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THE

WANDERING JEW.

Marie de France,

BY EUGÈNE SUE.

A NEW AND ELEGANT TRANSLATION.

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED

BY THE MOST EMINENT ARTISTS OF PARIS

IN TWO VOLUMES

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The Arctic Ocean encloses, with a belt of eternal ice, the desert borders of Siberia and of Northern America, those extreme limits of the two worlds which are separated by the narrow Straits of Behring.

The month of September is just at its close.

The equinox has brought darkness and the northern storms—night will soon displace one of the short and melancholy days of the poles.

The sky, of a livid and gloomy blue, is feebly lighted by a sun which is without heat, whose wan disk, scarcely seen above the horizon, seems paled by the dazzling brightness of the snow which covers the vast steppes far as the eye can see.
THE WANDERING JEW.

To the north, this desert is bounded by a coast bristling with black and gigantic rocks. At the foot of their Titanic piles lies, motionless, that stony sea whose waves are extended chains of frozen mountains, their blue-tinted peaks lost from view in a mass of snowy fog.

To the east, between the two peaks of Cape Oulikine, the eastern terminus of Siberia, is dimly visible a line of green, where the waters slowly plough their way through enormous fields of ice.

It is Behring's Straits.

Beyond, and towering above them, are the vast granitic masses of Cape Prince of Wales, the extreme point of North America. These desolate latitudes belong not to the habitable world; their terrible cold rends the very stones, cleaves trees, and cracks the ground in fissures radiating with glittering threads of ice.

No human being would seem able to dare these regions of frost and tempest, of famine and of death.

Yet, strange to say, steps are visible on the snow which covers these deserts, these remote boundaries of two continents divided by Behring's Straits.

On the American side, the foot-prints, by their smallness and lightness, denote a woman's passage.

She has moved in the direction of the rocks, from whose heights are seen, beyond the strait, the snowy steppes of Siberia.

On the Siberian side, foot-marks, larger and deeper, declare the presence of a man. He, too, has turned toward the strait. It would seem that this man and this woman, thus reaching, from opposite directions, the extremities of the globe, have aimed to see each other across the narrow arm of the sea which separates the two worlds.

Still more strange! This man and this woman have traversed these solitudes during a fearful tempest.

Some black pines, the growth of centuries, scattered here and there along the waste, like crosses in a churchyard, have been torn up, broken, swept away by the storm.

Through this raging hurricane, which uproots huge trees, which drives before it mountains of ice and dashes them in masses against each other with the noise of thunder—through this awful storm these travellers have made their way.

Yes, they have made their way without turning aside from the direct line which they have pursued, as may be seen by their regular and steady foot-tracks.

Who are these two beings who go onward thus calmly amid the convulsions and wrecks of nature?

Chance, will, or fatality has formed beneath the iron-shod sole of the man seven projecting nails which form a cross; and everywhere he leaves this trace of his progress.

Seeing these deep imprints in the smooth, hard snow, one might imagine a sheet of marble stamped by a foot of iron.

But now a night without twilight has succeeded to the day.

A fearful night!

By the dazzling refraction of the snow, the steppe spreads out its pure whiteness beneath a heavy cupola of blue, so gloomy that it seems like black; the pale stars are lost in the depths of this palpable obscure.

The silence is awful!

But toward the Strait of Behring a faint light gleams on the horizon. At first it is soft and of a pale azure, as the light which precedes the rising of the moon; then the brightness increases, rays out, and assumes a roseate hue.

In every other quarter of the heavens the darkness waxes deeper, and the whitened extent of the desert, but now so conspicuous, is hardly distinguishable from the midnight blackness of the vaulted firmament.
In the midst of this obscurity are heard strange, confused sounds.

One might suppose them caused by the wings, now flapping violently and now extended motionless, of great night birds, which, losing their course in the gloom, alternately skim and soar above the plain.

But no cry is heard.

This fearful silence betokens the approach of one of those imposing phenomena which strike with terror all animated beings, from the most savage to the most timid. An aurora borealis, that magnificent spectacle so frequent in the polar regions, breaks forth in glory...

On the horizon appears a demi-globe of dazzling brightness. From the centre of this glowing mass immense columns of light jet forth, which, rising to measureless heights, illumine heaven, earth, and sea. Then rays, as of a conflagration, glide along the snows of the desert, empurpling the blue tops of the icy mountains, and tinting with a sombre red the tall, black rocks of the two continents.

After having put forth this magnificent radiance, the aurora pales by degrees, and its clear brightness becomes lost in a luminous mist.

At this moment, owing to a singular effect of the *mirage*, frequent in these latitudes, the American coast, although separated from Siberia by an arm of the sea, appears suddenly so near that one might think it possible to throw a bridge from one world to the other.

Then, in the midst of that bluish, transparent vapour, which spread itself over the two worlds, two human figures were discernible.

On the Siberian cape, a man, kneeling, stretched forth his arms toward America, with a gesture of measureless despair.

On the American promontory, a young and lovely woman responded to this attitude of hopeless wretchedness by pointing toward heaven.

For several seconds these figures were thus disclosed, pale and shadowy, in the fading rays of the aurora borealis.

But the mist thickened gradually, and all was lost in darkness.

Whence came these two beings, who thus met amid the polar ices, at the very extremities of the earth?

Who were these two creatures, brought together for one instant by a deceptive *mirage*, but apparently separated for eternity?
THE WANDERING JEW.

PART I.
THE INN OF THE WHITE FALCON.

CHAPTER I.
MOROK.

In October, 1831, although it was still day, a copper lamp, with four burners, cast its rays on the cracked walls of a large garret, whose only window was closed; a ladder, projecting above the opening of a trap-door, served as a staircase.

Here and there, thrown carelessly on the floor, were iron chains, collars with sharpened points, collars with teeth like saws, muzzles studded with nails, long rods of steel with wooden handles. In one corner was a small, portable stove, such as plumbers use for melting lead; in it was charcoal placed on dry shavings, which a spark would in a moment kindle into a blaze.

Not far from these ill-boding instruments, which seemed like the tools of an executioner, were some arms of antique form. A coat of mail, with rings so flexible, so light and so close, that it resembled steel tissue, was laid on a chest, beside which were cuisses and armlets of iron, in good order, with their leather straps. Several other weapons, and particularly two long pikes, with triangular blades and ashen handles, at once light and strong, on which were the recent stains of blood, completed this panoply, which had the modern accompaniment of two Tyrolean carbines, primed and loaded.

With this arsenal of deadly weapons and barbarous instruments was strangely mingled a collection of very different objects—small glass cases, enclosing rosaries, necklaces, medals of Agnus Dei, vessels for holy water, images of saints in frames. There was, also, a quantity of those pamphlets printed at Fribourg, on coarse, blue paper, in which are recited many modern miracles, in which is quoted a letter, signed J. C., addressed to a "faithful disciple," in which, too, there
were, for the years 1831 and 1832, predictions of a most fearful description against impious and revolutionary France.

One of those paintings on canvas which showmen place in front of their moveable booths hung from one of the cross beams of the attic, doubtless that the picture might not sustain damage by being rolled up too long.

This canvas bore the following inscription:

"THE VERACIOUS AND MEMORABLE CONVERSION OF IGNATIUS MOROK, SURNAMED THE PROPHET, WHICH HAPPENED AT FRIBOURG, IN THE YEAR 1828."

This painting, whose proportions were larger than life, in a rude style and glaring colours, was divided into three compartments, presenting in action three important epochs in the life of the convert, called the Prophet.

In the first was seen a man with a long beard, of so light a tinge as to be almost white, of savage aspect, and attired in the skins of reindeer, like the wild tribes in the north of Siberia; his cap was of black fox's skin, topped with a raven's head. His features expressed terror, and crouching in his sledge, which, drawn by six wild dogs, glided over the snow, he fled from the pursuit of a pack of foxes, wolves, monstrous bears, etc., which all, with open jaws, armed with formidable teeth, seemed capable of devouring a hundred times over, man, dogs, and sledge.

Beneath this picture was:

"IN 1810 MOROK WAS AN IDOLATER, AND FLED BEFORE WILD BEASTS."

In the second compartment, MOROK, attired in the white robe of the catechumen, was kneeling, with clasped hands, before a man dressed in a long, black gown, with a white, falling collar. In one corner of the picture a tall angel, with a stern countenance, held a trumpet in one hand, and a flaming sword in the other, while the following words proceeded from his lips, in red letters on a black ground:

"MOROK THE IDOLATER FLED FROM WILD BEASTS; THE WILD BEASTS WILL NOW FLEE FROM IGNATIUS MOROK, CONVERTED AND BAPTIZED AT FRIBOURG."

In the third compartment, the new convert stood erect, proud, exulting, triumphant, in his long, blue robe, which hung in folds; his head proudly elevated, his left hand on his hip, with the right hand extended, he seemed to rule a crowd of tigers, hyenas, bears, lions, etc., etc., which, drawing in their claws and hiding their teeth, crouched at his feet, submissive and fearful. Beneath the latter compartment was inscribed as a moral conclusion:

"IGNATIUS MOROK IS CONVERTED; THE WILD BEASTS CROUCH AT HIS FEET."

Not far from these pictures were several bundles of small books, also printed at Fribourg, telling by what wonderful miracle the idolater Morok, when converted, had suddenly acquired a supernatural power, as was testified every day by the trial to which the "tamer of beasts" submitted himself, less to display his courage and boldness, than to show forth the praise and glory of the Lord.*

* * *

From the open trap in the garret arose in puffs a wild, acrid, strong, and penetrating smell.

From time to time were heard deep and heavy growls and strong breathings, followed by a dull noise, like that made by some heavy body which spreads and stretches itself along the floor.

A man is the solitary occupant of this chamber.

It is Morok, the tamer of wild beasts, surnamed the "Prophet."

He is forty years of age, of middling height, his limbs shrunken, his form singularly attenuated. A long pelisse, blood-red in colour, and trimmed with black fur, completely enwraps him; his complexion, naturally fair, is bronzed by the
wandering life he has led from infancy; his hair, of that dull yellow peculiar to
certain nations of the polar countries, falls straight and lank upon his shoulders;
his nose is thin, sharp, and aquiline; while around his prominent cheek-bones
is a long beard, blond almost to whiteness.

The physiognomy of this man was the more singular, as his eyelids, which
were very open, displayed his fierce eyeball encircled by a white ring. His
look, fixed and extraordinary, exercised an actual fascination over animals, which,
however, did not prevent the Prophet from also using in their subjugation the
terrible arsenal of weapons which lay around him.

Seated before a table, he had just opened the secret drawer of a small chest
filled with chaplets of beads and other trinkets used by the devout. In this draw-
er, closed by a hidden lock, was a quantity of sealed envelopes, bearing for ad-
dress only a number, combined with a letter of the alphabet. The Prophet took
one of these packets, and, putting it in the pocket of his pelisse, shut the secret
drawer, and restored the chest to the small table whence he had taken it.

The scene occurred at about four o'clock in the afternoon, at the inn of the
White Falcon, the sole hostelry of the little village of Mockern, near Leipsic,
coming from the north toward France. After a few moments a hoarse roar,
which came from below, made the whole garrett tremble.

"Judas, be silent!" exclaimed the Prophet, in a menacing tone, and turning

A third roar of inexpressible savageness now resounded through the place.

"Will you be quiet, La Mort?" cried the Prophet, hurrying to the trap, and
addressing some invisible animal which bore the gloomy appellation of "Death."
Spite of the habitual authority of his voice, spite of his reiterated menaces, the
tamer of brutes could not obtain silence; on the contrary, the loud barking of
several mastiffs was now added to the roaring of the beasts.

Morok seized a lance, and was about to descend the ladder, when
an individual was seen emerging from the trap. The new com-

language, though with a slightly foreign accent. "Good or bad news, Karl?"
he inquired, anxiously.

"Oh, good!"
"You have met them, then?"
"Yesterday, two leagues from Wittemberg."
"Heaven be praised!" cried Morok, joining his hands with an expression of the deepest satisfaction.
"Why, I could not fail finding them; they were constrained to travel this road from Russia to France, and it was a thousand to one I should meet them between Wittemberg and Leipsic."
"And the description?"
"Answers precisely: two young girls in mourning, a white horse, an old man with long mustaches, wearing a blue foraging cap and gray military coat, and a Siberian dog at his heels."
"And you have left them?"
"About a league hence. In less than half an hour they will be here."
"And in this inn, there being none other in the village," rejoined Morok, with a thoughtful air.
"And night fast approaching," added Karl.
"Did you enter into conversation with the old man?"
"Conversation! You surely are not thinking when you ask such a question."
"Why?"
"For the best of all reasons—it was impossible."
"Impossible! And wherefore?"
"You shall hear. I first followed them as though accidentally journeying the same road; then, toward nightfall yester evening, I approached them, and gave the old man the salutation common with foot-travellers, 'Good night, and a pleasant journey, comrade;' the only answer I received was a cross look, while, with the end of his stick, he pointed to the other side of the road."
"He is a Frenchman, and probably did not understand your German."
"He speaks it as well as you; when he arrived at the inn I heard him ask for what he wanted for himself and the girls."
"And could you not manage to draw him into conversation during the evening?"
"I tried once, but was so roughly repulsed that, for fear of running any risk, I would not venture again. I tell you, between ourselves, that you must be on your guard. This man has a look I don't like at all, and, spite of his gray mustache and meager frame, he seems so vigorous and resolute, that I scarcely know whether he or my comrade, Goliath, would have the best, were they to engage in trial of strength. I know not what are your projects, but, I say, 'Take care, master, take care!'"
"My black Java panther also was strong, and disposed for mischief," added Morok, with a sinister and disdainful smile.
"La Mort? Yes, and she remains still fierce and dangerous as ever to all but yourself—to you certainly she is almost gentle."
"And so will I make this old man, spite of his strength and his brutality."
"Doubtful, master; you are as shrewd and brave as man can be; but, trust me, not even you can change the fierce old wolf we expect here into a lamb."
"Do not my lion Cain, and Judas my tiger, crouch before me with terror?"
"True; but then you have such means to compel them as—"
"Because I have faith—that is all—and that comprises all," said Morok, interrupting Karl, with such a look as made the other cast down his eyes and be silent. "Why should not the man whom the Lord strengthens to contend with the wild beasts of the forest have his arm also strengthened unto victory over perverse and impious man?" added the Prophet, with a devout and triumphant air.

Whether from conviction of his master's power, or inability for controversy on
"THE WANDERING JEW."

so delicate a subject, Karl replied, humbly, "You are wiser than I, master, and what you do is well done."

"Did you follow this old man and the young girls through the whole journey?" inquired the Prophet, after a momentary silence.

"I did, but at a distance; only, as I am acquainted with the country, I sometimes made a short cut through a valley, sometimes over a mountain, still keeping them in sight: the last look I got at them was from behind the old water-mill, down by the tile-works. As they were travelling on a high road, and night was approaching, I hastened onward to announce to you what you call a piece of good news."

"Very good—yes, very good," replied Morok; "neither shall you go unrewarded, for, had these people escaped me—" the prophet shuddered, and ceased abruptly, but the expression of his countenance and the tone of his voice abundantly declared how important were the tidings just brought to him.

"Now I think of it," said Karl, "perhaps that courier, all covered with gold lace, who came from St. Petersburgh to Leipsic to find you, had something to do—"

Morok abruptly interrupted Karl, and said,

"Who told you the courier from Petersburgh was in any way concerned with these travellers? You forgot yourself—"

"Right, master; but pardon me this time: let us say no more about it. I must take off my game-bag, and help Goliath feed the beasts; it must be about their supper-time, if not already past. Do you think, master, that big giant of ours would forget to feed himself?"

"Goliath has gone out. He must not know that you have returned; neither would I have you seen by our expected travellers; it might excite their suspicion."

"Where do you wish me to go?"

"Go down to the small outhouse adjoining the stable, and there await my orders; for I may possibly have to send you off this very night for Leipsic."

"As you please. I have still some provisions in my wallet; and can eat my supper and take some rest at the same time."

"Go!"

"Master, remember what I have said to you, and mistrust that old fellow with the gray mustache; I believe him a very devil for resolution. I am a pretty good judge, and he would prove an ugly customer; beware of him."

"Be satisfied," said Morok; "I mistrust all, and always."

"Good luck, then, master!"

And Karl, stepping on the ladder, disappeared.

After bestowing a friendly sign of adieu on his servant, the Prophet continued slowly to pace the floor in profound meditation; then, approaching the casket with the false bottom, which contained papers, he selected a letter of considerable length, which he perused again and again with close attention, occasionally
going to the closed shutter which looked out on the courtyard of the inn, and listened with anxiety, mingled with impatience, for the arrival of the three persons whose approach had just been announced to him.
CHAPTER II.

THE TRAVELLERS.

Ending the scene we have described at the White Falcon, at Mockern, the three persons whom Morok, the tamer of wild beasts, awaited so eagerly, were quietly advancing through smiling meadows, bounded on one side by a river whose current turned a mill, and on the other by the highroad to the village of Mockern, which was distant about a league, on the top of a tolerably high hill.

The sky was beautifully serene. The noise of the river, beaten by the mill-wheel, and white with foam, alone disturbed the stillness of the profoundly tranquil evening; bushy willows drooped over the water, on which they threw their green, transparent shadows; while, farther on, the river reflected the blue of the firmament and the warm tints of the setting sun so splendidly, that, but for the hills which separated it from the sky, the gold and azure of the wave would have united in one dazzling sheet with the gold and azure of the heavens. The tall reeds on the bank bowed their velvet heads to the light breeze which so often rises with the close of day; the sun was slowly sinking beneath a broad band of purple clouds, tipped with flame. The pure, clear air brought up the distant tinkling of the bells worn by a flock of sheep.

Across a path worn in the grass of the meadow, two young girls, almost children—for they were but fifteen years of age—were riding on a white horse of moderate height, seated in a large Spanish saddle, which easily held them both, for they were of slender and dainty figure.

A tall man, with swarthy complexion and long, gray mustaches, led the horse by the bridle, and turned from time to time to the young girls with an air at once anxious, respectful, and paternal. He walked with a long staff; his shoulders, still robust, bore a soldier's knapsack; while his dusty gaiters and his slow march betokened the fatigue of a lengthened journey.

One of those dogs which the people of the north of Siberia attach to their sledges, a powerful beast, with almost the size, the make, and the colour of a wolf, followed closely on the steps of this little caravan, never leaving for an instant the heels of his master.

Nothing could be more charming than the group of these two young girls. One of them held in her left hand the loose bridle, and with her right arm encir-
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cled the waist of her sleeping sister, whose head rested on her shoulder. Each
step of the horse communicated to these two yielding forms an undulation full
of grace, as they balanced their tiny feet on a step made of wood, which served
them for a stirrup.
These twin sisters were called Rose and Blanche, by a loving fancy of their
mother. They were orphans, as might be seen from their mourning garments,
which were somewhat faded.
Such were the exactness of their resemblance and the equality of their height,
that it required an intimate knowledge to distinguish one from the other. The
portrait of her who was not sleeping may therefore serve for both; the only dif-
fERENCE at this moment was that Rose was awake, and on this day fulfilled the
functions of the elder sister, functions which were shared, thanks to the fancy of
their guide, who, an old soldier of the empire, was a strict disciplinarian, and had
thought it right to alternate between the two orphans subordination and command.
An artist would have been inspired at the sight of these two lovely coun-
tenances, framed in hoods of black velvet, whence escaped a profusion of cluster-
ing curls of the brightest chestnut flowing down their necks and shoulders, and
surrounding their round, fresh, and velvet cheeks. A carnation, wet with dew,
could not display a more lovely tint than did their pouting lips: the tender blue
of the violet would have seemed dark beside the limpid azure of their full eyes,
in which were painted the sweetness of their disposition and the innocence of
their age. A white and smooth brow, a delicately formed nose, and a dimple
in the chin, completed faces replete with ingenuousness and goodness.
It was charming to see them when, on the approach of a shower or a storm,
the old soldier carefully wrapped them both in a large pelisse of reindeer's skin,
and pulled over their heads the capacious hood of this weather-proof garment.
Then nothing could be more delicious than these two fresh and lovely faces peep-
ing out from under this dark canopy.
But the evening was fine and serene, and the heavy mantle was only wrapped
around the knees of the two sisters, while the large hood fell back on the crupper
of the saddle.
Rose still encircled her sleeping sister with her right arm, gazing on her with
an air of inexpressible tenderness, almost maternal; for to-day Rose was the se-
nior, and an elder sister is already almost a mother.
Not only did these orphans idolize each other, but, by a psychological phenom-
enon common to twins, they were usually simultaneously affected; the emotion
of one was instantly reflected in the countenance of the other; the same cause
made them both start or blush, for truly did their young hearts beat in unison.
In fact, simple joys, bitter griefs—all between them was mutually felt and in-
stantly participated.
In their infancy, attacked at the same moment by a severe illness, like two
flowers on one stem, they had together bent, grown pale, and languished; but
together also they had resumed their former health and charming appearance.
Need we say that these mysterious and indissoluble bonds which united the
twins could not be severed without proving a mortal blow to both?
Thus those tender creatures, which we call the "love-birds," can only live to-
gether; they grow sad, suffer, pine, and die when any cruel hand disperses them.
The guardian of the orphans, a man of about fifty-five, of a military aspect,
presented the immortal type of the soldiers of the republic and the empire, that
heroic offspring of the people, who became in one campaign the first soldiers in
the world, proving to the world what the people can and will do when those
whom they trust put confidence and hope in them.
This soldier, who was the protector of the two sisters, was an old grenadier of
the Imperial Horseguards, named Dagobert. His countenance was grave, reso-
lute, and strongly marked; his gray mustache, long and thick, completely hid his
lower lip, and joined a large imperial, which covered nearly the whole of his
chin; his lean cheeks, of the colour of brickdust, and tanned like old parchment,
were carefully shaved; thick eyebrows, still black, almost covered his light-blue
eyes; his gold ear-rings descended to the edge of his white-edged military stock; a leathern belt confined his cloak, of thick, gray cloth, about his waist; and a blue cap with a red tassel, which fell on his left shoulder, covered his bald head.

Once endowed with the strength of Hercules, and still retaining the courage of a lion; good and patient, because he was brave and powerful, Dagobert, notwithstanding the harshness of his features, evinced for the orphans an exquisite anxiety, inexhaustible consideration, a tenderness almost maternal—yes, maternal! for the heroism of affection is seen in the heart of a mother and the heart of a soldier.

Of stoical calmness, suppressing every emotion, the perfect sang froid of Dagobert never failed; thus, although nothing could be less sportive than he, he was at times actually comical in the very air of unruffled seriousness which characterized his every action.

From time to time, as he wended on his way, Dagobert turned to give a pat or say a kind word to the good white horse which bore the orphan girls, and whose eyepits and long teeth betrayed his respectable antiquity; two deep scars, one on the flank and the other on the breast, showed that he had been in battle; and so it was not without an air of pride that from time to time he shook his old military bridle, on the brass of whose bit was an eagle in relieve. His step was easy, careful, and firm; his skin glossy, his condition tolerable, and the foam which covered his bit showed the health which horses acquire by the constant but not excessive work of a long journey by short stages; for although he had been en route more than six months, this fine old fellow stepped on with as much alacrity as at starting, though he carried the two orphans and a tolerably heavy portmanteau, fastened behind the saddle.

If we have alluded to the extreme length of the old horse's teeth (and they are the unmistakable evidences of old age), it was because he often showed them, though only with the intention of being faithful to his name (which was Jovial), and to play a little prank, of which the dog was the victim. The dog, called Killjoy (no doubt as a contrast), which never left the heels of his master, was thus within reach of Jovial, and the latter now and then, seizing him gently by the skin of his back, lifted him up and carried him so for a few moments; the dog, protected by his thick coat, and no doubt long used to similar facetiousness from his companion, submitted to the fun with an air of stoical composure; only when he thought the joke had lasted long enough, Killjoy growled audibly. Jovial was quick to take the hint, and instantly dropped him. At other times, and doubtless by way of a change, Jovial lightly nibbled the soldier's haversack; and his master, with his dog, seemed perfectly accustomed to these little frolics.

These details will serve to show the excellent terms that existed between the two sisters, the old soldier, the horse, and the dog.

The little caravan advanced, somewhat impatient to reach the village of Mockern, which was in sight, before nightfall.

Dagobert looked about him from time to time, as though recalling old remembrances to mind. Gradually his features grew sad, and when he was at a little distance from the windmill, whose noise had attracted his attention, he stopped, and frequently passed his forefinger and thumb over his long mustaches, the only symptom of a strong and deep-seated emotion that he ever displayed. Jovial having stopped suddenly behind his master, Blanche, who was awakened by this, raised her head: her first look was at her sister, on whom she smiled sweetly; then both exchanged looks of surprise at the sight of Dagobert, motionless, his hands clasped together on the top of his long staff, and apparently overcome by a powerful and melancholy feeling.

The orphans were at this moment at the foot of a small mound, whose top was hidden by the thick foliage of a vast oak, planted half way up this little elevation. Rose, seeing Dagobert still motionless and lost in thought, leaned forward in her saddle, and, placing her little white hand on the shoulder of the soldier, whose back was toward her, said to him, in a gentle voice, "What ails you, Dagobert?"

The veteran turned, and, to the great surprise of the two sisters, they saw a
large tear which, having marked its moistened furrow down his embrowned cheek, lost itself in his thick mustache.

"What, weeping?" exclaimed Rose and Blanche, deeply moved; "tell us, we beseech you, what is the matter."

After a brief pause, the old soldier drew his hard hand across his eyes, and pointing to the aged oak near which they were resting, he said, in a tone of deep emotion,

"My poor children, I shall make you grieve, but what I have to say is a sacred duty I must fulfil. Listen: it is now eighteen years since the battle of Leipsic; on the eve of that bloody scene I bore your father in my arms beneath this very tree. He had two sabre cuts on his head, and a musket ball in his shoulder; it was here that both he and myself, who had two stabs with a lance, were taken prisoners; and by whom? By a renegade, a Frenchman, an émigré marquis, then a colonel in the Russian service, and who afterward—but another time you shall hear all about him."

Then, after a little interval, the veteran, pointing with his stick to the village of Mockern, added, "Yes, yes, there it is! Well do I recognise those heights, where your brave father, who commanded us and the Poles of the guard, cut down the Russian cuirassiers, after carrying the battery they were in charge of. Ah! my children," he added, with grave simplicity, "I only wish you could have seen your gallant father, at the head of our mounted grenadiers, charge in the face of a perfect hurricane of grapeshot. There never was his equal."

While Dagobert was thus expressing his regrets and his recollections, the orphans, by a spontaneous movement, had lightly slipped from their saddle, and,
holding each other by the hand, had kneeled at the foot of the old oak; then, closely pressing to each other's side, they burst into tears, while the old soldier, standing behind them, crossed his hands on his long staff, and leaned his bald forehead on them.

"Come, come," he said, gently, after a few minutes, seeing tears stealing down the blooming cheeks of the still kneeling sisters; "come, dear children, you must not grieve. Perhaps we shall find General Simon in Paris," he continued; "I will explain myself more fully to you this evening, before you go to sleep. I had my reasons for choosing this day to relate to you many things concerning your father. It was an idea of mine—for this may be called an anniversary."

"We were weeping," said Rose, "because we thought of our dear mother also."

"Whom we shall never see again till we rejoin her in heaven," added Blanche.

The soldier raised the orphans, took a hand of each, and looked alternately from one to the other with an expression of ineffable attachment, rendered still more striking by the contrast with his rude aspect. "You must not grieve thus, dear children," he said. "True, your mother was the best of women. When she inhabited Poland, she was styled 'the Pearl of Warsaw;' they might more justly have called her the Pearl of the whole world, for the universe itself could not produce her equal. No—no—"

The voice of Dagobert trembled and he stopped, smoothing down, as was his wont, his long mustache with his finger and thumb.

"Hear me, my dear children," he said, after having overcome his emotion; "your mother could but give you good counsels—could she?"

"No, Dagobert."

"And what were her dying injunctions to you? To think constantly of her, but to restrain all grief."

"It is true. She told us that God, always pitiful to tender mothers constrained to leave their children on earth, would suffer her to hear us from on high," said Blanche.

"And that her eyes would ever behold us," added Rose.

So saying, the sisters, by a common movement, clasped each other's hand, and raising their ingenuous faces toward heaven, repeated, with the enchanting simplicity of their age,

"Mother, dearmother, do you not see and hear your children?"

"Then, since your mother sees and hears you," said Dagobert, deeply affected, "do not grieve her by giving way to regrets she so expressly forbade."

"You are right, Dagobert; we will not weep any more," said the orphans, drying their tears.

Now Dagobert, in the estimation of a devotee, would be accounted a veritable pagan. In Spain, he had cut down with the least possible compunction those monks of all orders and colours who, bearing a crucifix in one hand and a poniard in the other, defended, not liberty (the Inquisition had for ages swept that away), but their monstrous privileges. Still, Dagobert had for forty years been present at so many sights of terrible grandeur; he had so often looked on death that the instinct of "natural religion," common to all simple and honest minds, had still survived in his soul; thus, though wanting the fond delusion which consoled the orphans, he would have deemed it a crime to say a word against it. Seeing them more composed, he resumed,

"That's right, my children; I would rather hear you prattle away as you did this morning, and all yesterday, laughing at your own little jokes, and not answering when I spoke to you, so entirely were you occupied with your own conversation. Yes, yes, young ladies; you have had some wonderful business to talk over the last two days. Well, so much the better, if it does but amuse you."

The sisters blushed, and exchanged a smile which contrasted brightly with the tears still glittering in their eyes. At length Rose replied, with a slight embarrassment,

"Indeed and indeed, Dagobert, we were not talking of anything in particular."
"Ah, well! I don't seek to know any more than it pleases you to tell me. And now take a little rest, and then we will resume our journey, for it is growing late, and we must reach Mockern before night, that we may set out again tomorrow morning early."

"Have we still a very long way to go?" inquired Rose.

"To reach Paris? Yes, my dear children; a hundred marches. We get on, though slowly, and we travel cheaply too, for our purse is but slender. A closet for you, with a straw bed and coverlet for myself at your door, with old Killjoy at my feet; a litter of fresh straw for Jovial: here is all our expense, for as to food, both of you together scarcely eat more than a mouse; and I learned, when I was in Spain and Egypt, to be hungry only when I had something to eat."

"You forget to add that, to economize still more, you have undertaken to do everything for us, without permitting us to assist you in any way."

"Yes, indeed, good Dagobert, when we think, too, that you set about washing almost every night, as if it were not our place to perform such offices—"

"You!" exclaimed the soldier, interrupting Blanche. "What! allow you to spoil your pretty little hands by dabbling in soap suds? Besides, a soldier is accustomed to wash his own linen, and, I can assure you, young ladies, whatever you may think, I was the best laundress in my squadron; and as for ironing, I am a pretty good hand at that too."

"Oh! impossible to be better; you excel in ironing."

"Only sometimes," said Rose, smiling, "you rather scorch the things."

"Yes, yes, when the iron is too hot. You see, it is of no use for me to hold it toward my cheek, for my skin is so hardened that I cannot feel it," said Dagobert, with the most imperturbable gravity.

"Don't you perceive that we are only joking, good Dagobert?"

"Well, then, my children, if you are satisfied with me as a laundress, I hope you will continue to give me your custom. It costs less; and, while on the road, poor folks like us should be as saving as possible, that our means may hold out till our arrival in Paris. Our papers, and the medal you have about you, will do the rest—at least we must hope so."

"The medal is sacred in our eyes. It was our mother's dying gift."

"Then be careful not to lose it, and see occasionally that you still have it."

"Here it is," said Blanche, drawing from her bosom a small bronze medal, which she wore suspended round her neck by a slender chain of the same metal. This medal presented on its two sides the following inscriptions:

**VICTIME DE**

**L. C. D. J.**

**FRIEZ POUR MOI.**

**PARIS LE 13 FEVRIER 1682.**

---

**APARIS**

**KVE S. FRANCOIE**

**ENAIN CRICLE EX.**

**VOUS Serez**

**LE 13 FEVRIER 1632.**

**FRIEZ POUR MOI.**

"What does all that mean, Dagobert?" said Blanche, observing these obscure inscriptions. "Our mother could not tell us."
"We will talk more about it before we go to bed," replied Dagobert. "It is growing late. Let us push on. Be very careful with this medal; and now, forward; we have still an hour's march before we reach our halt. Come, my dear children, give one more look to the hillock once moistened with your father's blood, and then—to horse—to horse!"

The orphans turned a last pious glance on the spot which had awakened such painful recollections in their guide, and then, with his aid, resumed their seat on Jovial.

This venerable animal had not even thought of wandering, but, with the forethought of a veteran, had availed himself of the opportunity to lay in a provision for the night by levying on a foreign soil the fresh and tender grass, and that, too, with so much apparent enjoyment as almost to excite the envy of Killjoy, who lay stretched out on the grass, his nose between his forepaws; but at the signal of departure he resumed his place behind his master. Dagobert, feeling his way carefully with the end of his long staff, led the horse by his bridle, because of the increasing marshiness of the ground. After a few steps he was even obliged to strike off to the left, in order to regain the highroad.

Dagobert, having, on his arrival at Mockern, inquired for the least expensive house of entertainment, was referred to the White Falcon, as the only inn the village afforded.

"On, then, to the White Falcon," replied the soldier.
CHAPTER III.

THE ARRIVAL.

Morok, the tamer of wild beasts, had already many times impatiently opened the shutter in the garret which looked out into the courtyard of the White Falcon, to watch the arrival of the two orphans and the soldier. Not seeing them, he began again to walk slowly up and down, with his arms folded on his breast, his head lowered, reflecting on the best mode of executing the plans which he had conceived. His meditations were, doubtless, painful, for his features seemed even more harsh than usual.

Notwithstanding his savage aspect, this man was by no means wanting in intelligence: the intrepidity of which he gave proof in his displays—and which, with a shrewd quackery, he attributed to his recent state of grace, a language at times solemn and mysterious, and an austere hypocrisy—had given him a sort of influence over the people whom he visited in his peregrinations.

Morok, long before his conversion, had no doubt been familiar with the habits of wild beasts. Born in the north of Siberia, he had, while young, been one of the boldest hunters of the bear and reindeer. Later, in 1810, giving up that pursuit, he had become the guide of a Russian engineer charged with a survey in the polar regions, and had accompanied him to St. Petersburg. There Morok, after many vicissitudes of fortune, was employed among the imperial couriers, those iron automata whom the least caprice of a despot sends forth in a frail sledge through the whole vast extent of the empire from Persia to the Frozen Ocean. For these men, who travel day and night with the rapidity of lightning, there are no seasons, obstacles, fatigues, or dangers: mere human projectiles, they must be broken or reach their destination. We may imagine, therefore, the boldness, vigour, and fortitude of men accustomed to such an existence.

It is useless here to detail the remarkable series of events which led Morok to abandon this life of peril for another pursuit, and how he entered as a catechumen into a religious house at Fribourg, after which, duly converted, he had commenced his wanderings, accompanied by a menagerie, how formed nobody could tell.

Morok was still walking up and down his attic.

It was night.

The three persons whom he so impatiently expected did not appear.

His step became more and more abrupt and impatient.

Suddenly he stopped, turned his head in the direction of the window, and listened.

The man had a hearing as acute as that of a savage.

"They come!" he exclaimed.
And his savage eyes glared with fiendish joy; he had heard the footsteps of a man and horse.

Going to the shutter of his garret, he carefully half opened it, and saw the two young girls on horseback, with the old soldier who guided them, enter the courtyard of the inn.

The night had set in dark and cloudy; a high wind blew about the light of the lantern by which these new guests were welcomed and assisted. The description which Morok had received was too precise for him to be deceived.

Sure of his prey, he closed the window.

After having reflected for a quarter of an hour—no doubt, that he might well arrange his plans—he leaned over the opening of the trap, from which the top of the ladder projected, and called,

"Goliath!"

"Master!" replied a hoarse voice.

"Come hither!"

"Here I am, just come from the slaughter-house. I've brought the meat."

The sides of the ladder shook, and soon an enormous head appeared on a level with the floor.

Goliath (fitly named, for he was more than six feet high, and cast in the mould of Hercules) was hideous; his scowling eyes were deep sunk beneath his low and projecting brow; his matted locks and beard, thick and coarse as horsehair, gave to his features a brutal character; between his large jaws, armed with teeth like hooks, he held by one corner a piece of raw beef, weighing ten or twelve pounds, finding it, no doubt, more convenient to carry the meat in this way, that he might have his hands free to help him up the ladder, which yielded beneath his weight.

At last this huge frame wholly emerged from the trap, and by his bull's neck and the vast width of his chest and shoulders, and the bulk of his arms and legs, it might be seen that this giant could fearlessly wrestle with a bear.

He wore an old pair of blue trousers with red stripes, and laced with sheepskin, and a sort of coat, or, rather, cuirass, of very thick leather, torn in places by the sharp nails of the animals.

When he reached the floor Goliath unclosed his hooks, opened his mouth, and letting his quarter of beef fall on the ground, licked his bloody mustaches with a relish.

This species of monster had, like many other mountebanks, begun by eating raw flesh at fairs to get money from the gaping crowds. Having thus acquired a taste for this cannibal food, and uniting his taste with his interest, he used topreface the shows of Morok by eating some pounds of raw flesh in presence of the astonished crowds.

"My share and La Mort's are below; here's Cain and Judas's allowance," said Goliath, pointing to the piece of beef. "Where's the hatchet? I want to chop it in two. No partiality; beast or man: let every weasand have its fair share."

Then tucking up one of the sleeves of his garment, he displayed an arm as hairy as a wolf's skin, and furrowed by veins as thick as a man's thumb.

"Now, master, where's the chopper?" he again inquired, looking around him.

Instead of replying, the Prophet asked him several questions.

"Were you below when those new comers entered the inn just now?"

"Yes, master; I was coming out of the slaughter-house."

"Who are they?"

"Oh! there's two little wenches on a white horse; there's an old fellow with 'em, with long mustaches—But the chopper—the animals are terribly hungry, and so am I: where's the chopper?"

"Do you know where they have lodged these travellers?"

"The landlord took the little girls and the old fellow to the bottom of the courtyard."

"In the building which looks up to the fields?"
"Yes, master; but the—"
Here a concert of horrid roars shook the very floor of the garret and interrupted Goliath.
"Do you hear?" he exclaimed. "Hunger has made the beasts furious. If I could roar, I should do so too. I never saw Judas and Cain as they are tonight; they jump about in their cages ready as if they would break them to pieces. As to La Mort, her eyes shine brighter than ever—just like two candles. Poor Mort!"
Morok replied, without paying any regard to Goliath's remarks,
"The young girls, then, are put in the building at the bottom of the courtyard?"
"Yes, yes; but in the devil's name, the chopper! Since Karl was sent away, all the work falls on me, and that makes the feeding-time come later."
"And the old man is with the girls?"
Goliath, astonished that, in spite of all his urging, his master did not think of the animals' supper, regarded the Prophet with an air of increasing surprise.
"Answer me, brute!"
"If I'm a brute, I've a brute's strength," said Goliath, in a sulky tone, "and, brute against brute, I haven't always the worst of it."
"I ask you if the old man is with the young girls?" repeated Morok.
"Well, no," replied the giant; "the old fellow, after having led his horse to the stable, asked for a tub and some water, and there he is under the porch, and by the light of a lantern he is soaping away—he with gray mustaches, soaping like a washerwoman! just as if I should be feeding canaries with bird-seed," added Goliath, shrugging his shoulders with contempt.
"Now I've answered, master, let me get the beasts' supper ready?" then looking about him, he added, "But where is the chopper?"
After a moment's reflection, the Prophet said to Goliath,
"You will not feed the beasts this evening." At first Goliath did not understand, for the very idea was to him incomprehensible.
"What do you say, master?" he inquired.
"I desire that you will not feed the beasts this evening."
Goliath made no reply, but opened his heavy eyes to an immense size, clasped his hands and retreated two steps.
"Well, you understand me now, don't you?" said Morok, impatiently. "It's plain enough, is it not?"
"Not eat, when here's the meat, and our supper's three hours behind time!" cried Goliath, in increasing amazement.
"Obey, and be silent."
"Do you, then, wish some frightful accident to happen to-night? Hunger will make these beasts furious, and me too."
"So much the better."
"Mad!
"All the better."
"How all the better! But—"
"Enough!"
"But, by the devil's skin! I am as hungry as the very beasts themselves."
"Eat, then! Who hinders you? Your supper is ready, since you eat it raw."
"I never eat without my beasts, nor they without me."
"I repeat, that if you give the animals one taste of food I will dismiss you instantly."
Goliath uttered a deep growl as hoarse as that of a bear, while he surveyed the Prophet with an air at once stupefied and wrathful.
Morok, having given his orders, continued to pace the garret as if buried in profound reflection; then, addressing Goliath, who still remained in utter amazement, he said,
"You recollect the burgomaster's house, where I went this evening to have my passport signed, and where the wife purchased some little books and a chaplet!"

"Yes," answered the giant, sulkily.

"Go, then, and inquire of the servant if I can depend upon seeing the burgomaster early to-morrow morning."

"What for?"

"I may possibly have something of importance to communicate to him. At any rate, say that I particularly beg he will not leave his house to-morrow until I have seen him."

"Good! But the beasts—you will let me feed them, will you not, before I go to the burgomaster? Only the Java panther—she is the most famished of all; just let me give La Mort one little bit, only a mouthful or two. Cain, myself, and Judas, will wait."

"It is that panther I most particularly desire you to keep without one morsel of food. Yes, I tell you, she more than any other."

"By the horns of the devil!" exclaimed Goliath, "what ails you to-day? I can't make this out at all. Pity Karl is not here; he is so deep and knowing, he would soon find out why you keep the starving beasts from having anything to eat."

"There is no need for your understanding."

"Will not Karl soon be back?"

"He has returned."

"Where is he, then?"

"Gone again."

"What can be going on here? I am sure there is something. Karl goes—returns—sets out again—and—"

"But our present business is with you, not with Karl. You, who, though hungry as a wolf, are as cunning as a fox, and, when you please, as deep as Karl himself."

And Morok patted the giant familiarly on the shoulder, changing his language and his manner.

"Cunning as Karl! what, I?"

"Come, I will prove it. There are ten florins to be got to-night, and you will be the cunning fellow who will gain them—I am sure you will."

"Ah, yes! if that's it, I am deep enough," replied the giant, smiling with a stupid and self-satisfied air. "But what must one do to gain these ten florins?"

"You will see."

"Is it difficult?"

"You will see. You will begin by going to the burgomaster. But, before you go, light me this brasier," said Morok, pointing with his finger to a small stove.

"Yes, master," replied the giant, somewhat consoled for the delay of his supper by the hope of gaining ten florins.

"Place this bar of steel in the brasier until it becomes red hot," added the Prophet.

"Yes, master."

"Leave it there while you go with my message to the burgomaster; then return and await me here."

"Yes, master."*

"You must keep up the fire in the brasier."

"Yes, master."

Morok made a step as though leaving the room, when, changing his purpose, he said,

"You told me that the old man was engaged washing linen under the porch?"

"Yes, master."

"Forget nothing; the bar of iron in the fire, the burgomaster, and to return and await my orders here."
So saying, the Prophet descended the ladder leading from the garret, and disappeared.

CHAPTER IV.

MOROK AND DAGOBERT.

OLIATH made no false report. Dagobert was soaping away with that air of imperturbable gravity which never forsook him.

If we consider the habits of a soldier in a campaign, we shall not be astonished at this apparent eccentricity; besides, Dagobert thought only how to spare the slender purse of the orphans, and save them from all care, all trouble; and, therefore, each evening after the day's march, he occupied himself with sundry feminine occupations. Moreover, he was not in his apprenticeship; for often during his campaigns he had very industriously repaired the damage and disorder which a day of battle necessarily brings to the clothing of a soldier who not only may receive sword-cuts, but must also mend his uniform; since when the skin is cut, the blade also makes in the garment an unseemly opening.

Thus the evening or day after a severe combat, the best soldiers (always known by their extremely neat attire) may be seen drawing from their haversack or portmanteau a small housewife furnished with needles, thread, scissors, and other needfuls, and going to work
upon all sorts of mending and repairs, of which the most careful seamstress might be jealous.

We cannot find a better time to explain why the surname of Dagobert was given to François Baudoin (the companion of the two orphans), when he was recognised as one of the finest and bravest grenadiers in the Imperial Horseguards.

There had been a sharp fight through the day, without any decisive advantage. In the evening the company of which François formed one, had been sent forward to occupy the ruins of a deserted village: the outposts being placed, one half the troopers remained on horseback, while the other took some rest and picketed their horses. Our friend had charged among the bravest without being wounded this time, for he only called a remembrancer a deep scratch which a Kaiserlitz had given him in the thigh by a thrust of the bayonet, clumsily delivered from below.

"Scoundrel! my new breeches!" cried the grenadier, when he saw a wide rent on the thigh of his garment, which he revenged by running the Austrian through with a scientific carte from above. If the grenadier evinced a stoical indifference on the subject of this slight gash on his skin, he was by no means so indifferent to the disastrous wound which his full-dress breeches had sustained.

At bivouac the same evening, therefore, he undertook to remedy this accident; and, drawing his housewife from his pocket and choosing his best thread, best needle, and arming his finger with his thimble, he began his tailor-work by the light of the bivouac fire, having first divested himself of his jack-boots and (we must confess it) of his breeches too; he turned the latter wrong side outward, to sew them on the inner side, that the stitches might not be so apparent.
This partial *deshabille* was somewhat contrary to discipline; but the captain going his round could not help laughing at the sight of the old soldier, who, gravely seated with his legs under him, his hairy cap on his head, his full uniform on his back, his boots by his side, and his breeches on his knees, was stitching away as coolly as a tailor on his shop-board.

Suddenly there was a rattle of musketry, and the videttes came in, crying "To arms!"

"To horse!" cried the captain, in a voice of thunder.

In a moment the troopers were in the saddle. The unlucky mender of holes was guide of the first rank, and, having no time to turn his breeches, alas! he put them on wrong side outward, and, without taking time to put on his boots, leaped on his horse.

A party of Cossacks, profiting by the shelter of a wood, had tried to surprise the detachment. The encounter was bloody. Our soldier foamed with rage, for he was very tenacious of his goods, and the day was an unlucky one for him, his breeches torn and his boots lost! and he therefore cut and slashed away with fury, a splendid moonlight lending its aid. All the company were in admiration at the valour of the grenadier, who killed two Cossacks and took an officer prisoner with his own hand.

After this skirmish, in which the detachment kept its position, the captain drew
up his men in line and called our hero from the ranks to compliment him on his
good behaviour. François would fain have gone without this honour, but must
needs obey.

We may imagine the surprise of the captain and his troopers when they saw
the tall and martial figure advance at a foot's pace on his horse, with his naked
feet in his stirrups, and pressing his horse with limbs equally denuded.

The captain, much astonished, approached him; but, remembering the soldier's
occupation at the instant of the cry to arms, he understood the whole affair.

"Ah, ah! old campaigner!" said he, "you do like King Dagobert, do you?
you put on your breeches wrong side outward!"

In spite of discipline, ill-repressed shouts of laughter hailed this joke of the
captain. But our man, erect in his seat, with his left thumb at the right point
of his accurately adjusted bridle, the handle of his sabre resting on his right thigh,
kept up his immoveable gravity, and, making his half circle, regained his rank
without moving his eyelid, after having received the congratulations of his cap-
tain. From that day forward François Baudoin received and retained the sur-
name of Dagobert.

Dagobert then was in the porch of the inn, employed in washing, to the great
marvel of several beer-drinkers, who, from the tap-room in which they were as-
sembled, looked at him with a curious eye.

To say truth, it was a rather odd sight.

Dagobert had taken off his gray great-coat, and turned up the sleeves of his
shirt; with a vigorous hand he was rubbing soap into a small pocket-handker-
chief spread on a board, one end of which inclined in a butt-full of water; on his
right arm, tattooed with warlike emblems in red and blue, were two scars, so
deep that a finger could be laid in them.

The Germans, as they drank their beer and smoked their pipes, might well be
surprised at the singular employment of this tall, old man, with long mustaches,
bald head, and forbidding look, for the features of Dagobert were harsh and re-
pulsive when he was not in the company of the young girls.

The unremitted notice of which he found himself the object began to annoy
him, for he thought himself engaged in the simplest employment possible.

At this moment the Prophet came beneath the porch; he looked steadfastly
at the soldier for some time, then approaching him he said, in French, and in a
somewhat contemptuous tone, "Comrade, it seems that you have not much con-
fidence in the washerwomen of Mockern?"

Dagobert, without suspending his work, frowned, turned his head half round,
cast a side look at the Prophet, and made him no answer.
Surprised at his silence, Morok said, "I am not wrong, you are a Frenchman, my old hero; the words tattooed in your arm prove that, and your military figure testifies that you are an old soldier of the empire; I think, then, that for a hero you end rather with the distaff."

Dagobert remained still silent, but he bit his mustache with his teeth, and rubbed more briskly than ever, with an impatience; for the manner and words of the tamer of beasts were displeasing to him, though he was unwilling to show his anger. Nothing abashed, the Prophet continued,

"I am sure, my hero, that you are neither deaf nor dumb; why, then, do you not answer me?"

Dagobert, losing patience, turned abruptly, looked Morok full in the face, and said, sharply,

"I do not know you—I do not wish to know you—let me be quiet;" and he resumed his occupation.

"But we may make acquaintance by drinking a glass of Rhenish wine together. We can talk of our campaigns, for I have seen the wars myself, I can tell you, and that, perhaps, may make you a little more civil."

The veins of Dagobert's bald forehead swelled; he perceived in the look and tone of this persevering intruder a desire and intention to provoke him, still he restrained himself.

"I ask you why you will not drink a cup of wine with me, while we have a talk about France. I was there once for a long time, and a beautiful country it is. So when I meet with a Frenchman anywhere I am delighted, particularly if he uses soap as skilfully as you do; if I had a housekeeper I should certainly send her to you to take a few lessons."

The sarcasm was apparent; insolence and bravado were openly displayed in the impertinent look of the Prophet. Dagobert, perceiving that with such an opponent the quarrel might become serious, and desiring under every provocation to avoid it, lifted his tub in his arms, and betook himself to the other end of the porch, hoping by this expedient to put an end to a scene which tried his patience severely.

The savage eyes of the tamer of beasts sparkled with pleasure. The white ring which encircled his eyeballs seemed to expand, and, thrusting his crooked fingers twice or trice into his long and yellow beard in token of satisfaction, he again leisurely approached the soldier, accompanied by two or three idlers from the tap-room.

In spite of his natural phlegm, Dagobert, surprised and annoyed at the impertinent attack of the Prophet, at first thought to knock him down with the washboard, but he remembered the orphan girls and curbed his irritable feeling.

Morok, crossing his arms on his chest, said to him, in a dry and insolent tone,

"Assuredly you are not very polite, man of soap!" then turning to the bystanders, he continued in German, "I told this Frenchman with long mustaches that he is not polite; we shall see what his reply will be; it may be requisite to give him a lesson. Heaven preserve me from being quarrelsome," he added, with affected compunction; "but the Lord has enlightened me; I am His work, and out of respect to Him I must make His work respected."

This mystic and impudent peroration was very much to the taste of the listeners. The Prophet's reputation had reached as far as Mockern, and as they expected an exhibition on the morrow, they relished this prelude heartily.

When Dagobert heard this provocation on the part of his adversary, he could not refrain from saying in German, "I understand German; go on in German, your words will not be lost."

Other spectators now arrived, and so great interest was excited that they formed a circle around the two speakers.

The Prophet replied in German,

"I said you were not polite, and I say now that you are grossly impertinent. What is your reply to this?"
"Nothing," said Dagobert, coldly, and began to soap another piece of linen. "Nothing," replied Morok, "that's concise enough; I will be less brief, and tell you that when an honest man civilly offers a glass of wine to a stranger, that stranger has no right to make an insolent retort, and deserves to be taught good manners."

Heavy drops of perspiration streamed down the forehead and cheeks of Dagobert, his massy imperial moved up and down with nervous excitement; but he still commanded his temper, and taking the two ends of the handkerchief, which he had rinsed in the water, he shook it, then twisted it to squeeze out the water, and began to hum the old campaigning song:

"De Tirlemont, taodion de diable,
Noui partirons detnaiumatin,
Le sabre en main
Duaut adieua," etc., etc.

(We suppress the end of the couplet, which is rather too free for any place beyond the barracks-room.)

The silence which Dagobert prescribed to himself had half choked him, but this ditty was a kind of safety-valve for him. Morok, turning to the spectators, said to them, with an air of hypocritical restraint,

"We knew very well that the soldiers of Napoleon were heathens, who stabled their horses in churches, who offended the Lord a hundred times a day, and who were justly rewarded by being drowned and destroyed in the Beresina, like the Pharaohs; but we did not know that the Lord, to punish these miscreants, had deprived them of their only virtue, courage! Here is a man who, in me, has insulted a creature touched by the grace of God, and he pretends that he does not understand that I require an apology at his hands; or if not—"

"If not," said Dagobert, without looking at the Prophet.

"If not, you shall give me satisfaction. I told you that I, too, have been in the wars. We can find somewhere a couple of sabres, and to-morrow morning, at daybreak, behind some wall, we may discover the colour of each other's blood—that is, if you have any in your veins."

This challenge began somewhat to frighten the spectators, who had not expected so tragic a conclusion.

"You fight? What an idea!" exclaimed one; "Why, you'll both get locked up—the laws against duelling are very severe."

"Especially with persons of low rank or strangers," added another. "If you are taken, weapon in hand, the burgomaster will put you in the cage, and you will have two or three months' imprisonment before sentence is passed on you."

"Are you, then, the persons to go and inform against us?" asked Morok.

"No, certainly not," said the citizens; "do as you wish, we only advise you as friends; but do as you like."

"What do I care for a prison!" exclaimed the Prophet. "Only let me find a couple of swords, and to-morrow morning shall show whether or not I care for what the burgomaster may say or do."

"What would you do with two swords?" coolly inquired Dagobert of the Prophet.

"When you have one in your hand, and I the other in mine, you shall see. The Lord requires that His honour be regarded!"

Dagobert shrugged his shoulders, bundled up his linen in a handkerchief, dried his piece of soap, packed it carefully in a little oil-skin bag, then whistling between his teeth his favourite rondeau of Tirlemont, he made a step forward.

The Prophet frowned: he began to fear that his provocation was ineffectual. He advanced a couple of paces toward Dagobert, stood directly before him as though to bar his progress, then folding his arms across his chest and measuring him, with an insolent air, from head to foot, he said,

"So, then, an old soldier of that brigand, Napoleon, is only fit to be a washerwoman: he refuses to fight."

"Yes, he refuses to fight," replied Dagobert, with a firm voice, but turning
deathly pale. The old soldier had never, perhaps, given to the orphans confided to his guardianship so striking a proof of his tenderness and devotion. For a man of his temper to allow himself to be insulted with impunity, and to refuse to fight, was an incalculable sacrifice.

"Then you are a coward—you are afraid—and you confess it—"

At these words Dagobert made, if we may use the expression, a summerset upon himself, as though, at the instant when he was about to spring at the Prophet, a sudden thought had restrained him.

In fact, he thought of the young girls, and the fearful consequences which a duel, whether fortunate or unfortunate for him individually, must entail on their journey.

But this movement of the soldier, rapid as it was, was so significant—the expression of his harsh features, pale and bathed in sweat, was so terrible, that the Prophet and the lookers-on receded a step.

A perfect silence reigned for several seconds, and by a sudden revulsion, a general feeling arose in Dagobert's favour. One of the by-standers said to those near him,

"This man is not a coward!"

"Not he, indeed."

"It sometimes requires more courage to refuse a challenge than to fight."

"And the Prophet was wrong to provoke him; he's a stranger."

"And if a stranger should fight and be taken, he would have a long imprisonment."

"And then," added another, "he's travelling with two young girls, and that's a reason why he should not fight. If he were killed, or shut up, what would become of those poor children?"

Dagobert turned to the individual who uttered these words, and saw a stout man with a frank, good-humoured face. The soldier held out his hand to him, and said, in a tone of emotion,

"Thank you, sir!"

The German cordially shook the hand which Dagobert extended to him.

"Sir," he added, still retaining his grasp of the veteran's hand, "do this; take a bowl of punch with us, and we will compel this devil of a Prophet to confess that he has been too hasty, and to pledge you in a bumper."

Up to this time the tamer of beasts, vexed at the issue of his plan to make the soldier fight, had scowled sulkily on those who had taken part against him, but now his features gradually cleared up; and thinking it most serviceable to his projects to conceal his discomfiture, he made a step toward the soldier, and said to him cordially enough,

"Well, be it so. I accede to the proposition of these gentlemen, and confess that I was wrong. Your behaviour wounded me, and I was not master of myself. I repeat that I was wrong," he added, with ill-disguised rage; "the Lord commands humility, and I ask your pardon."

This proof of moderation and repentance was greatly applauded, and highly appreciated by the spectators.

"He asks your pardon, and now you can't bear him any spite, mon brave," said one of the party, addressing Dagobert. "Come, let us drink together; we offer you the bowl with good-will, and you should accept it as heartily."

"Yes! accept it, we beg of you, in the name of your pretty little maidens," said the stout man, wishing Dagobert to comply. He, moved by the cordial advances of the Germans, replied, "Thanks, gentlemen; you are very kind. But when a man accepts a cup, he must offer one in his turn."

"To be sure, and we'll drink it with pleasure; every one in his turn—that's the right thing. We'll pay the first bowl, and you the second."

"Poverty is not vice," replied Dagobert; "so I tell you frankly that I have not the means of offering you a bowl in my turn. We have yet a long journey before us, and I must make no needless expenses."
The soldier said this with so much simple but firm dignity, that the Germans did not venture to press their offer, understanding that a man of Dagobert's character could not accept it without humiliation.

"Ah! well, so much the worse," said the stout man. "I should like to take a glass with you very much; but, as it is, good night, my brave fellow—good night. It is growing late, and the landlord of the White Falcon will be for turning us out."

"Good-night, gentlemen," said Dagobert, going toward the stables to give his horse his second feed.

Morok approached him, and said, in a tone of extreme humility,

"I have owned how much I was in the wrong, and I have asked your pardon. You have not replied. Are you still incensed against me?"

"If we should meet again some day, when my children do not need me," said the old soldier, in a deep and suppressed voice, "I will have two words with you, and they shall not be long ones."

So saying, he turned his back abruptly on the Prophet, who slowly left the courtyard.

The inn of the White Falcon formed a parallelogram. At one extremity was the main building, at the other were some smaller buildings, containing several apartments, let at low prices to poor wayfarers. A vaulted passage was formed in the centre of these latter, which opened upon the country. On each side of the courtyard were stables and sheds, over which were granaries and lofts.

Dagobert, going into one of the stables, took from a bin a measure of oats ready for his horse, and pouring it into a sieve, shook it as he approached Jovial.

To his extreme astonishment, his old travelling companion did not reply by his accustomed joyful whinny at hearing the oats in the sieve. He was uneasy, and spoke to Jovial kindly; but the beast, instead of turning to his master with his intelligent eye, and pawing impatiently with his feet, remained motionless. Still more astonished, the soldier went up to him.

By the dim light of a stable lantern he saw the poor animal in a state which betokened extreme fear—his limbs crouched, his head raised, his ears thrown back, his nostrils expanded, while his halter was stretched to its full length, as though he sought to break it in order to escape from the partition to which his rack and manger were affixed; a cold and excessive sweat mottled his cloth with bluish streaks, and his coat, instead of shining in bright relief against the obscurity of the stable, stood on end, stiff and bristly, while every now and then his whole frame was shaken as if in convulsions.

"So! so! old Jovial," said the trooper, putting the sieve on the ground to pat his horse: "what, afraid, like your master!" he added, bitterly, thinking of his recent insult; "what, frightened, boy, frightened—you, who are not usually a coward!"

Despite the caresses and voice of his master, the horse continued to evince signs of fright. However, his halter was less stretched, and he snuffed Dagobert's hand with hesitation, snorting violently, as if doubting his master's identity.

"What! don't you know me!" exclaimed Dagobert; "then something very wonderful must be going on here."

And the old soldier gazed about him uneasily.

The stable was spacious, gloomy, and but dimly lighted by a lantern hanging from the ceiling, festooned with innumerable cobwebs. At the other end, and separated from Jovial by some places marked with bars, were the three powerful black horses of the trainer of beasts, which were as quiet as Jovial was trembling and affrighted.

Dagobert, struck by this singular contrast (soon to be explained), again patted and encouraged his horse, which, gradually reassured by the presence of his master, licked his hands, rubbed his head against him, and evinced a thousand other tokens of attachment.

"Come, come, that's right—that's the way I like to see you, my old Jovial,"
said Dagobert, taking up the sieve and pouring its contents into the manger.

"Come, boy, eat—eat, for we have a long march before us to-morrow, and no more of those foolish fancies and frights. If Killjoy were here, he would give you courage; but he is up in the room with the children; he is their guardian in my absence. Come, eat, and don't keep looking at me."

But the horse, after having moved his oats about with his lips, as though to obey his master, left them, and began to nibble the sleeve of Dagobert's great-coat.

"Jovial, my poor fellow, there's something wrong with you, who generally pick up your feed with so much good-will! You leave your oats, and this is the first time since we started!"

The veteran said this with real anxiety, for the result of his journey depended very much on the vigour and health of his horse.

A horrid roar, so near that it seemed to issue from the stable itself, so completely frightened Jovial that, with one snap, he broke the halter, leaped over the bar of his stall, and, reaching the open door, bounded into the courtyard.

Dagobert himself could not repress a start at this sudden, deep, and savage growl, which accounted for the terror of his horse.

The next stable, occupied by the travelling menagerie of the tamer of beasts, was separated only by the partition wall to which the manger was attached—the Prophet's three horses, used to these roarings, remained perfectly tranquil.

"Oh ho!" said the soldier, reassured, "now I know what it is. No doubt Jovial had before heard these roars. He smelt the animals of that impudent vagabond, and they were quite enough to frighten him," added the veteran, carefully gathering up the oats from the manger. "Once in another stable—and there ought to be some empty ones—he will not leave his feed, and we will make an early move of it in the morning."

The affrighted horse, after running about the courtyard, came to his master at his call, and Dagobert, taking him by his headstall, led him to another single-stall stable, which a hostler pointed out to him, and there Jovial was comfortably installe.

Once removed from his vicinity to the wild beasts, the old horse became tranquil, and even frisked a little at the expense of Dagobert's great-coat, who, thanks to these small jokes, had a job in the tailoring line cut out for him that very night, if he so pleased; but he was absorbed in admiring the alacrity with which Jovial ate his provender.

Completely at ease, the soldier shut the door of the stable, and hastened to his supper, that he might rejoin the orphans, reproaching himself with having left them so long alone.
ow, and of small proportions, was the chamber which the orphans occupied, in the most retired part of the inn, whose only window looked out on the country; a bed without curtains, a table, and two chairs, completed the more than modest furnishing of the apartment, lighted by a lamp; on the table, near the casement, was deposited the wallet of Dagobert. The huge Siberian dog, Killjoy, stretched at the entrance, had already twice uttered a low growl, without any farther manifestation of impending danger.

The sisters, reclining on their pallet, were clad in long white wrapping gowns, fastened at the neck and wrists. They wore no caps, but a broad fillet confined their rich chestnut hair, and kept it in order while they slept. Their snowy vestments, with the white circlet round their brows, gave to their fresh and blooming countenances a still greater charm.

Spite of their early troubles, the orphans prattled merrily, with the innocent gayety of their age; remembrance of their lost mother made them sad at times, but it was a sadness without pain, and rather a gentle melancholy which they cherished, not shunned; for them, their beloved mother was not so much dead as absent.

Almost as ignorant as Dagobert of religious forms (for, in the wilderness in which they had dwelt, there was neither priest nor chapel), they only believed, as they had been told, that a good and just God had so much pity for a mother compelled to leave her children on earth as to permit her to behold them from on high, and to hear their voices, and sometimes to send down good angels for their protection.

Thanks to this illusion, the orphans, persuaded that their mother incessantly beheld them, believed that if they did wrong it would give her pain, and forfeit the protection of the good angels.

This was all the theology of Rose and Blanche, but it was enough to satisfy their innocent and affectionate souls.

That night the two sisters were discoursing together while awaiting the return of Dagobert.

Their conversation was deeply interesting to them, for it referred to a secret, so important as to quicken the pulsations of their young hearts, cause their tender bosoms to heave, and send a deeper colour to their delicate cheeks, while a thoughtful and uneasy languor weighed down the lids of their clear blue eyes.
Rose, on this occasion, occupied the outer side of the bed. Her fair
rounded arms were crossed beneath her head, which was half
turned to her sister, who, leaning on her elbow and smiling upon her, said,

"Do you think he will come again to-night?"

"Oh, yes! for yesterday, you know, he promised it."

"And he is too good to forget his promise."

"And so handsome, too, with those beautiful light curls!"

"And so sweet a name, just suited to himself!"

"And such a charming smile? With how kind a voice he spoke when, taking
a hand of each, he said, 'My children, bless God for having bestowed on you
one mind! That which others seek elsewhere you will always find within your-

selves; because,' he added, 'you are one heart in two bodies.'"

"What a joyful thing it is for us to remember so perfectly every word he said!"

"When I see you listening to him, it seems as though I were looking upon
myself, dear little looking-glass that you are," said Rose, smiling, and affection-
ately kissing the forehead of Blanche; "and when he speaks, your eyes, or,
rather, our eyes, are wide, wide open, and our lips move, as though repeating
each word after him. So how could we possibly lose one word?"

"Words, too, so noble—so generous—so beautiful!"

"And did you not find, sister, that while he spoke our good thoughts sprang
up within our bosoms? If we do but remember and cherish them!"

"Never fear! They will remain in our hearts, like young birds in the nest of
their mother."

"How delightful it is, Rose, that he loves us both!"

"It could not be otherwise, there being but one heart between us. How
could he love Rose without loving Blanche?"

"Or what would become of the rejected one?"

"And besides, imagine the impossibility of choosing between us!"

"We are so exactly alike!"

"So, to spare himself so difficult a task," said Rose, laughing, "he has chosen
both!"

"And that is best, too; for he has but one to love, while he has two to love
him!"

"Provided he does not leave us until we reach Paris!"

"And provided we see him there, too!"

"To be sure; at Paris it will be especially delightful to have him with us, and
with Dagobert, in that great city. Oh, Blanche, what a splendid place it must be!"

"Yes; it must be like a city of gold."

"A city where everybody must be happy, because it is such a beautiful place."

"But shall we poor orphans dare to enter it? How they will look at us!"

"Yes, indeed; but if everybody there is happy, everybody must be good."

"And everybody will love us."

"And we shall have our friend with us—our friend with the fair hair and blue
eyes."

"He has said nothing of Paris yet to us!"

"Probably it did not occur to him. We must mention it to him to-night."

"If he seems inclined to converse; for often, you know, he appears to prefer
gazing upon us in silence, his eyes fixed upon ours."

"Yes, and then there is something in his look which reminds me of our moth-

er's."

"And as she sees us from above, how delighted must she be at what has oc-
curred!"

"Because we should not be loved as we are, if we did not deserve it."

"Little vain thing!" said Blanche, smoothing with her slender fingers her sis-
ter's rich chestnut hair. Rose, after reflecting a few minutes, said,

"Don't you think we ought to tell Dagobert all that has happened?"

"By all means, if you think so."
"We will tell him all as though we were telling our mother; why should we conceal anything from him?"

"Especially a matter which affords us both such happiness."

"Have you not fancied since we first saw our friend that our hearts have beaten quicker and stronger?"

"Indeed I have, as though they were fuller than before."

"Because our friend occupies so large a place in them."

"So then, we will tell Dagobert of all our good fortune."

"Yes."

At this moment the dog growled again.

"Sister," said Rose, pressing toward Blanche, "what can cause the dog to growl in this manner?"

"Killjoy, be quiet, and come here!" exclaimed Blanche, patting the side of the bed with her little hand. The dog arose, gave another low growl, and then came and placed his great intelligent head on the counterpane, still keeping his eyes obstinately fixed on the window. The sisters leaned toward him, and caressed his large forehead, in the middle of which rose a remarkable protuberance denoting the purity of his race.

"What is the matter, Killjoy?" said Blanche, gently pulling his great ears; "what makes you growl so, eh! good dog?"

"Poor fellow! he is always restless when Dagobert is away."

"Yes, so he is; he appears to know that he has then a double watch to keep."

"Dagobert seems away longer than usual this evening; does he not, sister?"

"He is attending to Jovial, no doubt."

"And that reminds me we forgot to bid our accustomed 'good-night' to our old Jovial."

"So we did; I am sorry."

"Poor old horse! he always seemed so pleased to lick our hands, one would think he was thanking us for coming to see him."

"Fortunately, Dagobert will be sure to bid him good-night for us."

"Good Dagobert! always thinking of us—he quite spoils us. We do nothing, while he is always toiling."

"But how can we possibly hinder him?"

"What a pity we are not rich, that we might give him a little rest."

"Ah! dear sister, we shall never be rich; we are poor orphans, and must ever remain so."

"But that medal?"

"Has no doubt some great hope attached to it, otherwise we should not have undertaken this long journey."

"Dagobert has promised to tell us all this evening."

Ere the young girl could proceed, two panes of glass in their window were broken with a loud noise.

The orphans screaming with affright, threw themselves into each other's arms, while the dog, barking furiously, rushed to the broken casement.

Pale and trembling, holding each other in a convulsive embrace, the sisters dared not look at the window, while the dog, standing erect, his forepaws resting on the window-sill, kept up a fierce barking.

"What can this be?" whispered the orphans; "and Dagobert is not here."

All at once Rose, seizing the arm of Blanche, exclaimed, "Listen! somebody is coming up the staircase!"

"It is not Dagobert's step. Hark! how heavily it comes!"

"Here, here, Killjoy! come to us—save us! save us!" cried the sisters, in an agony of terror.

Steps of extraordinary heaviness were heard slowly ascending the wooden stairs, and a singular species of rustling was heard along the slight partition which separated their chamber from the staircase, till a heavy body, falling against their door, shook it violently. Terrified beyond the power of uttering a word, the two
poor girls gazed at each other in silence. The door opened, and Dagobert entered.

At his welcome appearance Blanche and Rose embraced each other as though they had just escaped a great peril.

"What has disturbed you, my children? why this alarm?" inquired the soldier, with surprise.

"Oh! if you did but know," said Rose, with a quivering voice, for her heart and her sister's beat violently, "if you did but know what has just happened! We did not recognise your step, it seemed so heavy; and then that noise against the wainscot."

"Why, you frightened little dears! I could not trip up the stairs with the lightness of fifteen years, having my bed to carry on my back; that is to say, a sack of straw which I have just thrown down at your door, intending to sleep there as usual."

"How silly we were, sister," said Rose, "not to think of that."

And the pretty faces of the girls reassumed the bright colour which had forsaken their cheeks. During this scene the dog neither quitted his position at the window, nor ceased his barking.

"What makes Killjoy bark so there, my children?" said the old soldier.

"Indeed, we cannot tell you; some one has broken the glass, which was the beginning of our alarm."

Without answering a word, Dagobert hastened to the window, opened it quickly, pushed back the blind, and looked out.

Nothing was to be seen but the dark night. He listened, and heard only the moaning of the wind. He called the dog, "Out there, old fellow!" showing the window, "out and search!"
THE WANDERING JEW.

The noble animal made a gallant leap, and disappeared through the open window, which was but about eight feet from the ground, while Dagobert, leaning out, excited his dog, by speech and gesture, to keep up the search.

"Go seek! go seek, my fine fellow! if you find any one, seize him—your teeth are strong—and don't let go till I come."

But Killjoy found no one. They heard him running to and fro, and occasionally uttering a half suppressed cry like that of a dog in search of game.

"There is no one, then, old dog, I am sure; for if there had been, you would have him by the throat before this."

Then turning to the young girls, who were anxiously following his movements and listening to his words, he exclaimed,

"And how were these squares of glass broken, my children? were you able to see?"

"No, Dagobert, we were conversing together, when suddenly the glass fell into the room with a loud noise."

"It seemed to me," added Rose, "as though a shutter had slammed against them violently."

Dagobert closely examined the blind, and discovered a long, moveable hook for fastening it within.

"The wind is high," he said; "it has probably blown this shutter to, and the glass has been broken by the hook. Yes, yes, that must be it; besides, what object can any person have in doing such a piece of mischief?"

Then speaking to Killjoy, he added, "Come in, my brave fellow; there is nobody, is there?"

The dog replied by a bark, interpreted by the old soldier in the negative, as he immediately answered,

"Come in, then, and take one round; you will find a door open; so away with you!"

The dog obeyed; after sniffing at the window-sill, he ran off to make the tour of the buildings and return by the courtyard.

"Come, my children," said the soldier, returning to the orphans, "make your minds easy."

"It was only the wind," said Blanche.

"But it frightened us sadly," added Rose.

"I dare say it did; but I must close up that opening; a draught may come in, and you will be cold," said the soldier, turning to the uncurtained window.

After looking about for some means of remedying the mischief, he took the pelisse of reindeer-skin, hung it on the iron rod which crossed the casement, and with the skirts stopped the opening made by the broken glass.

"Thank you, Dagobert. We were uneasy at not seeing you sooner."

"Yes, indeed, Dagobert! you stayed away longer than usual."

Then for the first time perceiving the paleness and changed countenance of the old man, who still laboured under the painful excitement of his affair with Morok, Rose continued,

"But what has been the matter? How very pale you are!"

"I! No, my children. Nothing is the matter with me."

"But something is wrong with you! your countenance is quite altered. My sister is right."

"I assure you, nothing is the matter with me," said the old soldier, with considerable embarrassment, for falsehood was a novelty with him; then, as if he had found a capital pretext for his disturbed appearance, he added, "Or if, indeed, there be anything the matter, it is simply my uneasiness at finding you so much alarmed, because it has all happened through me."

"Through you?"

"Yes, if I had not lingered over my supper I should have been with you when the glass was broken, and have spared you a moment of terror."

"Then don't let us think any more about it. Will you not sit down?"
"Yes, my children; for we have something to talk about," replied the old man, drawing a chair beside the pillow of the sisters. "Now, then, are you quite awake?" he said, trying by a smile of gayety to dispel their agitation.

"Let me see, are those great eyes quite open?"

"Look, Dagobert!" said the sisters, smiling in their turn, and opening their blue eyes as wide as they could.

"That will do," said Dagobert; "there is time enough to shut them; it is scarcely nine o'clock."

"We have something, also, to tell you, Dagobert," replied Rose, after having consulted her sister with a look.

"Indeed!"

"A confidence to make."

"A confidence!"

"Yes, indeed!"

"A secret of the utmost importance," added Rose, very gravely.

"And one which concerns us both," rejoined Blanche.

"To be sure," answered the soldier; "don't I know that what concerns one concerns the other? Are you not always, as they say, two faces under a hood?"

"To be sure, when you cover our two heads with the large hood of your pelisse," said Rose, laughing.

"Why, you little mocking-birds, you never let an old man get the last word. But now for this great secret, since a secret there is."

"Speak, sister," said Blanche.

"No, no, young lady, do you speak. You are eldest to-day, and so important a matter as the great secret you have to disclose belongs to the elder. Now, then, begin. I am all attention," said the old soldier, striving by an appearance of jocularity to conceal from his young charges how sorely his spirit still writhed beneath the unpunished insults of the brute-conqueror.

Thus directed, Rose, as leader of the squadron, as Dagobert styled her, thus spoke for her sister and herself.
CHAPTER VI.

THE CONFIDENCES.

"First of all, good Dagobert," said Rose, with a charming simplicity, "as we are going to tell you a secret, you must promise that you will not scold."

"Yes," added Blanche, in a tone equally caressing, "you will not scold your children, will you?"

"Granted," replied Dagobert, gravely, "seeing that I should not know how to set about it; but what is there to scold about?"

"Why, perhaps, we ought to have told you before what we are going to tell you now."

"Listen, my dears," replied Dagobert, sententiously, after having turned over in his mind for a moment this case of conscience; "one of two things must be; either you were right or wrong in concealing anything from me. If right, why, so it is; if wrong, why, it's done; so let's say no more about it. Now, I am all ears."

Entirely set at ease by this luminous decision, Rose and her sister exchanged a smile, and the former resumed:

"Dagobert, only imagine that for two successive nights we have had a visit."

"A visit!" and the soldier drew himself up suddenly in his chair.

"Yes, a delightful visit; for he is fair."

"What, the d—l! He is fair!" exclaimed Dagobert, starting up.

"Fair, with blue eyes," added Blanche.

"The deuce! blue eyes, too;" and Dagobert again started.

"Yes, blue eyes as large as that," said Rose, placing the end of her right forefinger midway on the forefinger of her left hand.

"But, marblic ! if they were as large as this," and the veteran measured his arm from his elbow to his wrist; "if they were as large as this, it would be none the better; a fair man with blue eyes? Young ladies, what does that signify?" and Dagobert rose from his seat, displeased and disquieted.
"Ah! now Dagobert, you see you scold directly."
"And this is only the beginning," added Blanche.
"The beginning? Then there is something more—an end!"
"An end? oh, we hope not;" and Rose laughed very heartily.
"All we ask is, that it may last for ever," added Blanche, joining in her sister's mirth.

Dagobert looked at them by turns very seriously, to find, if possible, some clew to this enigma; but when he saw their lovely faces animated by open and ingenious laughter, he reflected that they could not be so mirthful if they had any serious reproach to make against themselves, and he at once abandoned every thought but that of being glad to see the orphans so gay in their precarious position, and said,

"Laugh, laugh away, my children; I like to see you laugh." Then reflecting that after all this was not exactly the reply which he ought to make to the singular recital of the young maidens, he added, in a serious voice,

"Yes, I like to see you laugh, but not when you receive fair visitors with blue eyes, mesdemoiselles; come, tell me at once that you are jesting with me: you have got up some little joke between you, haven't you?"

"No! what we have told you is quite true."
"You know we never told a falsehood," added Rose.
"They are right, they never tell untruths," said the soldier, whose perplexity was thus renewed; "but how the d—l are such visits possible? I sleep on the threshold outside your room door, Killjoy sleeps under your window, and all the blue eyes and chestnut hair in the world could get in only by the door or the window; and if they had attempted, why, Killjoy and I, who are both quick of hearing, should have given them a welcome in our own way. But, come now, my children, tell me at once, and without any jesting—pray, explain this to me."

The sisters, seeing, by the expression of Dagobert's features, that he felt a real uneasiness, would no longer try his patience, and exchanging glances, Rose took into her little handsthe coarse, broad palm of the veteran, and said,

"Well, then, do not vex yourself. We will tell you all about the visits of our friend—of Gabriel—"

"What, are you beginning again? He has a name, has he?"
"Certainly he has, and it is Gabriel."
"What a pretty name, isn't it, Dagobert? Oh, you will see him, and love our beautiful Gabriel as much as we do."

"I love your Gabriel!" said the veteran, shaking his head, "I shall love your beautiful Gabriel? Why, that's as may be; but I must know him first."

Then interrupting himself, he added, "But it's very singular; it reminds me of something."

"Of what, Dagobert?"

"Why, fifteen years ago, in the last letter that your father brought me from my wife, when he returned from France, she told me that, poor as she was, and although she had then our little Agricola on her hands (though he was growing fast), she had taken in a poor little infant who had been forsaken; that it had a face like a cherub, and was named Gabriel; and it is not very long since I had some news about him."

"From whom?"
"You shall know in good time."
"Well, then, you see, as you have a Gabriel of your own, so much the more reason why you should love our Gabriel."

"Yours—yours—let me see yours; I sit on burning coals."
"You know, Dagobert," replied Rose, "that Blanche and I always go to sleep holding each other by the hand."

"Yes, yes, I have seen you so a hundred times in your cradle. I was never tired of looking at you so; you were so pretty."

"Well, two nights ago we were sleeping, when we saw—"
"It was a dream, then!" exclaimed Dagobert. "If you were asleep, it must have been a dream."

"To be sure it was a dream. What else could you think it was?"

"Let my sister go on."

"To be sure, to be sure," said the soldier, with a sigh of extreme satisfaction. "Certainly, in every respect I felt easier in my own mind; because, you see—but it is all the same—a dream. I am glad it was a dream. But go on, my little Rose."

"As soon as we were both asleep, we had the same dream."

"What! each the same!"

"Yes, Dagobert; for the next morning, when we awoke, we told each other what we had both dreamed."

"And both had dreamed alike."

"Really! Well, it is very extraordinary, my dears; and what was this dream about?"

"Why, in this dream, Blanche and I were sitting beside each other, and there came to us a beautiful angel with a long white robe, chestnut hair, blue eyes, and a countenance so beautiful and so kind that we joined our hands as though to pray to him. Then he told us, in a sweet voice, that his name was Gabriel, and that our mother had sent him to us to be our guardian angel, and that he would never forsake us."

"And then," added Blanche, "taking one of each of our hands, and bending his face toward us, he looked at us for a very long time in silence, and very, very kindly; so kindly, indeed, that we could not take away our eyes from his."

"Yes," resumed Rose, "and it seemed as if his look alternately drew us to him, and went to our very heart. Then, to our great grief, Gabriel left us, saying that the next night we should see him again."

"And did he appear the next night?"

"To be sure, and you may judge how anxious we were to go to sleep, that we might learn whether or no our friend would return to us in our slumber."

"Umph! that reminds me, mesdemoiselles, that you rubbed your eyes very much the night before last," said Dagobert, rubbing his forehead, "you pretended to be so very sleepy; and I'll wager that it was to get rid of me the sooner, that you might go to your beautiful dream."

"Yes, Dagobert."

"You could not say to me, as you can to Killjoy, 'Go to bed, sir!' And did your friend, Gabriel, return?"

"Certainly; but this time he talked a great deal to us, and in our mother's name gave us such good and tender advice, that Rose and I have done nothing but recall to each other everything that our guardian angel had uttered, as well as his face and his look."

"That reminds me, mesdemoiselles, that yesterday you were whispering to each other all along the road, and when I asked you anything you answered me at random."

"Yes, Dagobert, we were thinking of Gabriel; and we both love him as much as he loves us—"

"But is he devoted to you two only?"

"Was not our mother devoted to us two only? And you, Dagobert, are not you devoted to us two only?"

"True, true; but do you know that I shall become jealous of this gentleman?"

"You are our friend by day, and he by night."

"But, see, if you talk of him all day and dream of him all night, what will be left for me?"

"There will be left for you the two orphans whom you love so dearly," said Rose. "And who have only you to look to in the wide world," added Blanche, caressingly.

"Ah! ah! that's the way you coax the old soldier. Well, well, my darlings,"
added the veteran, tenderly, "I am content with my lot, and I leave you to your Gabriel. I knew that Killjoy and I might sleep quietly enough. Besides, it is not so very astonishing; your first dream had made an impression on you, and as you talked together so much about it, why you dreamed it all over again, and so I should not be astonished if you saw him for the third time, this beautiful night bird—"

"Oh, Dagobert, do not laugh. True, they were only dreams, but they seem as if they were sent by our mother. Did she not tell us that young orphan girls had guardian angels? Well, Gabriel is our guardian angel, and will protect us, and you also."

"It would be very kind of him to think of me; but, my dear girls, I prefer as my aide-de-camp in protecting you friend Killjoy; he is not so fair as an angel, but his teeth are stronger, and that is more to the purpose."

"Ah! you are very tiresome, Dagobert, with your jokes."

"Yes, you really are; you laugh at everything."

"Yes, it is astonishing how gay I am. I laugh like old Jovial, without showing my teeth; but do not scold me, my children. I was wrong; the thought of your sainted mother is mingled with this dream, and you are right to speak of it seriously. Besides," he added, with a grave air, "there's sometimes truth in dreams. In Spain, two comrades of mine of the empress's dragoons dreamed, the night before they died, that they were poisoned by the monks, and so they were. If you keep on dreaming about your beautiful angel Gabriel, why—you see—why, if it amuses you, why not? You have not much entertainment during the day, and so your sleep, at least, ought to be diverting. Now I have a good deal to tell you, and about your mother; but promise me not to be sad."

"Certainly we do; when we think of her we are not sad, only serious."

"Well, well; for fear of making you sorrowful, I have put off as long as I could telling you what your poor mother would have told you when you had ceased to be children, but she died before that time; and, then, what she would have told you would almost have broken her heart, and mine also; so I delayed my confidence as long as I could, and I made the pretext of not telling anything before the day when we crossed the field of battle in which your father was taken prisoner—I gained time by that—but now the moment has arrived, and there is no retreat."

"We listen, Dagobert," replied the young girls, with an attentive and melancholy air.

After a moment's silence, during which he recollected himself, the veteran said to the young girls,

"Your father, General Simon, was the son of a mechanic, who remained a mechanic, for, in spite of all that the general could do or say, the good man obstinately clung to his employment; he had a head of iron and a heart of gold, just like his son. You may suppose, my children, that if your father, who enlisted as a common soldier, became a general and a count of the Empire, that it was not without toil and glory."

"Count of the Empire, Dagobert? what's that?"

"Oh! a folly, a title which the emperor gave over and above the promotion—a something to say to the people, whom he loved, because he belonged to them. My children, if you like to play at nobility, as the old noblesse did, well, then, you are noble. If you like to play at kings, I'll make kings of you—try everything. There's nothing too high or too good for you—so feast on what you prefer."

"Kings!" said the little girls, clasping their hands in wonder.

"More than kings, if that's possible. Ah! he was not selfish with crowns, the emperor. I had a bedfellow, a good soldier, who became a king; well, we all liked that; it flattered us, because if it was one it was another; and it was playing at this game that your father became a count; but, count or no count, he was the handsomest and bravest general in the army."

"He was very handsome, Dagobert, was he not? Our mother always said so."

"Oh! indeed he was, but he was not a fair man, like your guardian angel.
Imagine a splendid, dark-complexioned man, in full uniform; a man to dazzle your eyes, and put fire into your heart; with him a soldier would have charged on the bon Dieu himself, that is, you will understand, if the bon Dieu had so will ed," added Dagobert, correcting himself, and desirous in no way to wound the simple faith of the orphans.

"And our father was as good as he was brave, was he not, Dagobert?"

"Good, my darlings! he? I believe so! He could bend a horse-shoe between his hands as you could bend a card, and the day he was made prisoner he had cut down the Prussian artillery-men at their very guns. With his courage and strength, how could he help being good? It is nearly nineteen years ago that hereabout, in the place I pointed out to you before we entered the village, the general fell from his horse dangerously wounded. As his orderly, I followed him, and ran to his succour. Five minutes afterward we were taken prisoners, and by whom? By a Frenchman."

"A Frenchman?"

"Yes; an emigrant marquis, a colonel in the Russian service," replied Dagobert, bitterly. "So when this marquis said, as he advanced to the general, 'Surrender, sir, to a countryman,' your father replied, 'A Frenchman who fights against France is no countryman of mine—he is a traitor, and I do not surrender to traitors!' and, wounded as he was, he dragged himself to a Russian grenadier, and gave him his sabre, saying, 'I surrender to you, my brave fellow;' the marquis turned pale with rage."

The orphans looked at each other proudly, a rich crimson suffused their cheeks, and they exclaimed, "Brave father! brave father!"

"Ah!" said Dagobert, caressing his moustache with a delighted air, "we may see the soldier's blood in the girls' veins." Then he continued, "Well, we were prisoners; the last horse of the general's had been killed under him, and he was obliged to mount Jovial, who had not been wounded that day. Well, we reached Warsaw; there the general met your mother, who was called the 'Pearl of Warsaw,' and that name tells all. So he who loved all that was good and handsome soon fell in love with her; she loved him in return, but her parents had promised her to another, and that other was no other than—"

Dagobert could not continue, for Rose, ut tering a piercing shriek, pointed to the window in an agony of fear.
CHAPTER VII.

THE TRAVELLER.

Dagobert rose quickly at the cry of the young girl.

"What is it, Rose?"

"There—there!" said she, pointing to the window; "I thought I saw a hand move the pelisse."

Rose had not finished these words before Dagobert hastened to the window, which he opened quickly, after having taken away the cloak which was hung up before it.

It was very dark without, and the wind blew violently.

The soldier listened, but heard nothing.

He then took the candle from the table, and endeavoured to throw its rays outside by covering the flame with his hand.

He saw nothing.

Closing the window again, he persuaded himself that a gust of wind had moved and deranged the cloak. Rose must have been deceived.

"Don't be alarmed, my dears. The wind is very high, and must have stirred the corner of the cloak."

"Yet I fancied I saw the fingers which moved it on one side," said Rose, in a tremulous voice.

"I was looking at Dagobert," said Blanche, "and so did not see anything."

"There was nothing to see, my children, that's quite evident. The window is at least eight feet above the ground; only a giant could reach it, or a ladder must be used. If there had been a ladder, there could not have been time to remove it before I reached the window, which I did as soon as Rose cried out; and when I held the candle out I could not see anything."

"I must have been deceived," said Rose.

"You see, sister, it could only have been the wind," added Blanche.

"I am very sorry for interrupting you, Dagobert!"

"Never mind that," replied the soldier, musing. "I am sorry that Killjoy has not returned, for he would have kept watch at the window, and that would have given you confidence; but, no doubt, he has smelled out the stable of his comrade Jovial, and has gone in to say good-night to him. I have a good mind to go out and look for him."

"Oh, no! Dagobert, do not leave us alone," exclaimed the young girls; "we should be so frightened."

"Besides, I dare say Killjoy will not be long before he returns, and we shall soon hear him scratching at the door. Well, then, I'll go on with my story," said Dagobert, as he seated himself at the foot of the bed, with his face toward the window.

"Well, the general was a prisoner at Warsaw, and in love with your mother, whom they wished to marry to another. In 1814, we learned that the war was
at an end. The emperor was exiled to the Isle of Elba, and the Bourbons were restored; and, in concert with the Russians and Prussians, who had brought them back, they had exiled the emperor to the Island of Elba. When your mother heard that, she said to the general, 'The war is ended—you are free! The emperor is in misfortune; you owe all to him—go to him! I know not when we shall meet again; but I will never marry any one but you. I am yours till death!' Before he started, the general sent for me. 'Dagobert,' said he, 'remain here. Perhaps Mademoiselle Eva may require your aid to fly from her family if they persecute her—our correspondence will pass through your hands. In Paris I shall see your wife—your son; and I will comfort them. I will tell them what you are to me—a friend!''

"Always the same!" said Rose, in a tender voice, looking at Dagobert.

"Good to the father and the mother as to the children!" added Blanche.

"To love the one was to love the others," replied the veteran. "So, then, the general was in the Isle of Elba with the emperor. I at Warsaw, concealed near your mother's house, received letters, and conveyed them secretly to her. In one of these—and I say it with pride, my dears—the general told me that the emperor remembered me."

"You! What! he knew you, then?"

"Yes, a little bit, I flatter myself. 'Ah! Dagobert,' said he to your father, who had mentioned me, 'a grenadier of my old horse-guard!—a soldier of Egypt and Italy, furrowed with wounds; an old cut-and-slash, whom I decorated with my own hand at Wagram: I have not forgotten him!' Dame! my children, when your mother read that to me I cried like a schoolboy!"

"The emperor! Oh! what a beautiful golden face he had in your silver cross with the red ribbon which you used to show us sometimes when we were good!"

"That was the very cross he gave me with his own hand. It is my relic—mine! and it is there in that bag with all we have in the world—our little purse and our papers. But to return to your mother. When I carried to her the general's letters, and talked with her about him, that was a great comfort to her, for she suffered a great deal. Oh! yes; a very great deal! Her relatives tormented her to no purpose: she always told them, 'I will never marry any one but General Simon!' She was a determined spirit—resigned, but full of courage. One day she received a letter from the general. He had sailed from Elba with the emperor. The war began again; a short war, but heroic like the others, and sublime in the devotion of the soldiers. Your father fought like a lion, and his brigade fought like him. It was no longer bravery—it was downright rage."

The cheeks of the veteran grew scarlet, and he felt once more the heroic emotions of his youth; he recalled, in fancy, the sublime ardour of the Republican wars, the triumphs of the Empire, the first and last days of his military life.

The orphans, daughters of a warrior and a high-spirited mother, were excited by these energetic words, instead of being intimidated by their roughness; their hearts beat high, and their cheeks became flushed.

"What happiness for us to be the daughters of so brave a father!" exclaimed Blanche.

"What happiness, and what honour, my children; for on the evening after the fight of Ligny, the emperor, to the joy of the whole army, created your father on the field of battle Duke of Ligny and Marshal of the Empire!"

"Marshal of the Empire!" said Rose, amazed, though hardly understanding the purport of these words.

"Duke of Ligny!" added Blanche, equally surprised.

"Yes, Pierre Simon, the workman's son, a duke and marshal! He could not be higher unless he was a king," continued Dagobert, proudly. "That's the way the emperor treated the sons of the people, and so the people were always for him. It was no use for any to say, 'Ah! but your emperor only considers you as food for powder!' 'Pooh! why another would make of us food for misery,' replied the people, who are no fools. 'I prefer gunpowder and the chance of being a captain, colonel, marshal, king—or invalid: that's better than starving
THE WANDERING JEW.

with want, cold, or old age, on straw in an old garret, after having toiled forty years for other people."

"What! in France—in Paris—in that beautiful city, are there miserable creatures who die of want and misery, Dagobert?"

"Yes, even in Paris, my dears; and so I repeat that gunpowder is better, for with that one has the chance of being made a peer and a marshal, like your father. When I say peer and marshal, I am right and I am wrong, for afterward he did not retain that title and rank; because, after Ligny, there was a day of deep mourning, very deep, on which old soldiers like me, the general has told me, wept—yes, wept—the evening of that battle—of that day, my children, called Waterloo."

There was in the simple words of Dagobert an accent of sorrow so deep that the orphans trembled.

"There are," resumed the soldier, with a deep sigh, "days accursed as these. This day, at Waterloo, the general fell, covered with wounds, at the head of a division of the guard. After a long time he was cured, and demanded leave to go to St. Helena, another island at the end of the world, where the English had sent the emperor to torture him at their ease; for if he was fortunate at first, he suffered a great deal of misery in his after life, my dears."

"Oh, Dagobert, how sad! you make us weep."

"And there's reason for tears. The emperor endured so much, so very much. His heart bled cruelly. Unfortunately, the general was not with him at St. Helena, or he would have been one more to console him: they would not let him go. Then, exasperated, like many more, against the Bourbons, he organized a conspiracy to recall the emperor's son. He wanted to gain over a regiment composed almost entirely of old soldiers devoted to him. He went into a city of Picardy, where this regiment was in garrison, but the conspiracy had been discovered. At the moment when the general arrived there, he was arrested and led before the colonel of the regiment: and this colonel," said the veteran, after a minute's silence, "do you know who he was again? But, bah! it is too long a story to tell now, and would only sadden you. Well, then, it was a man whom your father had long had reason to hate heartily. Well, they were face to face, and the general said, 'If you are not a coward, you will put me at liberty for one hour, and we will fight till one falls, for I hate you for that, I despise you for the other, and still more for this.' The colonel accepted the offer, and released your father until the next morning, when there was a bloody duel, the end of which was, that the colonel was left for dead on the plain."
“Good Heavens!”

“The general was wiping his sword, when a friend stepped up and told him that he had barely time to escape. In short, he fortunately got out of France; yes, fortunately, for fifteen days afterward he was condemned to death as a conspirator.”

“Oh, Heaven, what misfortunes!”

“There was good fortune in this misfortune; your mother kept firmly to her promise, and was waiting for him. She had written to him, ‘The emperor first, and me afterward!’ As he could do nothing more, either for the emperor or his son, the general, exiled from France, reached Warsaw. Your mother’s parents had died; she was therefore free, and they were married, and I was one of the witnesses of their marriage.”

“You are right, Dagobert; that was really good fortune amid misfortune.”

“Well, at last they were happy; but, like all noble hearts, the happier they were themselves, the more they pitied the miseries of others—and there was much to pity in Warsaw. The Russians were again beginning to treat the Poles as slaves, and your dear mother, although of French origin, was a Pole in heart and feeling. She boldly said out what others dared not even whisper; the unhappy called her their good angel, and that was enough to draw upon her the suspicious eye of the Russian governor. One day a colonel of the lancers, a friend of the general’s, a brave and worthy man, was condemned to exile in Siberia for a military conspiracy against the Russians. He escaped, and your father gave him shelter. This was discovered, and the next night a body of Cossacks, led by an officer, and followed by a post-carriage, came to our door, surprised the general in bed, and carried him off.”

“Oh, Heaven! what did they do with him?”

“Conduct him out of Russia, with a peremptory order never again to set foot in it under pain of imprisonment for life. His last words were, ‘Dagobert, I trust to your keeping my wife and child;’ for your mother was expecting your birth soon after. Well, in spite of that she was exiled to Siberia. It was an opportunity for getting rid of her; she did so much good in Warsaw that they were afraid of her. Not content with exile, they confiscated all her property. The only favour they would grant was that I should accompany her; and had it not been for Jovial, whom the general had made me keep, she would have been forced to make the journey on foot. Well, in this way, she on the horse, and I walking by her side, as I do by yours, my children, we reached a miserable village, where, three months afterward, you were born, poor little things!”

“And our father?”

“He dared not return into Russia, and it was impossible for your mother to fly with two children, and equally impossible for the general to write to her, because he did not know where she was.”

“And did you never hear from him again?”

“Yes, my dears, once we heard—”

“By whom?”

After a moment’s silence, Dagobert replied, with a singular expression of countenance,

“By whom? Why, by one who did not resemble other men: yes; and that you may understand what I say, I must tell you, as briefly as I can, an extraordinary adventure which happened to your father during the battle of Waterloo. He had received from the emperor an order to storm a battery which was dealing destruction on our lines. After many unsuccessful attempts, the general, heading a regiment of cuirassiers, dashed at the battery, according to his usual practice, to cut down the men at their very guns. He found himself on his horse exactly before the mouth of a cannon, of which all the artillery-men were killed or wounded; one, however, had strength enough to rise on one knee, and hold his portfire to the touch-hole of the piece, at the very moment when the general was only ten paces from the mouth of the gun.”
"Good Lord, what danger our father was in!"

"Never, as he told me, was he in greater; for the moment he saw the artillery-man fire the gun it went off; but, at that very moment, a tall man, dressed like a peasant, whom your father had not before remarked, threw himself before the cannon's mouth—"

"Ah! wretched man! What a horrid death!"

"Yes," said Dagobert, pensively. "That ought to have happened; he should have been shattered into a thousand bits, yet he was not—"

"What do you say?"

"What the general told me; 'At the moment when the gun fired,' he has often repeated, 'by a movement of involuntary horror, I closed my eyes, that I might not see the mutilated corpse of the unhappy man who sacrificed himself to save me. When I opened them, what should I see, in the midst of the smoke, but this tall man, standing erect and calm on the same spot, casting a sad but sweet glance on the artillery-man, who, with one knee on the ground, and his body thrown back, gazed upon him with as much terror as if he had been the devil himself; after this, the battle raging hotly, it was impossible for me again to find this man,' added your father."

"Dagobert, is this possible?"

"That's what I inquired of the general. He replied that he never could explain this fact, equally strange and real. Your father was much struck by the features of this man, who appeared, as he told me, about thirty years of age, with very black eyebrows, which united in the centre of his forehead, making, as it were, only one large brow from one temple to the other, so that his forehead seemed to be crossed by a black mark: remember this my dears, you will know why presently."
"Yes, Dagobert, we will not forget it," said the astonished girls. "How very strange, a man with his forehead crossed in black."

"Listen now. The general had been, as I told you, left for dead at Waterloo. During the night, which he passed on the field of battle in a sort of delirium, caused by the fever of his wounds, there seemed to appear to him, in the moonlight, the same man who leaned over him, contemplating his features with great tenderness and sorrow, and who, staunching the blood of his wounds, did all in his power to recover him. But as your father, whose senses were wandering, rejected his care, saying, that, after such a defeat, there was nothing left him but to die, it seemed to him that the man said, 'You must live for Eva!' That was your mother's name, whom the general had left at Warsaw to rejoin the emperor."

"How very strange, Dagobert! and did our father ever see that man again?"

"He did! it was he who brought tidings of the general to your poor mother."

"When was that? we never saw him."

"Do you recollect that on the morning of your dear mother's death you had gone with old Fedora to the forest of pines?"

"Oh yes!" replied Rose mournfully, "to search for the wild flower our mother was so fond of."

"Dear mother!" murmured Blanche, "who could have anticipated when we left her so well in the morning, the dreadful blow we were to experience at night?"

"Who, indeed, my child? As for me, that morning I was singing, as I worked in the garden, and as little dreaming of sorrow as yourselves, when suddenly I heard a voice inquire in French, 'Is this the village of Milošk?' I turned, and perceived a stranger standing before me; instead of replying to his question, I looked steadfastly at him and retreated several steps in astonishment."

"And why?"

"The individual was very tall, very pale, with a high, broad forehead; his black eyebrows had grown together, and seemed to cross his forehead with a black mark."

"This, then, was the man who had twice stood beside our father in battle!"

"Yes, it was he.""

"But, Dagobert," said Rose, thoughtfully, "how long is it since these battles?"

"About sixteen years."

"And this stranger whom you thought you recognised, how old was he?"

"Scarcely thirty years."

"Then how could he be the same man who, sixteen years before, had fought in the same campaign with our father?"

"You are right," said Dagobert, shrugging his shoulders; "I must have been deceived by some casual resemblance; yet—"

"At least, if he was really the same, his age must have stood still all those years."

"But did you not ask him if he had formerly succoured our parent?"

"In my first confusion of ideas I did not think of it; and he stayed so short a time that I had no farther opportunity. Well, he inquired for the village of Milošk."

"'You are there at present,' I replied, 'but how did you know that I was a Frenchman?'"

"'By hearing you sing as I passed,' he answered; 'but can you tell me where Madame Simon, wife to the general of that name, resides?'"

"'This is her house, sir.'"

"Evidently perceiving the surprise his visit occasioned me, he surveyed me for several minutes in silence, then holding out his hand to me, he said,"

"'You are the friend of General Simon—I may say his best friend!'"

"You may judge, my children, of my amazement."

"'And how do you know this, sir?'"
"From frequently hearing the general speak of you in terms of grateful recollection."

"You have seen the general?"

"Yes, long since, in India; I also am his friend. I bring tidings from him to his wife, of whose exile in Siberia I was aware. At Tobolsk I learned that she inhabited this village. Lead me to her."

"Kind traveller, I love him already," said Rose.

"For he was our father's friend," added Blanche.

"I begged him to wait a few minutes while I apprized your mother of his visit, fearing that any surprise might be injurious to her. Five minutes afterward he was admitted into her presence."

"And what sort of person was he?"

"Very tall, with long, black hair. He wore a dark travelling cloak, with a fur cap."

"And was he handsome?"

"Yes, my children, very handsome; but his look was so sad that it cut me to the heart."

"Poor man! some heavy grief, no doubt!"

"Your mother remained with him a little while, when she summoned me to say she had received good news from the general. She was in tears, and had before her a large packet of papers, forming a kind of journal, which the general wrote for her every evening to console himself. Unable to converse with her, he poured out on paper all he would have said had she been present."

"And where are these papers, Dagobert?"

"There, in my wallet, with my cross and our purse— one of these days I will give them to you. I have merely taken out a few leaves which you will read directly; you will see then why I have selected them."

"Had our father been long in India?"

"From the little your mother told me, it appears that the general had gone thither after fighting with the Greeks against the Turks, for he ever loved to side with the weak against the strong. Upon his arrival in India, he commenced a bitter strife against the English, who had massacred our countrymen when prisoners of war, and tortured our emperor at St. Helena. This was doubly a legitimate war; while wreaking his vengeance on a nation he detested, he was enabled to assist a good cause."

"What cause did he assist?"

"That of one of the poor native princes, whose territories the English ravage, until finally they seize them without a shadow of justice. Here, again, you see, my children, your father was battling for the weak against the strong. In a few months he had so well disciplined and instructed the twelve or fifteen thousand troops of the Indian sovereign, that in two battles they destroyed the English, who had not reckoned, you see, on his interference. But stay—a few pages from his journal will tell you more and better than I can. Besides, you will there read a name you must never forget; and for that reason I have selected this passage."

"Oh, what happiness!" exclaimed Rose, "to read the very words traced by our father's hand; it is almost the same as hearing him."

"As though he were beside us," added Blanche.

So speaking, the sisters eagerly extended their hands to receive the papers Dagobert drew from his pocket.

Then, with a simultaneous impulse, equally touching and beautiful, each silently kissed the handwriting of their father.

"You will perceive, my children, in reading these pages, why it was I felt so much surprised when you told me that your guardian angel was named Gabriel. But read, read," continued the soldier, observing the astonished looks of the sisters. "Only, I ought to tell you beforehand, that when your father wrote these lines he had not encountered the traveller who brought the papers to your mother."
Rose, sitting on the bed, took the leaves and commenced reading in a soft and tremulous voice.
Blanche, her head reclining on her sister's shoulder, listened with profound attention, the motion of her lips showing that she, too, read mentally.
CHAPTER VIII.

FRAGMENTS OF GENERAL SIMON'S JOURNAL.

"Bivouac of the Mountains of Ava."

"20th February, 1530."

"Each time that I add to the sheets of my journal, now written in the heart of India, where my wandering destiny has thrown me—a journal which, perhaps, thou, my ever-loved Eva, wilt never read—I experience sensations painful, yet soothing to me; for it is a consolation thus to commune with thee; yet my regrets are never more bitter than when I thus speak to, but do not see thee.

"If ever these pages shall come before thine eyes, thy generous heart will beat at the name of that intrepid being to whom I this day owe my life, to whom I shall, perhaps, owe the happiness of one day again beholding thee and our child—for it lives, does it not, our dear child? I must hope so, for else, dear wife, what must be your life, spent in lonely exile? Dear angel, it must be now fourteen years of age. How fares it? It resembles thee, dearest—does it not? It has thy large and lovely blue eyes. Fool that I am! How many times in this long journal have I not already asked this question, to which thou canst not reply? How many times more shall I ask it? Thou must teach our child to pronounce and love the name, however strange, of Djalma."

"Djalma!" said Rose, who, with moistened eyes, interrupted the reading.

"Djalma!" repeated Blanche, who shared her sister's emotion; "oh! we shall never forget this name."

"And you will be right, my children; for it seems it is that of a famous, though very young soldier. Go on, my little Rose."

"I have told you, dearest Eva, in the preceding sheets, of the two good days which we had during this month. The troops of my old friend, the Indian prince, improving daily in their European discipline, have done wonders. We have overthrown the English, and compelled them to evacuate a part of this unhappy country, invaded by them in contempt of all right, all justice; and which they have ravaged mercilessly, for here English warfare is treason, pillage, and massacre. This morning, after a difficult march over rocks and mountains, we learned by our spies that re-enforcements had reached the enemy, who was preparing to assume the offensive. They were only a few leagues off, and an engagement was inevitable. My old friend, the Indian prince, the father of my preserver, was eager for the onset. The affair began at three o'clock, and was fierce and bloody. As I saw a moment of indecision in our lines—for we were much inferior in num-
bers, and the English re-enforcements were quite fresh—I charged at the head of our small reserve of cavalry.

"The old prince was in the centre, fighting, as he always fights, bravely. His son, Djalma, hardly eighteen years of age, and as brave as his father, was at my side, when, in the hottest of the fight, my horse was killed, and rolled with me down a bank, on the edge of which we were at the moment, and I was so completely under him that, for a moment, I thought my thigh was broken."

"Poor father!" said Blanche.

"Fortunately, this time nothing serious did happen to him, thanks to Djalma. You see, Dagobert, I remember the name," remarked Rose, who then continued,

"The English believed that if they killed me (very flattering to me) they should easily subdue the prince's army; an officer and five or six irregular soldiers—brutal and cowardly brigands—seeing me roll down the ravine, rushed after to slay me. In the midst of the fire and smoke, our gallant fellows had not seen my fall; but Djalma never quitted me, and, leaping down the bank to my rescue, by his cool intrepidity saved my life. With one of the double barrels of his carbine he laid the officer dead, and with the other broke the arm of the miscreant who had stabbed my left hand with his bayonet; but my Eva need not feel alarm; it is only a scratch—"

"Wounded—wounded again!" cried Blanche, clasping her hands, and interrupting her sister.

"Be not alarmed," said Dagobert; "it was only a scratch, as the general said. He used to call the wounds which did not prevent him from fighting 'white wounds.' He always found out the right word for everything."

"Djalma, seeing me wounded," continued Rose, wiping her eyes, "used his heavy carbine for a club, and drove back my assailants; but, at this moment, I saw a fresh adversary concealed behind a clump of bamboos, which commanded the ravine, who, placing the barrel of his long fusil between two branches, blew on his slow match, took deliberate aim at Djalma, and the brave youth received a ball in his chest before my cries could put him on his guard. Feeling himself struck, he retreated, in spite of himself, for two paces, and fell on his knee, but still keeping erect and trying to make for me a rampart of his body. Conceive my rage, my despair! Unfortunately, my efforts to disengage myself were paralyzed by the excruciating pain which I felt in my thigh. Powerless and weaponless, I looked for some moments at this unequal conflict.

"Djalma had lost a great deal of blood—his arm grew weak; and one of the skirmishers, encouraging the others with his voice, took from his belt a large and heavy axe, which would decapitate a man at a single blow, when, at the moment, a dozen of our men reached the spot. Djalma was delivered in his turn, and they disengaged me. At the end of a quarter of an hour I was able to mount another horse, and we eventually gained the day, though with heavy loss. To-morrow the affair must be decisive, for I can see the fires of the English bivouac from this spot. Thus my Eva will see how I am indebted for life to this youth. Fortunately, his wound is harmless, the ball having glanced along his ribs."

"The brave lad would say, with the general, 'only a white wound,'" said Dagobert.

"Now, my beloved Eva," Rose read on, "you must know, at least, by my recital, the intrepid Djalma, who is scarcely eighteen years of age—in one word, I will paint to you his noble and courageous nature: in his country they sometimes bestow surnames, and, from fifteen years old, he has been called 'the Generous.' Generous, indeed, in heart and soul. By another custom of the country, as peculiar as it is touching, this surname has ascended to his father, who is termed 'the Father of the Generous,' and he might well be styled the Just, for the old Indian is a rare specimen of chivalrous loyalty and proud independence. He might, as so many other poor princes in this land have done, humble himself before the execrable English despotism, treat for the sale of his sovereignty, and yield to force; but no—'My whole right, or a grave in the mountains where I was born!' such is
his motto. It is not boasting, it is the consciousness of what is right and just. 'But you will be crushed in the struggle,' I have said to him. His reply was, 'My friend, if to compel you to a disgraceful action you were told to yield or die?' From this day I fully understood him, and have devoted myself, body and soul, to the cause—the sacred cause—of the weak against the strong. You see, my Eva, that Djalma is worthy of such a sire. This young Indian's courage is so heroic, so intense, that he fights like a young Greek of the age of Leonidas, with a bare breast, while the other soldiers of his country, who in time of peace go with the shoulders, arms, and breasts uncovered, put on a thick war-coat for battle. The rash intrepidity of this youth reminds me of the king of Naples, of whom I have often spoken to you, and whom I have seen a hundred times charge at the head of his troops with no other weapon than a riding-whip.'

"Ah! he is one of those I told you of," said Dagobert, "with whom the emperor amused himself in making kings. I saw a Prussian officer, a prisoner, whose face that wild king of Naples had marked with his whip. It was black and blue. The Prussian swore he was dishonoured, and that he would rather have had a sabre cut. I believe him. That devil of a monarch; he was good for only one thing, to march straight up to the cannon. As soon as a cannonade began, one would think it called him by all his names, and he ran up to it, saying, 'Here I am.' If I speak of him to you, my dears, it is because he often said, 'No one can cut through a square that bids defiance to General Simon or myself.'"

Rose proceeded:

"I have remarked, with pain, that, notwithstanding his youth, Djalma often had fits of deep melancholy. Sometimes I have detected between him and his father singular looks, and, in spite of our mutual regard, I believe that they keep from me some painful family secret, if I may judge from a few words which at times escape from them; it involves some singular event, to which their imaginations, naturally excited and romantic, have given a supernatural character.

"But you know, my love, that we ourselves have lost the right of ridiculing credulity in others; I, since the campaign of France, wherein that singular adventure occurred to me, which I have never been able to solve—"
"He means that of the man who threw himself before the mouth of the cannon," said Dagobert.

"And you," the young girl resumed her perusal, "my dear Eva, since the visits of that young and lovely woman, whom your mother said she had seen at her mother's forty years before."

The orphans looked at the soldier with astonishment.

"Your mother never mentioned that to me, nor the general either; it's as strange to me as to you."

Rose resumed, with much emotion and increasing curiosity:

"After all, my dear Eva, things very extraordinary in appearance are often explained by some chance, some resemblance, or some caprice of nature. The marvellous being always only some optical illusion, or the result of an imagination already deeply impressed, a time comes when that which seemed superhuman or supernatural turns out an event the most probable and explicable in the world; and so I have no doubt that what we call our prodigies will, one day or other, come before us naturally explained."

"You see, my children, that what at first is wonderful is afterward very simple, though that does not prevent us from being a long time before we find out its meaning."

"As our father says so, we must believe it, and not be surprised; must we not, sister?"

"Of course, because, some day or other, it will be all explained."

"Now," said Dagobert, after brief reflection, "a comparison. You two are so much alike, you know, that any one who was not in the habit of seeing you every day would easily mistake one for the other. Well, if he did not know—if I may say so—that you were double, only see how astonished he would be. I am quite sure that he would think the devil was in it, a propos of good little angels as you are."

"You see right, Dagobert; and in this way, as our father says, many things may be accounted for;" and Rose continued:

"My dear Eva, it is with no little pride I find that Djalma has French blood in his veins: his father married, many years ago, a young girl whose family, of French extraction, was long settled in Batavia, in the isle of Java. This similarity of position between my old friend and myself has made our friendship the more close; for your family also, Eva, is of French descent, and long since established in a strange land. Unfortunately, the prince, some years since, lost the wife he adored.

"Alas! my beloved, my hand trembles as I write. I am weak—I am a child—my heart is wounded, broken. If such a misfortune should occur to me! Oh Heaven! and our child, what would become of it without you—without me—in that barbarous land? No! no! the fear is absurd; but what horrid torture is uncertainty! Where, then, are you? What are you doing? What has become of you? Forgive these gloomy thoughts, which come over me so often in spite of myself! Cheerless moments—desolate—for, when they come, I say, 'I am a proscribed man, unhappy; but still, at least, at the farther end of the world, there are two hearts that still beat for me, thine, my Eva, and that of our child!'"

Rose could hardly finish these last words; her voice was almost choked by sobs.

There was, in truth, a sad coincidence between the fears of the general and the mournful reality; and what could be more affecting than these outpourings written on the eve of a battle, by the light of the bivouac fire, by a soldier, who thus sought to allay the anguish of a separation so painful, but which, at the moment, he did not know to be eternal?

"Poor general! he knows not our misfortune," said Dagobert, after a moment's silence; "nor does he know that, instead of one child, he has two—that will be some comfort to him; but now, Blanche, go on with the reading; I fear your sister will be tired; she is too much excited, and, besides, it is only right that you should share the pleasure and the pain."
Blanche took the letter, and Rose, wiping her eyes, which overflowed with tears, leaned, in her turn, her lovely head on her sister's shoulder, who thus proceeded,

"I am calmer now, my loved one. I ceased to write for a moment. I have driven my dark thoughts away, and now let us resume our conversation.

"After having so much at length discoursed to you of India, I will say a word or two of Europe. Yesterday evening one of our men, a safe hand, came to our advanced post, and brought me a letter from France, which had been forwarded to Calcutta. I have news from my father, and my uneasiness is removed. This letter is dated in August last, and I find that others are lost or delayed, for, in almost two years, I have not had one, and was therefore deeply anxious about him. Excellent father, always the same—age has not weakened his mind; and his health is as robust as ever, he tells me. He is still a mechanic, and rejoices in it as much as ever; always faithful to his stern Republican bias, and full of hope yet; for, said he, 'the time is at hand,' and these last words were underlined. He also gave me, as you will see, excellent accounts of the family of old Dagobert our friend. Believe me, dearest Eva, it is a diminution of my anxiety to reflect that you have so true a man near you, for well I know that he would never forsake you in your exile. What sterling worth lies hid beneath his rough exterior. I can suppose how tenderly he loves our child!"

At this Dagobert was seized with a fit of coughing, looked down and searched diligently for a small checked handkerchief which was lying across his knees. He remained in his stooping position for some brief space, then, recovering himself, commenced stroking his mustache.

"How well our dear father knows you!"

"And how rightly he foresaw that you would love us!"

"Enough, enough! dear children, don't let us say any more about that; but go on to where the general mentions my little Agricola and Gabriel, the adopted son of my wife—dear wife, when I think that perhaps in three months—but proceed, my dear children. Read, read," added the soldier, striving to repress his emotion.

"Spite of myself, dear Eva, I cherish the hope that these pages will one day reach you, and with that idea I write what I think may also be interesting to Dagobert, and I know well how delighted he will be to receive tidings of his family. My father, who still superintends the business of the excellent Mr. Hardy, informs me that this latter has taken Dagobert's son into his workshop, and Agricola is employed under my father, who is delighted with him; he speaks of him as a sturdy, well-grown youth, who wields the smith's hammer as though it were a feather. As light-hearted as industrious and intelligent, he is the best workman in the establishment; yet, after his day's toil is over, his great delight is to return to his mother, whom he worships, and compose verses and patriotic songs of extraordinary merit; his poems, full of energy and lofty thought, are sung in all the workshops of Paris, and warm the coldest hearts."

"Oh! how proud you must be of your son, Dagobert," said Rose, with admiration; "he composes songs, you see."

"Yes, it is indeed a fine thing to hear all this; but what principally delights me is to learn how much he loves his mother, and that he is skilful and strong in the use of the hammer. As for the songs, before he can write such as the 'Waking of the People' and the 'Marseillaise,' he will have pounded a good batch of iron; but where the deuce can he have learned all that? At the school, I suppose, where, as you will see, he goes with his foster-brother, Gabriel."

At this name, which recalled to the sisters the imaginary being whom they styled their 'guardian angel, their curiosity was excited, and Blanche, with redoubled attention, read as follows:

"Agricola's adopted brother, the poor deserted child so generously protected by the wife of our excellent Dagobert, is, I am told, the most perfect contrast to himself, not as regards the goodness of his heart, for in that respect the youths
are equal, but in character and disposition. Agricola is lively, joyous, ever in action, while—while Gabriel is melancholy and thoughtful. My father adds, you may read in the countenance of each the index of his character. Agricola is tall and muscular, with a dark complexion, and a bold, animated expression; Gabriel, on the contrary, has a thin, slight figure, a delicate complexion, and the timidity of a girl, with an almost angelic sweetness of countenance.

The orphans surveyed each other in amazement; then turning their ingenuous faces toward Dagobert, Rose exclaimed:

"Why, Dagobert, this is the description of our Gabriel. Yours is fair, and has the look of an angel—so has ours."

"Yes, yes; that was the cause of my being so astonished at your dream."

"I wish I knew whether he has blue eyes," said Rose.

"As for that, my child, though the general says nothing about it, I can answer for him; all these fair people have blue eyes; however, black or blue, he will not look young girls in the face with them; therefore, you will find out as you proceed."

Blanche resumed:

"The angelic expression of Gabriel's countenance attracted the attention of a brother in one of our Christian schools, which, in company with Agricola and the children of the neighbourhood, he was in the habit of attending. This good man mentioned him to a person of distinction, who placed him in one of our seminaries, and for two years he has been a priest. He is intended to be sent abroad as a missionary, and will soon depart for America."

"Then your Gabriel is a priest?" said Rose, looking at Dagobert, somewhat dismayed.

"And ours is an angel!" added Blanche.

"Which proves that your Gabriel is of a higher grade than mine. Well! every one to his choice! but I am very glad it was not my boy took a fancy to a priest's coat. I would rather see my Agricola with a leathern apron tied before him, and his brawny arm wielding a hammer, after the fashion of your grandfather, my children, otherwise the father of Marshal Simon, Duke de Ligny; for after all, the general holds that rank, through the emperor's own creation. Now conclude your manuscript."

"Thus, therefore, my tender Eva, should this journal ever reach you, you set Dagobert at ease as to the condition of his wife and son, whom he quitted for us. How shall I ever repay so great a sacrifice? But he is with you, and your noble and generous heart will know how to reward him."

"Again and again adieu for to-day, Eva, best beloved! For one instant I have left my journal to visit the tent of Djalma. I found him sleeping peacefully, his father watching beside him. A single gesture made by the latter sufficed to convince me that no alarm was entertained for the safety of the intrepid young man. May he be equally preserved from the perils of the approaching fight. Farewell, my beloved wife! The night is calm and still: one by one the watch-fires burn out and become extinct; our poor mountaineers repose after their bloody day, and no sound is heard but the distant call of our sentinels; their words, uttered in the language of their country, remind me of what, when thus conversing with you, I forget—that oceans divide us, that I am far, far from you and our child. Beloved beings, what is your present condition—what will your future destiny be? Ah! could I but convey to you that medal I so unfortunately brought away with me from Warsaw, perhaps you might obtain permission to proceed with it to France, or, at least, to send your child thither with Dagobert; for you know, well know, the importance attached to it: but why add this vexation to the many troubles which already oppress us? Unfortunately, years are rolling on: the fatal day will arrive, and the last hope to which I cling will be taken from me.

"But I will not end this day mournfully. Once more, my Eva! my love! farewell! Press our infant to your heart, and cover it with the kisses sent by an exiled husband and father.
“Till the termination of to-morrow’s conflict, adieu!”

A long silence succeeded the perusal of this touching paper, while the tears of the sisters flowed, and Dagobert, leaning his head on his hand, was lost in painful meditation.

The wind increased in violence, heavy drops of rain pattered against the window-panes, and all within the house was still.

While the daughters of General Simon read these fragments from their father’s journal, a strange and mysterious scene was passing within the menagerie belonging to the tamer of beasts.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CAGES.

Orok had armed himself. Over his vest of chamois leather he had put on his coat of mail; a tissue of steel, flexible as linen, hard as adamant. He had buckled his cuisses on his thighs, his greaves upon his legs, his brassards on his arms, and covered his feet with iron-plate shoes; concealing all this defensive attire with a long and loose pantaloons, and an ample pelisse carefully buttoned up, while in his hand he bore a long rod of iron, heated in the fire, and held by its wooden handle.

Although his tiger Cain, his lion Judas, and his black panther La Mort, had long since been subdued by his address and energy, at times these brutes, in a fit of anger, would try their teeth and nails upon him; but, thanks to the armour which his pelisse covered, they had but struck their nails on a surface of steel, blunted their teeth on arms or legs of iron, while a slight blow of the metal rod made their hides smoke and shrivel, furrowed by a deep and smarting burn.

Finding that their bites were useless, these animals, whose memories are vastly retentive, understood that henceforward it were vain to try their claws and teeth on an invulnerable being. So greatly did their crouching submission increase, that in his public displays, their master, by the least movement of a small rod covered with flame-coloured paper, made them shrink and cringe at his feet in terror.

The Prophet, carefully armed, and holding in his hand the rod, heated by
ROSE AND BLANCHE.
Goliath, descended the trap of the garret, which was over the large shed, where the cages of his animals were placed. A partition of planks separated this shed from the stable in which were the horses of the tamer of beasts.

A reflecting light threw its full beams over these cages. They were four in number.

A grating of iron, tolerably wide, formed the sides. At one side this grating turned on hinges like a door, so that the animals which they enclosed might come out. The floors of the cages were on axletrees and four small iron wheels, so that they were thus easily drawn to the large covered van in which they were placed during their journeys. One was empty, the three others were closed, and in them, as we have said, were a panther, a tiger, and a lion.

The panther was from Java, and seemed, by its lowering and savage aspect, to deserve its name, La Mort.

Completely black, it remained coiled up into the smallest compass at the farther end of its cage. The colour of its skin blended with the obscurity that surrounded it, so that its shape could not be made out, and only two glowing fires could be seen—two large eyeballs of a phosphorescent yellow, which only shone at night; for all the animals of the feline genus see perfectly only in the midst of darkness.

The Prophet had entered the stables silently, the deep red of his pelisse contrasting with the light yellow hue of his straight hair and long beard. The lamp was so placed that it completely lighted up the man, and the breadth of its beams, contrasted with the darkness of the stable, brought out more fully the prominent features of his harsh and bony countenance.

He slowly approached the cage.

The white ring, which encircled his glaring eyeball, seemed to expand, while his eye rivalled, in brilliancy and fixedness, the glowing and motionless eye of the panther.

Crouching in the darkness, she felt already the influence of her master’s commanding look, and twice or thrice closed her eyelids hastily, uttering a low angry growl; then her eyes, re-opening in spite of herself, became immovably fixed on those of the Prophet.

Then the round ears of La Mort fell back on her neck, flattened like that of a snake, the skin of her forehead wrinkled convulsively, while she drew up her nostrils, covered with long bristles, and twice silently opened her wide jaws, armed with formidable teeth.

At this moment a kind of magnetic sympathy seemed to be established between the gaze of the man and that of the beast.

The Prophet stretched toward the cage his rod of heated steel, and said, in a harsh and imperious tone,

"La Mort, come hither!"

The panther rose, but crouched so greatly that her belly and hocks still dragged along the floor. She was three feet high, and nearly five feet long, her chine was supple and fleshy, her hams as long and deep as those of a racehorse, her chest wide, her shoulders broad and projecting, her paws flat and powerful—all evincing that this formidable beast united strength with suppleness and vigour with agility.

Morok, with his rod of iron extended towards the cage, made a step towards the panther.

The panther made a step towards the Prophet.

He paused.

La Mort paused likewise.

At this moment the tiger Judas, which, as Morok stood, was behind him, as though jealous of the notice bestowed by his master on the panther, uttered a furious growl; and, throwing back his head, displayed his formidable triangular jaw and powerful chest of dusky white, whence arose the first shades of tawny, mingled with black, which constituted the colour of his coat. His tail, like a
huge copper-coloured serpent, marked with black rings, was sometimes pressed against his flanks, at others lashing them with a slow and continued movement, while his green phosphorescent eyes were fixed on the Prophet.

Such was the influence possessed by this man over the animals, that Judas ceased his roaring, as if frightened at his own temerity; but he still breathed strong and heavily.

Morok turned to him, and examined him with steady attention for several moments. The panther, meanwhile, relieved from the controlling power of the Prophet's eye, returned to the darkest corner of her cage, and laid herself down.

A crackling noise, at once sharp and grating, like that made by beasts when gnawing hard substances, now arose in the lion's den, and Morok, leaving the tiger, proceeded to the den of Cain.

Nothing but the huge tawny rump of the animal was visible; his hind quarters were bent under him, and his bushing mane shrouded his head; but by the working of his muscles it was evident that he was making violent use of his jaws and fore-paws.

The Prophet's mind misgave him, and he approached the cage, fearing that, contrary to his command, Goliath had given the beast some food. To ascertain this point, he exclaimed, in a sharp, decisive tone, "Cain!"

Cain did not move. "Cain! come hither!" again cried Morok, in a still louder voice; but with no better success: the lion stirred not, and the grinding noise still went on.

"Cain! here!" exclaimed the Prophet a third time; but as he spoke, he applied his rod of hot steel to the flanks of the animal.

Scarcely had a light smoke issued from the scorched hair of the creature, when, with a leap of inconceivable quickness, he turned and rushed to the bars of his cage; not with a run, but with a single bound, and, as it were, erect, with an air of majestic grandeur and fearful rage.

The Prophet standing at the corner of the cage, Cain, in his fury, and to face his master, presented his side against the bars, through which he thrust his enormous fore-paw to the shoulder, its muscles expanded, and the limb itself as large as Goliath's enormous thigh.

"Down, Cain!" said the Prophet, quickly approaching him; but the beast did not obey; his lips, drawn back in rage, displayed fangs as long and sharp as the tusks of the wild boar.

Morok touched his wand of burning iron to the lips of Cain; subdued by this acute pain and by a sudden command from his master, the lion, not daring to roar, gave a low growl, and his huge body sank crouching down in an attitude of submission and terror.

Morok took down the lantern to see what had occupied the beast, and perceived that he had torn up one of the planks from the bottom of his den, and had been trying to appease his hunger by grinding it between his huge jaws.

For several instants the most profound silence reigned in the menagerie. The Prophet, with his hands behind him, passed from cage to cage, observing the animals with a perplexed yet earnest gaze, as though hesitating to make a difficult and important choice between them. From time to time he stopped at the door, looking out on the inn yard, and listened attentively.

In a few minutes it was opened, and Goliath appeared, the wet streaming from his garments.

"Well!" said the Prophet.

"I have had trouble enough!" answered the giant. "Luckily, the night is as dark as pitch, and it blows and rains enough to kill a fellow!"

"Do they suspect anything?"

"I should say not, master! Your observations were correct. The harness-room door is just under the window of the room where these girls are put
to sleep; and that door opens out on the fields. When you whistled to let me know it was time, I went out, carrying a high stool, which I placed against the wall, and stood upon it: that, with my own height, made me at least nine feet, so that I could lean upon the window-frame. I held the blind in one hand and my knife in the other; and, while I broke two squares of glass, I slammed the blind as hard as I could."

"And they fancied it was the wind?"

"Yes. There, you see, one is not quite such a fool. Well, when I had done my job, I made all the haste I could back into the harness-room, taking my stool with me. In a little while I heard the old man's voice; it was well I had been so quick."

"When I whistled, he had just gone to his supper. I did not expect he would get through so soon."

"Oh! he isn't the sort of man to be long eating his supper," replied the giant, contemptuously. "Well, soon after the glass was broken, the old soldier-man opened the window, and called his dog, saying, 'Jump.' I ran to the other end of the harness-room, else that cursed dog would have throttled me."

"He is shut up now in the stable with the old man's horse. Go on."

"When I heard the shutter and window shut again, I came out from the harness-room, replaced the stool, mounted, and, turning the fastening of the shutter gently, I opened it. But the two broken panes of glass had been filled up with the skirts of a pelisse, so I could only hear, and not see anything. Well, then, I moved the cloak a little and saw the girls on the bed with their faces toward me, and the old fellow sitting at the foot with his back to me—"

"And the bag—his bag? That is the important thing."

"His bag was near the window on a table beside a lamp. I could have touched it by stretching out my arm."

"What did you hear?"

"As you told me not to attend to anything but the bag, I only remember about the bag, and the old fellow said that his papers, a general's letters, his money, and his cross were in it."

"Good! What then?"

"As it was difficult to hold the pelisse away from the hole in the window, it fell out of my hand. I tried to take it up again, and put my hand so far through the window that one of the girls must have seen it, for she cried out, pointing to the window."

"Cursed wretch! all is a failure," exclaimed the Prophet, pale with rage.

"Listen, all is not a failure. "When I heard her scream, I jumped down from my stool, and again hid myself in the harness-room. As the dog was no longer there, I left the door half open. Then I heard the window open, and saw by the reflection that the old fellow was holding a lamp out of the window. He looked about him; but not seeing any ladder, and as the window was too high for any man of ordinary stature to reach up—"

"He thought it was the wind, as before. You are not so stupid as I thought."

"The wolf has become a fox, as you have said; when I found out where the bag, the money, and the papers were, as I could not do any more for the present, I thought it best to come to you. So here I am."

"Go in the loft and find me the longest ashen pike."

"Yes, master."

"And the red woollen blanket."

"Yes, master."

"Begone."

Goliath mounted the ladder, and when he had reached midway, stopped.

"Master, mayn't I bring down a bit of meat for La Mort? You'll see she'll owe me a spite; she'll lay it all to me. She never forgets, and at the first opportunity—"

"The pike and the blanket!" replied the Prophet, in a commanding tone.
While Goliath, muttering, executed his behests, Morok opened the door of the shed, and, looking out into the courtyard, again listened.

"Here are the pike and blanket," said the giant, coming down the ladder with them. "What am I to do next?"

"Return to your harness-room, get up again to the window, and when the old man rushes hastily out of the chamber——"

"Who'll make him rush out?"

"He will go out. The how is no affair of yours."

"Well; and then?"

"You told me the lamp was near the window."

"Quite near; on the table close to the bag."

"As soon as the old man leaves the room, push the window, knock over the lamp, and if you then succeed in doing quickly and cleverly what remains to be done, the ten florins are yours. You remember all I told you?"

"Yes, yes."

"The girls will be so frightened by the noise and the darkness that they will remain dumb with fear."

"Make yourself easy, the wolf has become a fox, he will be a serpent."

"This is not all."

"What more?"

"The roof of the shed is not high, the skylight in the loft is easily reached, the night is dark, and so, instead of returning by the door——"

"I am to get in by the skylight?

"And without a sound."

"Like a real serpent." And the giant left the stable.

"Yes," said the Prophet, after a silence of some time, "my means are sure, and I must not hesitate. Blind and obscure tool, I know not the motive of the orders I have received; but from the instructions which accompany them, and the position in which he is who sends them to me, doubtless some most important interests are involved. Interests," he continued, after another pause, "which affect all that is greatest—most exalted in the world! But how can these two young girls, almost beggars—how can this miserable old soldier represent or be connected with such interests? No matter," he added, humbly, "I am the arm which acts, it is for the head that thinks and orders to be responsible for its works."

The Prophet then left the shed, taking in his hand the blanket, and directed his steps to Jovial's little stable. The shattered door was hardly kept closed by a hasp.

At the sight of a stranger Killjoy sprang at him, but his teeth only met with greaves of iron; in spite of the dog's bites, the Prophet took Jovial by his halter, and, having tied his head up in the blanket, that he might neither see nor smell, led him out of the stable and conducted him to the interior of his menagerie, the door of which he fastened.
HAVING completed the perusal of their father's journal, the orphans remained, for some time, mournfully and silently contemplating the leaves, discoloured by age; while Dagobert was absorbed in anticipation of meeting the wife and son from whom he had been so long separated.

The soldier was the first to break the silence which for several minutes had prevailed; taking the manuscript from the hands of Blanche, and carefully folding it, he returned it to his pocket, and said to the sisters,

"Take heart, my children; you see what a brave father you have; cherish the hope of soon embracing him, and never forget the name of that worthy youth to whom you owe this happiness, for, but for him, your father would have been killed in India."

"His name is Djalma. We will never forget him," answered Rose

"And if Gabriel, our guardian angel, again visits us," added Blanche, "we will pray of him to take Djalma also under his protection."

"Good, my children!" replied Dagobert; "I am quite sure that you will do all that affection and duty require. But, to return to the traveller who visited your mother in Siberia: he had seen your father a month after the events of which you have just read, when the general was setting out to open a fresh campaign against the English; it was then that your father confided to him these papers and the medal."

"But, Dagobert, can you tell us what is the use of this medal?"

"And what do the words inscribed on it mean?" pursued Rose, drawing it from her bosom.

"Why, it means that we must be in Paris, No. 3 Rue Saint François, on the 13th of February, 1832."

"But what to do?"

"The suddenness of the attack which carried off your poor mother prevented her from telling me; all I know is, that this medal had been handed down to
her from her family, in whose possession it had been for more than a hundred years."

"And how did our father become possessed of it?"

"Among the articles hastily put into the carriage, when he was violently carried from Warsaw, was a dressing-case of your mother's, in which was this medal. No opportunity was ever afforded the general of returning it; for, had there been any means of communicating with us, he was ignorant of our place of exile."

"This medal, then, is of great importance to us?"

"Doubtless! for never had I seen your mother so joyful in fifteen years as when the stranger brought it to her. 'Henceforward,' she exclaimed, 'the fate of my children will perhaps be as prosperous as it has hitherto been wretched!' and, turning to me, her eyes filled with tears of joy, she said, in the presence of the stranger, 'I shall now request permission of the governor of Siberia to visit France with my daughters. Surely I have been sufficiently punished by fifteen years of exile, and the confiscation of my property. If I am refused, I must perforce remain; but, at least, he will permit me to send my children to France under your care, Dagobert; and you must, in that case, depart quickly, for, unhappy, much time has already been lost; and should you not arrive before the 13th of February, this painful separation and hazardous journey will all have been in vain.'"

"What if even a single day after the date?"

"If we arrive on the 14th instead of the 13th, it will be too late, your mother said; she gave me also a thick packet, enjoining me to put it into the post-office of the first town we passed through; and this I have done."

"And do you calculate upon our reaching Paris by the appointed time?"

"I trust so. But, if you think you are strong enough, I should like to double some of our marches; for, only travelling as we now do, at the rate of five leagues a day, even should we escape all accidental delay, we shall not reach Paris before the beginning of February, and it would be better to be there sooner."

"But since our father is in India, and, being under sentence of death, unable to return to France, when shall we see him?"

"Yes, and where shall we see him?"

"My poor children! there are many things you have yet to learn. When the stranger last saw your father, he could not venture back to France. But now he may."

"Why, Dagobert?"

"Because, during the past year, the Bourbons, who exiled him, have, in their turn, been driven out of the kingdom; the news will have reached India, and your father certainly will hasten to Paris, in the hope of finding your mother and you there on the 13th of February of the coming year."

"Ah!" said Rose, with a gentle sigh, "now I understand; and we may, indeed, hope to behold him!"

"Do you know the name of the traveller you have been telling us of, Dagobert?"

"No! my children. But let his name be what it may, he is a noble-hearted man. When he took leave of your mother, she thanked him, with tears, for his generous devotion to your father, to herself and her children; he pressed her hands in his and said, in a gentle voice, which moved me in spite of myself, 'Why thank me? has He not said, LOVE YE ONE ANOTHER?'

"Who said that? Whom did the traveller allude to?"

"That I can't tell you; but the manner in which he uttered the expression struck me, and those were the last words I heard him speak."

"LOVE YE ONE ANOTHER!" repeated Rose, thoughtfully.

"What beautiful words!" added Blanche.

"And where was the traveller going?"

"Oh! far, far toward the north, he told your mother; and when, after his de-
departure, your mother was speaking to me of him, she said, 'His tender yet
mournful style of language has affected me even to tears. While listening to
him, I felt happier than I have done for years; my heart seemed to beat with
increased love for my husband and children, and yet the expression of his own
countenance was that of a person who had never smiled or wept.' I stood by
your mother watching his departure; he moved with slow, calm, measured
steps, looking downward; and, talking of his steps, I observed one thing—"
"What, Dagobert?"
"You remember that the pathway leading to the house was always damp, from
the trickling of the small stream which flowed near it?"
"Yes."
"Well, the impression of his foot remained on the soil, and I observed that
the nails in his shoe were arranged in the form of a cross."
"A cross?"
"See," said Dagobert, dotting with his finger
seven times on the coverlet of the bed; "they were
placed in this way under his sole. You see it forms
a cross!"
"What could that signify?"
"Chance, perhaps. Yet I could not but look upon
it as a bad omen, for, from the hour of his quitting
us, one piece of ill luck followed another."
"Alas! the death of our mother!"
"Yes; but, previous to that, a severe blow over-
took us. You had not returned from your ramble, and your mother was pre-
paring her request for permission either to take you to France or to send you
thither, when I heard the gallop of a horse; it was a courier from the governor-
general of Siberia, bringing an order for our change of residence, and bidding
us prepare, in three days' time, to join a party who were condemned to banish-
ment four hundred leagues farther north. Thus, after fifteen years of exile, your
mother was still to experience an increase of persecution and cruelty."
"But wherefore, Dagobert, was she thus severely treated?"
"It appeared as though some evil genius strove against her. Had the traveller
been a few days later, he would not have found us at Milosk; and if he had found
us at a later day, the distance would have rendered both the papers and medal
useless, since, had we set off on the instant, we could not have reached Paris by
the appointed time."
"There must be some powerful interest concerned in keeping me and my
children from Paris, or these harsh measures would never be resorted to,' said
your mother; 'for thus to increase the distance of our place of banishment four
hundred leagues, is to place an insuperable obstacle to our being in Paris by the
appointed day.' And this thought rendered her almost heart-broken."
"And perhaps was the cause of the sudden malady which carried her off!"
"Alas! no, my children; it was that infernal cholera, which comes no one
knows whence; for it is a traveller, too, and strikes its victim like the lightning.
Three hours after the departure of the stranger, when you came in from the
forest, gay and delighted, with your great bunches of flowers for your mother,
she was already almost at the last gasp—one could scarcely recognise her. The
cholera had broken out in the village, and by nightfall five had died. Your
mother had only time to place the medal round your neck, my dear little Rose,
to recommend you both to my care, and to beg that I would set off with you im-
mediately. She being dead, the new order of exile could not apply to you, and
the governor allowed me to set out with you for France, in compliance with the
last wishes of your—" The soldier could not proceed; he pressed his fingers
over his eyes, while the sisters embraced each other, sobbing.
"And then," continued Dagobert, proudly, after a brief silence, "you showed
yourselves the brave daughters of the general. Spite of the danger, you could not
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be removed from the bed of your mother; you remained by her to the end. You
closed her eyes, you watched by her all the night, and you would not consent to
leave Milosk until you had seen me plant a little cross over the grave which I
had dug."

Dagobert abruptly ceased. A strange, wild neighing was heard, mingled
with savage roarings. The soldier sprang to his feet—his countenance was
blanched, and he exclaimed, "'Tis Jovial! my old horse! What are they doing
to my horse?" Then hastily quitting the chamber, he rushed impetuously down
the staircase.

The two sisters, relapsing into their former terror at the abrupt departure of
Dagobert, and folded in each other's arms, saw not an enormous hand pass
through the broken casement, open the fastening of the window, push the two
sashes violently apart, and knock over the lamp placed on the little table, on
which the old soldier had laid his wallet.

The orphans were thus left in impenetrable darkness.

CHAPTER XI.

JOVIAL AND LA MORT.

Morok, having conducted Jovial
into the middle of his menagerie, took
off the covering which prevented his
seeing or smelling.

Scarcely had the tiger, lion, and
panther perceived him, when the
famished creatures dashed themselves
against the bars of their cages.

The horse, seized with terror, stood
with extended neck and fixed gaze,
trembling in every limb, and as
though fastened to the ground, while
a thick, cold sweat ran from his panting
sides.

The lion and tiger, uttering fear-
ful roarings, paced violently up and down their dens, while the mute, concen-
trated fury of the panther was still more fearfully expressed. At the risk of
crushing her scull, she, with one tremendous spring, dashed against the bars
of her cage, then returning stealthily, though with increased ferocity, she again
leaped madly against the bars; thrice had she taken this deadly spring in fear-
ful silence, when the horse, passing from the stupor of fear to the wildness of
desperation, neighed loudly and rushed to the door by which he had entered,
but finding it closed, his head drooped, his limbs bent, while he sniffed with ex-
panded nostrils the aperture between the door and the sill, as though to breathe
again the outward air; then, becoming momentarily more and more terrified,
the poor brute filled the place with his loud neighings, while he kicked with des-
perate plunger against the door.

At the moment when La Mort was preparing for another spring, the Prophet
approached her cage, and with his spear pushed back the heavy bolt which se-
cured it. As the iron slipped from its groove, the Prophet fled rapidly to the
ladder, and, ere a second had elapsed, had well-nigh reached his loft.

The loud roaring of the lion and tiger, mingled with the cries of Jovial, now
resounded through the inn.

Again the panther made a fresh bound, and with such force that, as the
door flew open, she sprang into the very centre of the building.
The light of the lamp gleamed on the sable lustre of the creature's coat, spotted with dead black. For a few seconds the beast remained on the ground motionless, its short legs gathered under it, and its head stretched out, as though calculating the force of the spring necessary to reach the horse. A brief instant, and La Mort darted upon the unfortunate animal.

Jovial, on perceiving his enemy escape from her den, threw himself, with all his strength, against the door, which opened from without. At the moment when La Mort sprang on him, he was standing almost erect, striking against the door-posts with his fore-feet. But, quick as lightning, La Mort seized him by the throat, tearing his chest with the sharp talons of her fore-paws. The jugular vein was opened, from which spouted jets of crimson blood; and the Java panther, raising herself on her hind legs, forced her victim against the door, while, with her sharp claws, she tore open his heaving flanks.

The shrieks of the horse were now fearful to hear, as the panther continued to mangle his quivering flesh. All at once a voice was heard, exclaiming,

"Jovial! your master is here! Courage!"

These words proceeded from Dagobert, who was vainly striving to break open the door behind which this sanguinary conflict was going on.

"Jovial!" pursued the old soldier, "here I am. Here, help! help!"

At the well-known and friendly sound, the expiring animal endeavoured to turn his head to the place whence his master's voice proceeded, and answered with a faint note of recognition; but, sinking under the assault of the panther, he dropped, first on his knees, then on his side, so as completely to block up the door and prevent any one opening it from without.

All was now over.

The panther bestrode the horse's body, and, tightly compressing him with her fore and hind paws, spite of Jovial's dying kicks, continued to bury her blood-stained muzzle in the palpitating entrails.

"Help! help! for my poor horse!" exclaimed Dagobert, vainly seeking to burst the door; then crying with impotent fury, "And I have no weapon! My arms! my arms!"

"Take care!" cried the conqueror of brutes, appearing at the opening which looked out from the loft upon the courtyard; "attempt not to enter, or you will endanger your life! My panther is furious."

"But my horse! my horse!" reiterated Dagobert, in a voice of agony.

"Must have got out of his stable in the night and entered into the building by pushing the door open. The sight of him made the panther break through her bars and get out. You will have to answer for whatever may happen," added the tamer of beasts, in a threatening voice; "for I must incur the most fearful risks in getting La Mort back to her cage."

"But my horse!" persisted Dagobert. "Save my horse!"

The Prophet disappeared from the opening.

The roaring of the animals, with the cries of Dagobert, awoke all the inmates of the White Falcon; in all directions lights streamed from the opened windows. Ere long the servants of the inn had assembled, lantern in hand, and, crowding round Dagobert, were questioning him as to what had occurred.

"My horse is in there, and one of this man's animals has got loose!" cried the soldier, still striving to burst the door.

At these words the domestics, already terrified by the tremendous roaring of the beasts, fled to apprise the landlord of what had happened. The agony of the old soldier while awaiting the opening of the door is beyond the powers of language to describe. Pale; trembling, his ear pressed against the keyhole, he listened in silent eagerness. By degrees the terrific howling of the animals ceased; a deep, low growl was occasionally heard, mingled with the harsh voice of the Prophet, calling,
"La Mort! here! La Mort!"

The night was profoundly dark, and Dagobert did not see Goliath clambering over the tiled roof, so as to effect an entrance by the garret window into the chamber of his master.

Soon the yard door opened again, and admitted the landlord of the White Falcon, armed with a gun, and followed by a number of men, some carrying pitchforks and others clubs.

"What is all this about?" he inquired, approaching Dagobert. "What is this uproar in my house? I wish all wild-beast showmen were at the devil, in company with the careless fellows who don't know how to tie a horse up securely. If your horse is injured, it serves you right: you ought to have been more careful."

The soldier made no reply; listening intently to the sounds proceeding from the menagerie, with a gesture he sought to obtain silence.

Suddenly a ferocious roar was heard, accompanied by a loud cry from the Prophet, and almost instantly the panther uttered a frightful yell.

"Your negligence has, no doubt, caused some fatal accident," said the landlord to Dagobert. "Did you hear that cry? Morok is, perhaps, dangerously wounded."

Dagobert was about to reply, when the door opened, and Goliath appeared on the threshold, saying,

"You can come in—there is no danger now."
The interior of the menagerie presented a horrible spectacle. The Prophet, pale, and scarcely able to conceal his agitation beneath his assumed mask of calm self-possession, was kneeling near the panther's cage in an attitude of prayer; his lips only moved. At the sight of the crowd, he rose from his knees, and uttered, in a solemn voice,

"Thanks, O my God! for having yet again prevailed by the power Thou hast given to mine arm!" Then crossing his arms on his breast, with imperious look and haughty brow, he seemed triumphing in his victory over La Mort, who, extended at the bottom of her den, still howled piteously.

The spectators of this scene, ignorant that the robe of the Prophet concealed a complete suit of armour, and attributing the cries of the panther to fear, were struck with astonishment and admiration at the courage and almost supernatural power of this man. A little behind Morok stood Goliath, leaning on his pike; and at no great distance from the panther's cage lay the remains of poor Jovial, in a pool of blood.

At the sight of the mangled corpse the rough countenance of the old soldier assumed an expression of the most touching grief. The poor fellow, kneeling beside his horse, raised its head, as though still seeking a vestige of life; but when he beheld the fixed, glassy eye, but lately so bright and intelligent, Dagobert cried aloud with grief. He forgot his anger—he thought not of the deplorable consequences to the interests of the young girls that must attend this fatal accident, preventing them from continuing their journey; he remembered only the horrible death of the poor old horse, his ancient companion through fatigue and danger, the faithful animal that had been twice wounded like himself, and from which he had been so many years inseparable. His agony of sorrow was so touchingly depicted on his features, that the landlord and his people were for a moment filled with pity at the sight of the stout old man thus kneeling by the side of his dead horse.

But when, pursuing his regrets, Dagobert remembered that Jovial had shared his exile, and had borne the mother of his young charges through a long and fatiguing journey, even as he had since carried the children, the fatal consequences of his loss flashed on his mind in all their force. Rage succeeded to grief; he started to his feet, with fury flashing from his eyes, and springing on the Prophet, he seized him by the throat, and struck him repeatedly on the breast, but the coat of mail prevented this effusion of wrath from taking the slightest effect.

"Wretch!" exclaimed Dagobert, still continuing his blows, "you shall answer for the death of my horse."

Morok, though active and nervous, could fare but ill in a contest with Dagobert, who, besides the advantage of his height and size, still possessed a more than common degree of strength. The interposition of Goliath and the landlord was needed to rescue the Prophet from his grasp.

When at length the combatants were separated, Morok was white with rage and it required all Goliath's strength to prevent his assaulting Dagobert with the pike.

"Your conduct is disgraceful," said the landlord, addressing Dagobert, who was standing with his clenched hands pressed against his bald forehead. "You expose this worthy man to the risk of being devoured by his beasts, and then try to murder him! Is that the way for an old soldier like you to behave? You showed more sense in the early part of the evening."

The words recalled the soldier to himself; he the more regretted his impetuousity, as he knew that his quality of stranger might enhance the difficulties of his position. It was absolutely necessary that he should be indemnified for the loss of his horse, because the delay of a single day might peril the object of his journey. Making a violent effort, therefore, to restrain himself, he replied in an agitated voice, which he strove to render calm:
"You are right. I was too hasty! I forgot the patience I exercised before. But surely this man ought to replace my horse. I ask you to judge between us."

"Well, then, if you leave it to my decision, I shall give it against you. You are alone to blame for all the mischief that has ensued. You must have tied your horse up very carelessly, and he strayed from his stable and entered this barn, the door of which was probably left half open," replied the host of the White Falcon, evidently siding with the tamer of beasts.

"You are right, master," chimed in Goliath; "I recollect leaving the door ajar to give the animals air. The cages were well secured, and there was not the slightest danger."

"It is true," said one of the spectators.

"And no doubt it was the sight of the horse made the panther furious, and break her cage," added another.

"I think the Prophet has the greatest cause for complaint," said a third.

"It is very immaterial to me what any of you think," said Dagobert, whose patience was beginning to leave him. "What I say is, that I must have a horse, or the price of one, and that, too, without delay, that I may instantly quit this unlucky spot."

"And I say," added Morok, "that it is you who must compensate me;" and, having purposely reserved this coup de théâtre as a finale, he exhibited his left hand, which he had hitherto kept concealed in the bosom of his robe, wounded and bleeding. "There," said he, "behold the wound received while forcing the panther back to her cage; it has probably lamed me for life."

Without being of the dangerous nature pretended by the Prophet, the wound was severe enough to attract universal sympathy. Reckoning, no doubt, upon this incident as certain to obtain a favourable decision for a cause he looked upon as his own affair, the landlord of the Falcon said, turning to a stable lad,

"There is but one means of settling this dispute. We must call up the burgomaster, and beg him to come hither with all speed; he will decide who is right and who is wrong."

"The very thing I was going to propose," said the soldier; "for, talk as I may, I cannot obtain justice unaided."

"Fritz!" said the host, "run to the burgomaster."

The lad went instantly, and his master, fearing to be involved in the inquiry which would take place, having on the previous evening omitted to ask the soldier for his passport, said,

"The burgomaster will be in a rare ill humour at being disturbed at such an unreasonable hour: I have no taste for coming in for a share of it, therefore I will thank you to go and fetch your papers, if you are duly provided with them, for I did wrong in not demanding them upon your arrival last evening."

"They are in my travelling bag, up stairs," answered the soldier; "you shall have them instantly!" Then averting his head, and putting his hand before his eyes, as he passed the body of Jovial, he went to rejoin the sisters.

The eye of the Prophet followed him with a triumphant glare, and he muttered to himself,

"He has now neither horse, money, nor papers; more I am forbidden to do, for I must proceed cautiously, and so as to save appearances. All blame must rest on the soldier for what has happened; and one thing is very certain, that several days must elapse ere he can continue his route, since it appears that such importance is attached to delaying his progress and that of the two young girls."

A quarter of an hour after these reflections had crossed the mind of the brute-conqueror, Karl, Goliath's comrade, left the concealment he had observed by his master's commands, and departed for Leipsic, bearing a letter hastily written by
Morok, which Karl was instructed to put in the post immediately on his arrival. The letter was addressed,

"A Monsieur

"Monsieur Rodin,

"Rue du Milieu-des-Ursins, No. 11,

"A Paris,

"France."
CHAPTER XII.

THE BURGOMASTER.

The disquiet of Dagobert augmented with reflection. Certain that his horse had not gone into the shed of his own accord, he ascribed the deplorable result to the malice of the brutetamer, though in vain he sought to find a cause for such determined persecution; and he reflected with alarm that the decision of his just cause was at the mercy of a man whose displeasure at being roused from his slumbers might fall upon him, and who might condemn him upon false appearances.

Firmly resolved to conceal from the orphans as long as he possibly could the new misfortune which had overtaken him, he opened the door of their chamber, and stumbled over Killjoy; for, after having failed in his attempts to prevent the Prophet from leading Jovial away, the dog had returned to his post.

"Thank Heaven for that," murmured Dagobert; "the dog, at least, has kept watch over the poor children:"—to his great surprise, the chamber was in utter darkness.

"How comes it, my children," he exclaimed, "that I find you without light?"

No answer was returned.

Terrified, he hastily groped his way to the bed, and took the hand that lay nearest him. It was icy cold. "Rose! my children!" cried the old man. "Blanche! speak to me; you terrify me."

Still no reply; and the hand which he held remained cold and motionless in his clasp.

The moon, breaking through the mass of dark clouds which had surrounded her, shone brightly through the window-panes on the little bed immediately opposite, and revealed to him the sisters fainting in each other's arms, their pale countenances assuming a still more corpse-like hue from the reflection of the moonlight.

"Poor dear children! they have been reduced to this state by fear," cried Dagobert, catching up the small flask he usually carried with him; "but who can wonder at it after such a trying day as they have passed through?"

So saying, the soldier moistened the corner of a handkerchief with a few drops of brandy, and kneeling beside the bed, gently rubbed it on the temples
of the sisters, and applied the saturated linen to the nostrils of each. Still kneeling by their side, and bending his swarthy and anxious face over the orphans, Dagobert waited the effect of the only restorative he had it in his power to administer.

At length a slight movement of Rose inspired the old man with hope. She turned upon her pillow, sighing deeply; then, starting up, perceived Dagobert, whom she did not recognise at first, and clung to Blanche, calling upon her for help.

Happily the cares of the soldier began to take effect on Blanche, and the cries of her sister completely roused her; sharing her terrors, without being aware of the cause, she tightly infolded her sister in her arms.

"They revive," said Dagobert; "that is the great thing; now their fears will soon pass away;" then speaking in a more soothing tone, he added, "There! now you are better! Come, my children, courage, it is Dagobert—only Dagobert!"

The sisters roused themselves, and, looking at him with countenances still agitated, with a gracious impulse held out their arms to him, saying,

"Oh, Dagobert! it is you! Now we are safe!"

"Yes, dear children!" returned the veteran, taking their hands, and pressing them with the tenderness of a fond father, "it is I. You were sadly frightened, then, while I was gone."

"Oh, Dagobert! we were almost dead with fright!"

"If you knew—if you did but know—"

"But how came the lamp extinguished?"

"We did not do it."

"Come, dear children, collect your courage, and tell me all about it; this inn does not seem to me very secure; fortunately we shall soon leave it; it was a bad job for us that we ever entered it, but there was no other public house in the village: what happened, then?"

"Scarcely had you left us when the window burst open, the lamp fell with the table, and there was a terriblenoise— we were so alarmed that we threw ourselves into each other's arms, screaming for help, for we thought some person was walking in the chamber. And all that terror made us ill."

Unfortunately, adhering to his original belief that the violence of the wind had broken the glass of the window and forced it open, Dagobert concluded that he had fastened the casement imperfectly; ascribed this second accident to the same cause as the first, and believed that the terror of the sisters made them exaggerate.

"Well," he said, "it is over now; so calm yourselves, and think no more about it!"

"But what made you leave us so hastily, Dagobert?"

"Yes! now, I recollect—don't you, sister? We heard a great noise down stairs, and then Dagobert rushed out, exclaiming, 'My horse! what can they be doing to my horse?' Was it Jovial neighing?"

These questions renewed the grief of the soldier; he feared to reply, and said, with an air of embarrassment:

"Yes, it was Jovial neighing, but that was all; we must have a light. Do you remember where I put my fire-box last night? Why, I am growing stupid, and forget everything. Here it is in my pocket: fortunately, we have a candle; I will light it, and then look in my wallet for some papers I require."

Dagobert struck a light, and perceived that the casement was, indeed, half open, the table knocked over, and on the ground beside the lamp lay his haversack. He shut the window, replaced the table and bag, and then unclasped the latter in order to take out the pocket-book, which, as well as his cross and purse, was deposited in a sort of pocket between the leather and the lining; and so carefully had the different straps and fastenings been re-adjusted, that there was no appearance of the contents having been disturbed.

The soldier thrust his hand into the pocket, and found nothing. Thunderstruck, he turned pale, and, starting back, exclaimed,
"What! gone?"

"Dagobert!" said Blanche, "what is the matter?"

He answered not.

Motionless, bending over the table, he stood with one hand still buried in the empty pocket. Then, yielding to a vague hope (for so cruel a reality seemed more than it was possible to believe), he eagerly emptied the contents of the wallet on the table. They consisted of some half-worn clothing, his old grenadier's uniform of the Imperial Guards, in his eyes an inestimable relic; but in vain did he unfold and shake out each article—he found neither his purse nor the pocket-book containing his cross and the letters of General Simon. And then, with that almost childish tenacity of purpose which frequently attends a hopeless search, the soldier took the haversack by the two corners and shook it with desperate energy, but without finding what he sought. The orphans, unable to comprehend either the silence or the conduct of Dagobert, whose back was toward them, looked at each other with anxiety. At length Blanche ventured to say, in a timid voice,

"What ails you, Dagobert? You do not speak to us? What are you looking for in your bag?"

Still mute, the soldier commenced a strict search through all his pockets, turning them inside out, but still in vain; for the first time in his life, perhaps, his children, as he loved to call the orphans, spoke to him without receiving any answer. Tears suffused the eyes of the sisters; believing that Dagobert was displeased with them, they durst not again address him.

"No! no! it cannot be!" exclaimed the veteran, pressing one hand on his forehead, and seeking to recall to his memory some place where he might have deposited objects so precious.

A sudden ray of hope darted across his mind, and, quick as lightning, he placed on a chair the valise belonging to the orphans. It contained a few changes of linen, two black dresses, and a small white box, in which were enclosed a silk handkerchief that had been their mother's, two locks of her hair, and a black riband which she wore round her neck. The little she possessed had been seized by the Russian government when her estates were confiscated. Dagobert turned each article over and over, searched even the very corners of the valise, but there was nothing.

And now, completely overwhelmed, this man, so energetic, so bold, lost all his strength; his knees tottered under him, and a cold sweat bedewed his face.

It is commonly said that a drowning man will catch at a straw; it is so with persons who, however desperate their circumstances, refuse to surrender themselves to despair. Dagobert, clinging to any suggestion, however fallacious, absurd, or impossible, turned abruptly to the orphans and said, without thinking of his altered voice and looks,

"Tell me, did I not give them to you to keep for me? Speak, speak!"

Instead of replying to him, Rose and Blanche, terrified at his expression and at the paleness of his countenance, uttered a cry.

"In Heaven's name, Dagobert," murmured Rose, "what can be the matter with you?"

"Have you them, or have you not?" thundered the unhappy man, whose brain was unsettled by the shock he had sustained. "If you have not, I will seize the first knife I can find and bury it in my heart!"

"Good, kind Dagobert! pray forgive us if we have offended you!"

"You would not hurt us; you love us too well to see us grieve."

And weeping together, the orphans extended their hands in earnest supplication to the soldier.

For a time the veteran gazed upon them with a haggard eye, which yet saw them not; but as the confusion of his brain subsided, he became clearly aware of all the miseries which would result from this last climax of evil. Falling on his knees beside the orphans, and clasping his hands, he rested his forehead upon
them and wept bitterly. Yes, the iron-framed soldier sobbed while he uttered, in broken accents,

"Pardon! pardon! Alas! I know not—oh, terrible misfortune! Pardon! oh, pardon!"

At this burst of grief, the cause of which they could not comprehend, but which from such a man was dreadful, the sisters threw their arms around his gray head, and weeping bitterly, exclaimed, "Look up, Dagobert! Tell us what makes you so unhappy, and say we have not done anything to cause your grief."

Steps were now heard on the staircase. At the same time, Killjoy, who still kept watch outside the door, barked loudly. The nearer the sounds approached the more violent became the growling of the dog, which was evidently proceeding to more hostile measures, for the voice of the innkeeper was heard exclaiming, in an angry tone,

"Halloo! there! you! Speak to your dog, will you? Call him, I say!

"Dagobert!" cried Rose, "do you hear? The burgomaster is coming!"

"Hark!" said Blanche, "somebody is coming to this room."

The name of the burgomaster recalled Dagobert to himself, and completed, so to say, the picture of his unhappy situation. His horse was dead; he had neither money nor passport, and a single day's delay would destroy the last hope of the sisters, and make their long, fatiguing journey useless. Men of Dagobert's firm nature encounter a positive and imminent danger with more equanimity than the agonizing suspense of evils whose termination is uncertain.

But the plain good sense of the veteran, sharpened by his devoted attachment, quickly pointed out to him that his only hope was in the justice of the burgomaster's decision, and that his every effort must be directed to interest that functionary in his cause. Thus resolved, he rose from his knees, wiped the tears from his eyes with the bed-clothes, and standing calmly and erect before the sisters, said,

"Fear nothing, my children! the man who is coming must be our friend and saviour."

"Are you going to call your dog away?" shouted the innkeeper, still prevented from advancing beyond the stairs by Killjoy, who still guarded the approach. "Is the beast mad? Why don't you tie him up? You have caused mischief enough in the place, I think. I tell you that the burgomaster, having heard the Prophet's account, now wishes to know what you have to say for yourself."

Dagobert, feeling that the fate of the sisters depended on his interview with the magistrate, passed his finger through his gray locks, smoothed his mustache, adjusted the collar of his coat, and pulled down his sleeves. The heart of the brave fellow beat quickly as he laid his hand on the lock, and turning to the orphans, perplexed and affrighted at so many strange events, said, encouragingly,

"Cover yourselves up in your bed, my children; if it be necessary that any one should visit our room, the burgomaster alone shall enter."

Then, opening the door and advancing to the staircase, the soldier exclaimed,

"Down, Killjoy, down!"

The animal obeyed with evident reluctance, and it was not until his master had been twice compelled to interpose his authority that he seemed disposed to relinquish his hostile intentions toward the innkeeper, who, holding his cap in one hand and a lantern in the other, respectfully preceded the burgomaster, whose magisterial figure was lost in the darkness of the staircase.

At some distance behind the judge might be indistinctly seen, by the light of a second lantern, the curious visages of the servants belonging to the inn.

Dagobert, having shut up Killjoy in the chamber of the orphans, closed the door, and advanced a few steps on the landing-place, which was large enough to
contain several persons, and in one corner of which was a wooden bench with a back.

The burgomaster, who had just reached the top of the stairs as Dagobert closed the door, seemed much astonished at a proceeding which had the appearance of forbidding him to enter.

"Wherefore do you close that door?" he inquired, in an abrupt tone.

"In the first place, because two young girls, who are under my care, are sleeping there; and, secondly, because your interrogatories would alarm them," answered Dagobert. "Sit down here, Mr. Burgomaster, and put what questions you please; it is the same thing to you, I suppose, where the examination takes place!"

"And by what right do you presume to appoint the place where you shall be examined?" inquired the functionary, with an appearance of displeasure.

"Nay, Mr. Burgomaster," returned Dagobert, dreading, above all things, to prejudice his visitor against him; "far be it from me to dictate, only, as the young girls are in bed, and already much frightened, you would be acting most kindly toward them if you would be so good as to interrogate me here."

"Humph! here!" returned the magistrate, grumbling. "A pretty place for a person like me to be dragged to at this hour of the night! Well, be it so; I will examine you here, then." Then, turning to the innkeeper, he said, "Set down your lantern on that bench, and leave us."

The landlord obeyed, and departed with his followers, equally disappointed with them that he was not permitted to be present at the examination.

The old soldier was now left alone with the burgomaster.
ARGE and corpulent was the worthy burgomaster of Mock-
ern, attired in a cloth cap and cloak; when he seated him-
self on the bench, it groaned beneath his weight; he was
about sixty years of age, his countenance was morose and
forbidding, and with his large red hand he frequently rub-
bed his eyes, which were swelled and misty from the sud-
den interruption of his slumbers.

Dagobert, standing and holding his old military cap in
his hands, waited his inquiries with an air of respectful sub-
mission, while he sought to read in the harsh features of his
judge what hopes there were for his cause, or, rather, that
of the orphans. During these trying moments the old sol-
dier called to his aid all his coolness, reason; eloquence, and
resolution: he who had twenty times looked on death with
calm indifference—who, self-possessed and firm, because tried and sincere, had
never lowered his glance before the eagle eye of his emperor, his hero, his di-
vinity—now found himself trembling and confused before a scowling village
functionary.

So had he also brought himself to endure with imperturbable resignation, the
insults of the Prophet on the preceding evening, that he might not hazard the
sacred mission intrusted to him by a dying mother; thus proving the heroism of
self-denial which a simple upright heart can attain.

"Come, make haste! Let's hear what you have to say in your defence!" said the judge, in a brutal tone, yawning with impatient drowsiness.

"I have nothing to defend, Mr. Burgomaster; on the contrary, I have a com-
plaint to make," answered Dagobert, in a firm voice.

"Are you going to teach me in what form I am to put my questions?" exclaimed the magistrate, in so sharp a manner that the veteran, blaming himself for hav-
ing so badly opened the conversation, and anxious to propitiate his judge, hasten-
ed to reply submissively,

"Your pardon, Mr. Burgomaster, I expressed myself badly. I only wished
to say that I have been in no way to blame in this affair."

"The Prophet says differently."

"The Prophet!" repeated Dagobert, with a questioning expression.

"A pious, worthy man!" added the judge; "quite incapable of uttering a
falsehood!"

"That is a point on which I have nothing to say, Mr. Burgomaster; but you
are too good and too just to decide without hearing me. It is easy to perceive
you are not the sort of person to deny justice to any one. I feel quite sure of
that," added Dagobert, who, in thus playing a courtier's part against his own in-
clinations, endeavoured to soften his voice, and enliven his austere features with
a smiling, conciliating, and winning expression. "A man like you," continued
the soldier, redoubling his flattery, "a judge so highly respectable, does not hear
with one ear only."

"Ears have nothing to do with the matter, but 'seeing' is 'believing.' And
my eyes, which smart as though they had been rubbed with nettles, have seen
the hand of the brute tamer, and it is dreadfully torn."

"I don't dispute that, Mr. Burgomaster; but, only consider, if he had secured
his door and the cages of his animals properly, none of this mischief would have
happened."

"Yes it would; it was all your fault. You ought to have fastened your horse
more carefully to his manger."

"You are right, Mr. Burgomaster, quite right, nobody can speak more sensi-
bly," said the soldier. "It is not for a poor devil like me to contradict you! But
suppose now that some one, for mischief's sake, had untied my horse and
led him into the menagerie, you would say then, would you not? that it was not
my fault; or, at least," said the old man, "you will admit that fact, if it is your
pleasure to think so; because it is not for such as I am to dictate to you!"

"And what, in the devil's name, leads you to suppose anybody has played you
such a trick?"

"That is more than I can imagine, Mr. Burgomaster; but still—"

"But still you don't know! Well, no more do I," exclaimed the burgomas-
ter, in a peevish tone. "Here's a mighty fuss about the carcass of a dead horse."

The countenance of the old soldier at these words lost all its assumed gentle-
ness, its harsh expression returned, and he replied, in a serious and agitated voice,

"True, but a carcass remains of my faithful horse, which but a few hours ago,
though old, was still so intelligent and vigorous. He neighed joyfully at the sound
of my voice, and each night he licked the hands of the children, whom he car-
ried through the long day, even as he had borne their mother. But now he will
never again carry his mistress or her children; he will be thrown on the dung-
hill and become the food of dogs—that is all he is good for now. It was not
worth while, Mr. Burgomaster, to remind me of this so cruelly, for I dearly
loved my poor horse."

These words, pronounced with a simple, dignified manner, made the function-
ary regret the harshness of his words, and he said, more kindly,

"I can suppose you regret the loss of your beast; but what can be said? It
is a misfortune, and you must bear it."

"A misfortune, Mr. Burgomaster, of the deepest consequences. The two
young girls whom I am accompanying are not strong enough to undertake a
long journey on foot, and too poor to travel by any public conveyance; and yet
it is indispensable that we should be in Paris before the month of February. I
promised their mother on her death-bed to take them there; and the poor
things have no one in the world to protect them but me."

"You, then, are their—"

"Most faithful servant, Mr. Burgomaster; and now that they have killed my
horse, what shall I do? You, who are so good, have, perhaps, children of your
own. Oh! if they should ever be situated as my poor orphans are, with no
other possessions in the world than an old soldier and an aged horse; if, after
having been unfortunate all their lives—for these children were born in exile—a
bright future awaited them at the end of this journey, and if this journey were
rendered impossible by the loss of the horse, would not their painful position
move you to pity them? and would you not, like me, look upon the death of
your horse as an irreparable misfortune?"

"Certainly I should," answered the burgomaster, who was not a bad-hearted
man, and who began to feel sympathy with the grief of the old soldier; "I can
well believe that the loss of your beast is a most serious loss to you, and I feel
interested in the fate of your orphan children: what are their ages?"

"Fifteen years and two months. They are twins."

"Fifteen years and two months! Very nearly the same age as my Frederica."

"You have, then, a daughter of similar age?" said Dagobert, fresh hope
springing up at the idea. "Then, Mr. Burgomaster, the fate of my poor orphans
no longer disquiets me. You will see justice done us."

"Of course I shall: that is my duty. But really, in this affair between you
and the Prophet, I think the case is about equal. On the one hand, you failed
in securing your horse properly in his stable; on the other, the beast-tamer
leaves his menagerie door open. Then he says, 'I have been wounded in the
hand.' To which you reply, 'My horse has been killed, and, for various rea-
sons, the loss of my horse is irreparable.'"

"You express my meaning far better than I could do it myself, Mr. Burgo-
master," said the veteran, with a smile of humble confidence. "That is just the
sense of what I should say; for even you, Mr. Magistrate, admit that the horse
was all I possessed in the world, and therefore it is but just—"

"Of course," replied the burgomaster, interrupting the soldier, "your reason-
ing is excellent; but the Prophet, who is pious and good, had very clearly laid
the facts of the case before me, added to which, he is well known here. You see we are all devout Catholics, and he supplies our women at a cheap rate with wondrously edifying books, and sells them rosaries, chaplets, and agnus Dei. To be sure, as you will justly observe, that has not much to do with the present affair; and yet I confess that, when I came up stairs, I had made up my mind to—"

"To decide against me! was it not so, Mr. Burgomaster?" returned Dagobert, becoming each instant more reassured. "Ah, that was because you were only half awake! Your justice had only opened one eye."

"Good, my friend!" answered the burgomaster, pleasantly; "it may be as you say, for, at my first coming hither, I did not conceal from Morok that I considered he was the party aggrieved, and should decide accordingly; when he very generously remarked, 'Then, since you pronounce in my favour, I will not aggravate the position of my adversary by telling you what I otherwise could.'"

"Against me?"

"So it would seem; but, like a generous enemy, he was silent, after I had assured him that, according to appearances, I should sentence you (conditionally) to make him an ample atonement; for I will candidly tell you that, before you had told your side of the story, I had resolved on making you pay heavy damages to the Prophet for his wound."

"You see now, Mr. Burgomaster, how possible it is for even the most just and wise men to be deceived," said Dagobert, again playing the courtier; and he added, with an expression of inimitable admiration, "but they soon see the truth, and it is not every prophet who can foretell what they will do."

The burgomaster did not seem to appreciate the jest, until, looking up, he perceived the satisfied air of Dagobert, whose countenance seemed to say, "Well done! I am quite surprised at my own cleverness!" Upon which the magistrate gave a smile of paternal approbation, and added, with a miserable attempt at a joke,

"Ay! ay! you are right; the Prophet will turn out a false prophet. I shall not inflict any penalty upon you, because I think one has as much to complain of as the other; he has received a wound, and your horse has been killed; so it seems to me that you are even."

"And how much do you suppose he ought to pay me?" inquired the soldier, with singular simplicity.

"What is that you say?"

"I ask, Mr. Burgomaster, how much he shall give me?"

"How much?"

"Yes, the sum. But, before you name it, Mr. Burgomaster, I must tell you one thing. I consider that I have a right to employ the money as I please; therefore I shall not expend it all in the purchase of a horse. I am sure that, among the country people in the environs of Leipsic, I shall find a horse at a cheap price; and I will even go so far as to own, between ourselves, that if I could meet with a good strong ass, I would try to make shift with it; I should even like it better, for another horse would be painful to me, after my poor Jovial; therefore, I ought to say—"

"What are you gabbling about?" cried the burgomaster, interrupting Dagobert. "What money, ass, or other horse are you talking of? I tell you again, that you owe nothing to the Prophet, neither does he owe you anything!"

"Not owe me anything?"

"You have a very thick scull, my good man. I tell you once more, that if the wild beasts belonging to the Prophet have killed your horse, the Prophet himself has been severely wounded, so you are even with each other; or, if you like it better, I will say that he has nothing to repay you, nor you to pay him. Now, have I made you comprehend?" Dagobert, stupefied at finding his hopes destroyed, remained for some time regarding the burgomaster with an expression of deep anguish. At length he replied, in a subdued voice,

"Nay, Mr. Burgomaster, you are, I am sure, too just to overlook one circumstance. The wound received by the owner of the beasts will not prevent him
from continuing his occupation, while the death of my horse prevents me from proceeding on my journey. Surely, then, he ought to indemnify me."

The magistrate thought he had done much for Dagobert in excusing him from making any recompense to the Prophet; for Morok, as we have said, exercised considerable influence over the Catholic villagers, especially the women, by selling them cheap religious trinkets; he was known, also, to be protected by persons of eminence. Thus, then, the importunity of the soldier displeased his judge, who, resuming his original harsh aspect, replied, angrily,

"Do you wish to make me regret my impartiality? What! instead of thanking me, you have the face to make farther demands?"

"Mr. Burgomaster, I ask but for that which is just. I would gladly have my hand injured like the Prophet's, so I could but continue my journey."

"We have nothing to do with what you would like or dislike. I have pronounced judgment—the case is ended."

"But—"

"Enough! enough! Let us proceed to the next thing. Show me your papers."

"Yes, we will talk about the papers directly; but I beseech you, Mr. Burgomaster, to have pity on the two children yonder: give us the means of proceeding on our journey, and—"

"I tell you I have done all that I can do, perhaps more than I ought to have done. Once again, your papers!"

"Let me first explain to you—"

"I will listen to no explanations. Your papers! Do you mean to make me send you to prison as a vagabond?"

"Me! Send me to prison?"

"Unless you produce your papers, you must be dealt with as though you had none; and, in that case, I have no alternative but to arrest you, until the proper authorities have decided what shall be done with you. Now, then, these papers; be quick, for I want to get home again."

The position of Dagobert was the more trying from the false hope which for a moment he had entertained. This last blow was the climax of all the veteran had endured through this eventful night—a trial as severe as dangerous to a man of Dagobert's firm, honest, but unbending nature, who, long a soldier and victorious, had acquired a habit of dealing very unceremoniously with all mere "bourgeois." At the oft-repeated words, "Your papers," the soldier turned pale; but he tried to conceal the agony of his feelings beneath an appearance of confidence, which he thought might give the magistrate a good opinion of him.

"I will tell you in two words, Mr. Burgomaster, how I am situated. The thing is simple enough, and might happen to any one. I do not look like a rogue or vagabond, do I? And yet you can imagine that a man like me, travelling with two young girls—"

"What do you make all this parleying about? Produce your papers and have done!"

At this juncture, two unexpected allies came to the aid of the old soldier; the orphans, whose uneasiness increased as they heard Dagobert's voice still earnestly engaged in conversation, arose and dressed themselves, so that at the instant when the magistrate was loudly exclaiming, "Your papers," Rose and Blanche came out, holding each other by the hand.

At the sight of these lovely beings, rendered still more interesting by their humble dress of mourning, the burgomaster rose from his seat, struck with surprise and admiration. By a simultaneous movement, each sister drew up to the side of Dagobert, and taking one of his hands, looked up in the face of the magistrate with a timid yet ingenuous glance.

The picture was so touching—the old soldier standing between the delicate children, while he seemed as though presenting their youth and innocence to the eyes of his judge—that it had its full effect upon the magistrate, and again filled his heart with commiseration. The veteran quickly perceived this, and advancing toward him, holding the sisters by the hand, he said,
THE WANDERING JEW.

"Behold these poor helpless orphan girls, Mr. Burgomaster. What better passport could you desire?"

And overcome by a crowd of painful and long-repressed feelings, the eyes of Dagobert filled with tears.

Although naturally abrupt, and rendered still more churlish by being disturbed from his sleep, the burgomaster was, in reality, deficient neither in good sense nor feeling, and he felt how difficult it was to suspect a man thus accompanied.

"Poor, dear children!" he said, examining them with growing interest; "orphans at so early an age! And they come from far, you say?"

"From the most distant part of Siberia, Mr. Burgomaster, where their mother was exiled before they were born. We have already been five months on our journey, making short marches; no small hardship for young creatures like them. It is for them alone I seek your favour and assistance—for these poor things, who seem doomed to misfortune. For just now, when I went to look for my papers in the bag I always carried them in, I could not find the pocket-book in which I had placed them, my purse, and my cross; for, excuse me, Mr. Burgomaster, I do not say it to boast of myself, but I have been decorated by the emperor's own hand, and a man whom his hand thus distinguished cannot be a bad man, though he may unfortunately have lost his papers and his money: so now you see how we are situated, and why I was so earnest about being indemnified for the loss of my horse."

"And where and how did you lose these things?"

"I know not, Mr. Burgomaster. I am quite sure that the evening before last I took a small sum out of my purse, and that I then saw the pocket-book quite safe. The money, trifling as it was, supplied our wants through yesterday, so that I had no occasion to undo the bag again."

"And yesterday, and up to the present minute, where has your bag been kept?"

"In the room where these children slept. But this night—"

Dagobert was interrupted by the sound of approaching footsteps. It was the Prophet.

Concealed in the dark shadow of the staircase, he had overheard this conversation, and feared lest the weakness of the burgomaster should defeat the full accomplishment of his schemes now almost realized.
CHAPTER XIV.

THE RESULT.

Morok, who carried his left arm in a sling, ascended the staircase slowly, and saluted the burgomaster respectfully.

Terrified at the sinister aspect of the brute-conqueror, Rose and Blanche drew closer to the soldier, whose cheek burned again as he felt his gall rise against Morok, the cause of his distressing embarrassment. He was not aware, however, that Goliath had, at the instigation of the Prophet, stolen his pocket-book and papers.

"What do you want, Morok?" said the burgomaster, with an air half kind, half angry; "I told the innkeeper I wished to be alone."

"I came to render you a service, Mr. Burgomaster."

"A service!"

"A great service; but for which I should not have disturbed you. But a scruple has arisen in my mind."

"A scruple?"

"Yes, sir; I have reproached myself for not telling you all I knew of this man; but I was deterred by a false feeling of pity."

"Well, what then have you to disclose?"

Morok approached the judge, and spoke to him for some time in an undertone.

The burgomaster appeared at first greatly astonished, and then very attentive and anxious. From time to time an expression of surprise escaped him, then of doubt, as he looked at Dagobert and the two young girls.

By these looks, which grew darker and more scrutinizing, it was easy to perceive that the whispering of the Prophet destroyed the interest which the magistrate had felt for the orphans and the soldier, converting it into mistrust and hostility.

Dagobert saw this sudden change, and his fears, allayed for the moment, revived in double force. Rose and Blanche looked anxiously at the soldier, unable to comprehend what was passing.

"The devil!" said the burgomaster, rising hastily. "I never thought of that. Where was my head? But you see, Morok, when a man is aroused in the middle of the night he has not all his wits about him. It is a great service you have rendered me, as you truly said."

"Mind, I do not say it is certain; but—"

"Never mind, it's a thousand to one that you are right."

"It is only my suspicion, founded on certain circumstances; but still, a suspicion—"
"May lead us to the truth. And here was I, going like a bird into the snare! Again, I say, where was my head when—"

"It is so difficult to account for certain appearances—"

"To whom do you speak, my dear Morok? To whom?"

During this mysterious conversation Dagobert was on thorns; he had a presentiment that a storm was bursting upon him, and only considered how he should repress his rage.

Morok went closer to the judge, and glancing at the orphan girls, began again to speak in a low voice.

"Ah!" cried the burgomaster, with indignation, "now you are going too far."

"I affirm nothing," said Morok, hastily; "it is a simple presumption founded on—"

And again he whispered in the judge's ear.

"After all, why not?" said the judge, raising his hands to heaven. "Such people are capable of anything. He said, too, he had come from Siberia with them; what assurance have we that his whole tale is not a pack of lies? But nobody makes a fool of me twice," exclaimed the burgomaster, in a wrathful tone; for, like all persons of a weak and fickle mind, he had no mercy toward those whom he thought capable of practising any deceit on him.

"Do not, however, decide too hastily," said Morok, in a voice of hypocritical pity and compunction; "do not allow my words to have more weight than is really due to them. My position with this man (pointing to Dagobert) is, unfortunately, such that it might be imagined I was acting from resentment of the ill he has caused me; and perhaps, unknown to myself, I may be so influenced, while supposing that I am solely impelled by a love of justice, a horror of falsehood, and profound reverence for our holy religion. He who lives longest will see most—may the Lord pardon me if I err! let justice be done! If they are innocent, they will be free in a month or two."

"That is why I shall not hesitate; it is but a simple measure of prudence, and they will not die by that. Besides, the more I reflect, the more probable it seems to me. Yes, this man is a spy or a French emissary, particularly when we place beside these suspicions the outbreak of the students of Frankfort."

"And supposing it to be so, there is nothing which would excite and inflame the heads of those young fools like—" and Morok gave a quick and meaning glance at the two sisters; then, after a moment's significant silence, he added, with a sigh, "The Evil One avails himself of all means."

"Certainly it is a detestable idea, but therefore the more skilfully designed."

"Then, sir, look attentively at this man. Did you ever see a more dangerous countenance? Look!" and as he whispered, Morok pointed at Dagobert.

In spite of the control he exercised over himself, the constraint he had displayed since his arrival in this cursed auberge, and particularly since the commencement of Morok's conversation with the burgomaster, Dagobert could no longer restrain himself. He saw too clearly that his efforts to conciliate the judge were utterly destroyed by the fatal influence of the brute-tamer; and, losing all patience, he went up to him, and folding his arms across his chest, said to him, in a constrained voice,

"Are you talking of me to the burgomaster?"

"Yes," answered Morok, looking steadily at him.

"Then why not speak out?"

The convulsive twitches of the thick mustaches of Dagobert, who, having uttered these words, looked steadfastly into Morok's very eyes, betokened the violent contest which was working within him. Seeing that his adversary kept a provoking silence, he said to him, in a louder voice,

"I ask you why you speak in whispers to the burgomaster, when I am the subject of your conversation?"

"Because there are things so shameful that one would blush to say them aloud," replied Morok, insultingly.
Dagobert had till then kept his arms folded, but he suddenly extended them with his fists clenched. This rapid movement was so expressive, that the two sisters came to him uttering a cry of alarm.

"Mr. Burgomaster," said the soldier, from between his clenched teeth, "bid this man depart, or I will not answer for myself!"

"What!" said the burgomaster, angrily, "do you give orders to me? do you dare—"

"I tell you to make this man go away," said Dagobert, whose anger was now unrestrained, "or something will happen to him!"

"Dagobert, calm yourself!" exclaimed the children, taking hold of his hands.

"It is well for a miserable vagabond like you, if nothing worse, to give your orders here!" replied the burgomaster, in a rage. "What! you thought it would be enough for me, to say that you had lost your papers! You are playing a fine game, dragging these young girls about with you, who, in spite of their innocent looks, may be—"

"Scoundrel!" exclaimed Dagobert, interrupting the burgomaster, with a gesture and look so threatening that the justice was afraid to go on.

The soldier took the children by their arms, and, before they could utter a word, put them into their chamber, of which he closed the door and put the key in his pocket. He then turned hastily upon the burgomaster, who, alarmed at the threatening attitude and aspect of the veteran, recoiled several paces, and put his hand on the balustrade.

"Hear me, you!" said the soldier, grasping the judge's arm. "Just now this fellow (he pointed to Morok) insulted me; I bore it, because myself only was concerned. Again I have listened patiently to your stupid remarks, because you seemed for a moment to interest yourself in these unfortunate children; but since you have neither heart, pity, nor justice, I tell you to your beard, burgomaster though you are, that I will cross you as I have already crossed this hound (pointing again to the Prophet), if you dare to breathe one syllable against these girls which you would not say of your own daughter. Do you understand me, burgomaster?"

"What—you dare!" stammered the indignant burgomaster, "that if I speak of these two wanderers—"

"Your hat off when you speak of the daughters of the Marshal Duke de Ligny," cried the soldier, snatching off the burgomaster's bonnet and throwing it at his feet.

At this Morok thrilled with joy.

In fact, Dagobert, exasperated, giving up all hope, unfortunately allowed his indignation full vent.

When the burgomaster saw his bonnet at his feet, he looked at the tamer of brutes with an air of stupefaction, as if he could not believe that such an enormous offence had been committed.

Dagobert, regretting his hasty, and knowing that there was no hope of reconciliation left, cast a hasty glance around him, and retreating a few paces, gained the first steps of the staircase.

The burgomaster stood beside the bench in a corner of the landing-place; Morok, with his arm in a sling, to give a more serious aspect to his wound, was near the magistrate, who, deceived by Dagobert's movement, cried,

"Ah! you think to escape, after having dared to lay hands on me, you miserable old fellow!"

"Mr. Burgomaster, forgive me. I could not control a feeling too quick for me; I am sorry for my offence," said Dagobert, in a tone of repentance, and bowing very humbly.

"I have no pity for you, fellow! You want to come over me again with your humility; but I see through your tricks. You are not what you seem to be, and there may be some state secret at the bottom of all this," added the magistrate, with a very diplomatic air: "every means is resorted to by people who wish to set all Europe by the ears."
"I am but a poor devil, Mr. Burgomaster. You who have so good a heart should have pity."

"What, when you have snatched off my bonnet?"

"But you," added the soldier, turning to Morok, "you, who are the cause of all this; pity me, and do not show malice. You, who are a holy man, say at least a word in my favour to the burgomaster."

"I have said to him what I ought to say," replied the Prophet, ironically.

"Ah! now, you vagabond! you are very sorry. You thought to cozen me with your tales of wo," added the burgomaster, advancing toward Dagobert; "but, Heaven be praised, I am no longer your dupe. You will see that at Leipsic there are good dungeons for French emissaries and wandering misses; for your girls are no better than yourself. Go!" he added, swelling with impatience, "go down before me; as to you, Morok—"

The burgomaster could not conclude.

For some minutes Dagobert had only tried to gain time; he saw, with the corner of his eye, a half open door looking on the staircase, and opposite the room occupied by the orphans. He found the moment favourable, and darting
with the quickness of lightning on the burgomaster, he took him by the throat, and threw him so roughly against the half-open door, that the bewildered magistrate could not utter a word or cry, but rolled prostrate to the end of this chamber, which was in utter darkness.

Then turning on Morok, who, with his arm in a sling, seeing the staircase free, had hastened toward it, the soldier seized him by his long hair, and dragging him back, grasped him in his iron arms, put his hand over his mouth to prevent his cries, and, spite of his desperate resistance, pushed and dragged him into the chamber, at the end of which the burgomaster lay bruised and stunned.

Having doubled-locked the door, and put the key in his pocket, Dagobert darted down the staircase, which led to the courtyard. The inn-gate was closed, and it was impossible to get out that way.

The rain fell in torrents; and he saw, through the window of a lower room, lighted by a fire, the landlord and his people awaiting the decision of the burgomaster.

To bolt the door, and cut off all communication with the courtyard, was with the soldier but the work of a second, and he then went quickly up the stairs to rejoin the orphans.

Morok, recovering himself, called loudly for help; but even if his cries could have been heard at the distance, the noise of the wind and rain would have drowned them.

Dagobert had perhaps an hour before him, for not before that time, probably, suspicion would arise as to the length of his interview with the burgomaster; and suspicion once excited, there were yet the two doors to break open before they could release the burgomaster and the Prophet.

"My children," said Dagobert, abruptly entering the room of the two maidens, who had been aghast at the noise they had heard for the last few minutes, "now is the moment to prove whether or not a soldier's blood is in your veins."

"Heavens! Dagobert, what has happened?" exclaimed Blanche.

"What would you have us do?" asked Rose.

Without replying, the soldier ran to the bed, took off the sheets, tied them
together, and made a large knot at one end, which he placed at the upper part
of the shutter, first opened and then closed. Fastened inside by the knot, which
could not slip through the space between the shutter and the jamb of the win-
dow, the sheet was securely fastened, while the other end dropping outside
reached the ground; the other half of the window, being open, left a sufficient
space for the escape of the fugitives.

The veteran then took his bag, the children’s portmanteau, the reindeer-skin
pelisse, threw them all out of the window, and then made a sign to Killjoy to
jump out and take care of the things. The dog obeyed in an instant.
Rose and Blanche were amazed, and looked at Dagobert without a word.

“Now, my darlings,” he said, “the doors of the inn are closed. Courage!”
and pointing to the window, “we must get out by this way, or we shall be ar-
rested and cast into prison—you on one side and I on the other, and our journey
is ended.”

“Arrested! cast into prison?” exclaimed Rose.
“Separated from you?” cried Blanche.

“Yes, my dears! They have killed Jovial: we must escape on foot, and try
to reach Leipsic. When you are tired, I will carry you by turns; and, if I
have to beg every inch of our way, we will reach our journey’s end; but a
quarter of an hour’s delay, and all is lost! So now, dears, trust in me. Let
us see that the daughters of General Simon are no cowards, and we have still
hope to lead us on.”

The sisters took each other’s hand by mutual sympathy, as if to unite against
the common danger; their lovely faces, pale with emotion, yet expressed a sim-
ple firmness, which arose from their unbounded confidence in the old soldier.

“Be assured, Dagobert; do not fear for us,” said Rose, in a resolute voice.
“We will do what we ought to do,” added Blanche, in a voice no less firm.

“I was sure of it,” said Dagobert; “good blood will always show itself. For-
ward! You are not heavier than feathers, the sheets are strong, and it is hardly
eight feet from the window to the ground. Killjoy is waiting for you.”

“I will go first—I am eldest to-day,” said Rose, kissing Blanche affectionately;
and she hastened to the window, determined, if there was any peril, to essay it
before her sister.

Dagobert easily guessed the motive of her conduct, and said,
“My children, I understand you; but do not fear, there is no danger; I tied
the sheets securely. Now, quick, my little Rose-bud.”

Light as a bird, the young maiden sprang to the window-sill; then, aided by
Dagobert, she seized the sheet and slid gently down under the soldier’s advice,
who, leaning out of the window, encouraged her with his voice.

“Sister, do not fear,” said the young girl, in a low voice, when she touched
the ground; “it is very easy to come down so, and Killjoy is licking my
hand.”

Blanche, with courage equal to her sister’s, soon reached the ground in safety.

“Dear little things! what have they done to undergo such misfortunes! Thunder and lightning! Is there, then, an evil spell over the family?” ex-
claimed Dagobert, in his grief, when he saw the pale and resigned countenance
of the young child disappear in the darkness, rendered still more fearful by the
gusts of wind and torrents of rain.

“Dagobert, we are waiting for you: come quickly,” said the two girls under
the window. Thanks to his height, the soldier leaped, rather than slid from
the window to the ground.

Dagobert and the two girls had hardly left the White Falcon Inn a quarter
of an hour, when a violent burst resounded through the house.

The door had yielded to the efforts of the burgomaster and Morok, who had
used a heavy table for a battering-ram.

Guided by the light, they ran into the room of the orphans. It was deserted.
Morok saw the sheets hanging outside, and cried,
"Mr. Burgomaster, by this window they have escaped: they are on foot; the night is dark and stormy, and they cannot have fled far."

"Certainly not. We shall overtake them. Miserable vagabonds! Oh, I'll be revenged! Quick, Morok! Your honour is as much concerned as mine."

"My honour? More than that is concerned, Mr. Burgomaster," replied the Prophet, in a tone of bitterness. He then descended the staircase rapidly, and, opening the door of the courtyard, cried, with a resounding voice,

"Goliath, unchain the dogs! And you, landlord, bring lanterns and torches! Arm your people, open your doors! Run after the fugitives—they must not escape. We must take them, dead or alive!"
PART II.
THE STREET OF THE MILIEU-DES-URSINS.

CHAPTER I.

THE INFORMATIONS.

[In reading the rules of the order of Jesuits, under the title of De Formula Scribendi (Instit., 2, 11, p. 125–129), the development of the eighth part of the Constitution, we are amazed at the number of letters, informations, revelations, registers, and writings of every kind preserved in the archives of the society.

This body is a police, more exact and better informed than was ever found in any state. The government of Venice itself found that it was surpassed by the Jesuits, when, in 1606, it laid hands on their papers and drove them out of the city, reproaching them for their intense and wicked curiosity. This police, this secret inquisition, carried to such a pitch of perfection, evinces all the power of a government so fully informed, so persevering in its plans, so powerful in its unity, and, as their Constitutions express it, the union of its members. It may be easily understood what immense power the government of a society thus constructed must acquire, and how the general of the Jesuits was justified in saying to the Duke de Brissac, "From this room, sir, I govern not only Paris, but China; not only China, but the whole world, without any one understanding the manner in which I do it."—The Constitutions of the Jesuits, with the Declarations: Latin text, from the Prague edition, p. 470–478. Paulin, Paris, 1843.]

Morok, the beast-tamer, seeing Dagobert deprived of his horse, robbed of his papers and his money, and believing him thus deprived of every means for continuing his journey, had, before the arrival of the burgomaster, despatched Karl to Leipsic with a letter, which he was instantly to put in the post.
The address of the letter was:

"To Monsieur Rodin,
Rue du Milieu-des-Ursins,
A Paris."

About the middle of this solitary and little-known street, which is below the level of the Quai Napoléon, to which it leads, and not far from the Rue Saint Landry, there was a house of modest appearance, built at the extremity of a gloomy and narrow court, isolated from the street by a small façade, in which were an arched door, and two windows, protected by strong bars of iron.

Nothing could be more unpretending than the interior of this silent abode, judging from the furniture of a large room on the ground floor of the principal part of the building. Old gray panels covered the walls, the floor was of tiles, painted red and carefully polished, and white calico curtains hung in front of the windows.

A globe, four feet in diameter, placed on a pedestal of solid oak, was at the farther end of the apartment, opposite the fire-place.

On this large globe were a great number of small red crosses, scattered over all parts of the world, from north to south, from east to west; from the most barbarous countries, the most remote islands, to the most civilized—even to France; there was no nation which did not show many places marked with these small red crosses, which evidently served as signs of indication or points of reference.

Before a table of ebony covered with papers and placed against the wall, by the chimney side, was an empty chair; at a distance, between two windows, was a large walnut-tree bureau, above which were shelves filled with memorandum-cases.

At the end of the month of October, 1831, about eight o'clock in the morning, a man was seated at this bureau, writing.

It was M. Rodin, the correspondent of Morok, the beast-tamer.

Fifty years of age, he wore an old, threadbare, olive-coloured, greasy-collared surtout; a pocket-handkerchief was his cravat, with waistcoat and trousers of black cloth, worn white at the seams; while his feet, plunged in shoes of oiled leather, rested on a small green baize stool, which was on the red and shining floor. His gray hair lay flat on his temples, and crowned his bald forehead; his eyebrows were scarcely marked; his upper eyelid lax, and falling low, like the membrane of a reptile’s eye, half concealed his small and sharp black eye; his lips, thin and absolutely colourless, were lost in the wan hue of his lank visage, his peaked nose, and peaked chin. This livid and (it might almost be said) lipless mask seemed the more strange from its death-like inanimation, and but for the rapid motion of M. Rodin’s fingers as he stooped over his bureau, and his pen scratched along, he might have been taken for a corpse.

By the aid of a cipher (a secret alphabet) placed before him, he was transcribing, in a manner unintelligible to all but the initiated, certain passages from a long scroll of writing.

In the midst of this perfect silence, in a dull, dark day, which made this large and naked room even more gloomy, there was something repulsive in the sight of this frozen figure writing mysterious characters.

The clock struck eight.

The knocker of the outer gate sounded heavily, then a bell tinkled twice. Several doors opened and shut, and another individual entered the room.

When he saw him, M. Rodin rose, put his pen between two of his fingers, and bowed to him with an air of the deepest humility and resumed his labour without a word.

These two personages presented a striking contrast.

The new comer, older than he seemed, appeared to be thirty-six or thirty-
eight years of age, and of tall and elegant proportions; it was difficult to sus-
tain the brilliant glance of his large and sparkling gray eyes; his nose, large at
the base, was massive and angular at the extremity; his chin was well shaped,
and, being closely shaven, the blue tints of his beard contrasted broadly with
the vivid scarlet of his lips and the whiteness of his teeth, which were beautiful.
When he took off his hat and put on a black velvet cap, which was lying on the
table, he showed his bright chestnut locks, which time had hitherto left without
one gray hair. He was attired in a long military frock-coat, buttoned closely to
his chin.

The penetrating look of this man, and his largely-developed forehead, revealed
a powerful mind, while the expansion of his chest and shoulders betokened a
vigorous physical organization. His distinguished appearance, the care bestowed
upon his gloves and boots, the light perfume which came from his hair and
linen, and the easy grace of his slightest gesture, betrayed what is called "a man
of the world," and implied that he had had, and might still have, if he pleased,
success in all he aimed at, from frivolous toying to the most serious pursuit.

From this strength of understanding, power of limb, and elegance of manners
—a union so rare to meet, withal—resulted a combination the more remarkable,
insomuch as the preponderance in the upper part of his energetic features was,
in a manner, tempered by the affability of his smile, habitual but not uniform;
for, as occasion claimed it, this smile, by turns affectionate or sly, cordial or
gay, discreet or winning, increased the insinuating charm of a man who, once
seen, could never be forgotten.

Yet, in spite of these combined advantages, and although you were almost
always left under the influence of his irresistible demeanour, your feelings
would be mingled with a vague disquiet, as if the grace and exquisite urbanity
of this person's manners, the enchantment of his discourse, his delicate flattery,
and the attraction of his smile, concealed some design of treachery.

You would ask yourself, even while subdued by an involuntary sympathy, if
he were leading you to good or evil!

M. Rodin, the stranger's secretary, continued to write.

"Are there any letters from Dunkirk, Rodin?" asked his master.

"The postman has not yet come."

"Without being positively distressed about the state of my mother's health,
for she is convalescent," replied the other, "I shall not feel perfectly easy until
I have a letter from my excellent friend the Princess de Samt-Dizier. I hope
this morning will bring me good news."

"I hope so," said the secretary, as humble and submissive as he was laconic
and unsympathizing.

"Yes, I am very desirous," resumed his employer; "for one of the happiest
moments of my life was that when the Princess de Saint-Dizier informed me
that her malady, which was sudden as it was dangerous, had yielded to the
careful attentions with which my mother was nursed by her; but for this, I
should instantly have set out for the princess's estate, notwithstanding my pres-
ence here is so very requisite."

Then approaching the bureau of his secretary, he added,

"Have you made the extracts from the foreign correspondence?"

"Here is the analysis."

"All letters come addressed to the places designated, and are brought here
according to my orders?"

"Always."

"Read me the analysis of this correspondence; and if there be any letters to
which I ought to reply myself, I will let you know."

Rodin's master then began to walk up and down the room, with his hands
folded behind his back, dictating, from time to time, remarks which Rodin
carefully noted down.
The secretary took a thick volume, and began thus:

"Don Ramon Olivares acknowledges, at Cadiz, the receipt of letter No. 19, will conform to its instructions in every particular, and will deny all part in the abduction."

"Nothing to observe."

"Count Romanoff, of Riga, is in a most embarrassing dilemma."

"Tell Duplessis to send him fifty louis d'or. I was once captain in the count's regiment, and he has since supplied us with useful information."

"They have received at Philadelphia the last cargo of the 'History of France expurgated for the use of the Faithful.' They require another supply, as that is exhausted."

"Make a note to write to Duplessis. Go on."

"M. Spindler sends from Namur the secret report requested, concerning M. Ardouin."

"That must be analyzed."

"M. Ardouin sends, from the same city, the secret report requested, concerning M. Spindler."

"To be analyzed."

"Doctor Van-Ostadt, of the same city, sends a confidential note concerning M. Spindler and M. Ardouin."

"They must be compared. Continue."

"The Count Malipieri, of Turin, announces that the donation of the 300,000 francs is signed."

"Inform Duplessis. Well—"

"Don Stanislas has left the Baden waters with the Queen Marie-Ernestine. He says that the queen will gratefully receive the promised instructions, and reply in person."

"Make a note of this. I will write myself to the queen."

While Rodin was making several notes in the margin of the book he held in his hand, his master, who continued to walk up and down the room, paused before the large globe marked with the small red crosses, and gazed at it for a moment thoughtfully.

Rodin continued:

"From the opinions prevalent in certain parts of Italy, where some agitators have turned their eyes towards France, Father Orsini writes from Milan that it would be very important to diffuse, in large numbers, a small book in which our countrymen, the French, should be described as impious and debauched, robbers and cut-throats."

"It is an excellent idea, and we could easily work in the excesses committed by our troops in Italy during the wars of the Republic. Jacques Dumoulin must be employed to write this book: that man overflows with bile, gall, and venom! His pamphlet will be tremendous, and I can furnish him with some notes. But mind, Jacques Dumoulin must not be paid until the manuscript is delivered."

"Of course. If he had any money down, he would be blind drunk for eight days together in some disreputable house. We were obliged to pay him twice for his virulent letter against the pantheistical tendencies of the philosophical doctrines of Professor Martin."

"Make your memorandum, and go on."

"The merchant announces that the clerk is on the point of sending the banker to exhibit his accounts before the proper authorities."

Having accentuated the words in italics in a peculiar way, Rodin added:

"You understand?"

"Perfectly," said the other, with a start; "these were the expressions agreed upon. Well, what then?"

"But the clerk," added the secretary, "is restrained by a last scruple."

After a moment’s silence, during which his features were painfully contracted, Rodin's master replied:
THE WANDERING JEW.

"Give instructions to work on the clerk's imagination by silence and solitude, and then make him read again the list of instances in which regicide is authorized and absolved. Continue."

"The woman Sydney writes from Dresden that she awaits instructions. Violent scenes of jealousy have occurred between the father and son about her; but in their mutual reproaches and hatred, in the confidences which each has made to her against his rival, the woman Sydney has not gleaned anything on the subject we desire to fathom; she has not as yet shown preference for either, but if she delays, she fears they may suspect: which is she to prefer—the father or the son?"

"The son! the workings of jealousy would be more violent and deadly in the old man than in the young; and, to revenge himself for the preference bestowed on his son, he might very probably reveal what both have so great an interest in concealing. What next?"

"In the last three years, two female servants of Ambrosius, who was placed as pastor in that small parish among the mountains of the Valois, have disappeared, without the least trace having been obtained of their fate; a third has recently been missing. The Protestant inhabitants of the country are excited; they speak of murder and of horrible incidents."

"Until the most positive evidence of his guilt is obtained, let Ambrosius be defended against the infamous falsehoods of a party which does not shrink from the most infamous inventions. Continue."

"Thompson, of Liverpool, has at length succeeded in securing a confidential employment for Justin in the family of Lord Stewart, a rich Irish Catholic, whose mental weakness daily increases."

"Fifty louis for Thompson upon the information being duly verified. Make a note for Duplessis. Go on."

"Frank Dichestein, of Vienna," resumed Rodin, "informs us that his father has just died of cholera in a little village a few leagues from that city, for the epidemic is advancing slowly, proceeding from the north of Russia through Poland."

"True," answered Rodin's superior, interrupting him; "may this frightful scourge be arrested ere it reach France!"

"Frank Dichestein proceeds to say that his two brothers have resolved to contest the legacy left by his father, but that he is well disposed to allow it."

"Consult those charged with the bequest. What have you next?"

"The Cardinal Prince d'Amalfi will conform to the first three points of the proposition; but he will only accede to the fourth upon certain reservations."

"None will be permitted; a full and unqualified acceptance, or war. War! mark me well, and take a note of what I say—bloody and unsparing, either of himself or his creatures! The next."

"Father Paoli announces that the patriot Boccarì, head of a secret and formidable society, driven to despair at being (in consequence of the adroit insinuations infused by Paoli in the minds of his associates) accused by his friends of treason, has perished by his own hand."

"Can it be possible?" exclaimed Rodin's employer. "Boccarì! the patriot Boccarì! that dangerous enemy!"

"Boccarì!" repeated the still immovable secretary.

"Bid Duplessis send an order for twenty-five louis to Father Paoli. Make a note."

"Hausman acquaints us that the French dancer, Albertine Ducornet, is the mistress of the reigning prince, over whom she exercises the most complete influence: through her intervention the desired aim might be obtained; but this Albertine is guided by her lover, an individual now under sentence for forgery, but without whose concurrence she does nothing."

"Tell Hausman to confer with this man, and if he find him reasonable in his demands, to accede to them; also to make inquiries whether this woman has not relations in Paris."
THE WANDERING JEW.

"The Duke d'Orbano announces that the king his master will authorize the new establishment proposed, but upon the conditions previously declared."

"No conditions; either an unqualified compliance or a positive refusal. By such means we know our friends from our foes; the more unfavourable the circumstances, the greater need of showing firmness and self-reliance."

"From the same we learn that the entire diplomatic body persist in supporting the father of the young Protestant girl, who refuses to quit the convent in which she has found an asylum, unless to marry her lover, against the wishes of her father."

"Ah! the diplomatic body continue to support the father's demand, do they?"

"They do."

"Then continue to reply that the ecclesiastical power cannot suffer itself to be drawn into disputes with temporal authority."

At this instant the bell at the entrance-door rang twice.

"Go see who that is," said Rodin's master.

The former rose and left the room, while his employer continued pensively to pace the room, until his attention being attracted by the enormous globe, he stopped, and for several minutes gazed in silence on the innumerable little red crosses, which, like the meshes of an immense net, appeared to cover the whole surface of the earth.

Doubtless impressed with the consciousness of his wide-extended power, from the influence of which no quarter of the universe seemed free, the features of this man were lighted up; his large gray eye glittered, his nostril expanded, and his strongly marked features assumed an indescribable look of energy, determination, and pride.

With lofty mien and half-disdainful smile he bent over the sphere and placed his vigorous hand on the axis, looking on it with the proud air of a conqueror who felt assured of obtaining the universal dominion he coveted. No smile played on his lips; deep frowns contracted his large forehead and imparted a menacing air to his features. An artist would have chosen him as a model for the demon of pride and audacity, the evil genius of insatiable power.

When Rodin returned the features of his master had resumed their habitual expression.

"'Twas the postman," said Rodin, exhibiting the letters he carried in his hand. "There is nothing from Dunkirk."

"Nothing!" exclaimed his master; and the pain depicted on his countenance contrasted singularly with the haughty and unbending expression it so lately wore.

"No news of my mother!" he resumed; "six-and-thirty hours more of suspense!"

"It seems to me that if Madame la Princesse had bad news to communicate she would have written. The convalescence probably continues."

"It is likely that you are right, Rodin; but I cannot tranquillize myself, and if to-morrow does not bring me satisfactory intelligence I shall set off to the princess. Oh! why would my mother choose to pass the autumn in that place! I fear that the situation of Dunkirk is unfavourable to her."

After a brief silence, during which he still continued to pace the room, he added,

"Well, read those letters. Whence do they come?"

Rodin, having examined their postmarks, replied,

"Among the four are three relative to the great and important affair of the medals."

"Heaven be praised, if the tidings are good!" exclaimed Rodin's master, in a tone of anxiety that evinced the importance attached to this matter.

"One is from Charlestown, and relates, no doubt, to the missionary Gabriel," rejoined Rodin. "The other, from Batavia, gives information, doubtless, concerning the Indian Djalma. This is from Leipsic, and is, I presume, in confirmation of that of yesterday, in which Morok, the tamer of beasts, announced
that, in pursuance of orders received, and without in any way involving himself, the daughters of General Simon were unable to continue their journey."

At the name of General Simon a cloud passed over the features of Rodin's master.

CHAPTER II.

ORDERS.

[The provincial agencies correspond with that in Paris, and are also in direct communication with the general, who resides at Rome. The correspondence of the Jesuits, so active, various, and so wonderfully organized, is devised to supply the chiefs with every information they may require. Every day the general receives a mass of reports which check each other. In the central dépôt at Rome there are immense registers, in which are kept the names of all the Jesuits, their associates, and all persons of consequence, friends or enemies, with whom they have connexion or business. In these registers are detailed, without alteration, without hatred or passion, the facts relating to the life of each individual. It is the most gigantic biographical collection ever formed. The conduct of a frivolous woman and the concealed faults of a statesman are recapitulated in this book with calm impartiality. Drawn up for a useful purpose, these biographies are necessarily precise. When it is requisite to act upon a certain individual, the book is opened, and instantly his life, character, qualities, defects, projects, family, friends, and most secret connexions are known. Imagine, now, what immense control a book like this, which includes the entire world, must give to a society! I do not speak lightly of these registers—I have the fact from one who has seen the collection, and who knows the Jesuits thoroughly. This must afford matter for reflection for families who admit with facility into their domestic circle members of a community by whom the study of biography is so skilfully carried out."

—Libri, member of the Institute: Letters on the Clergy.

After having overcome the involuntary emotion which the name or the recollection of General Simon had caused him, Rodin's master said,

"Do not open these letters from Leipsic, Charlestown, and Batavia; the information they contain will doubtless classify itself forthwith. That will spare us a double employment of time."

The secretary looked at his master with an inquiring air.

The other continued:

"Have you finished the note in reference to the medals?"

"Here it is; I have just finished it in ciphers."

"Read it to me; and then, according to the order of dates, add the fresh informations which these three letters must contain."

"By which," said Rodin, "these informations will duly fall into their right places."

"I wish to see," added the other, "if this note be clear and sufficiently full; for you have not forgotten that the person to whom it is addressed must not know the whole?"

"That I remembered, and have drawn it up accordingly."

"Read."

M. Rodin read what follows very carefully and slowly:

"A hundred and fifty years since a French Protestant family voluntarily expatriated itself in anticipation of the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and with the intention of escaping the rigorous and just decrees already issued against the Reformers, those inveterate enemies of our holy religion.

"Among the members of this family, some took refuge first in Holland, then in the Dutch colonies; others in Poland, others in Germany, others in England, and some in America."
"It is believed that at this time there are only seven surviving descendants of this family, which has experienced remarkable vicissitudes of fortune, since its representatives are now placed on almost every step of the ladder of society, from the monarch to the mechanic.

"These direct or indirect descendants are,

"By the Mother's side:

"The demoiselles Rose and Blanche Simon, minors.

"(General Simon married, at Warsaw, a female descendant of the said family.)

"The sieur François Hardy, a manufacturer at Plessis, near Paris.

"The Prince Djalma, son of Kadja-Sing, king of Mondi.

"(Kadja-Sing married, in 1802, a female descendant of the said family, then settled at Batavia, Isle of Java, a Dutch settlement.)

"By the Father's side:

"The sieur Jacques Rennepon, called Couche-tout-nud, a mechanic

"The demoiselle Adrienne de Cardoville, daughter of the Count de Rennepon, duke de Cardoville.

"The sieur Gabriel Rennepon, a missionary in foreign parts.

"Each member of this family possesses, or ought to possess, a bronze medal, on which are engraved the following inscriptions:

```
VICTIME
DE
L.C.D.J.
PRIEZ POUR MOI.
PARIS
LE 13 FÉVRIER
1832.
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A PARIS
RUE STRANDGREN,
DANS UN SIÈCLE ET DEMI
VOUS Serez
LE 13 FÉVRIER 1832.
PRIEZ POUR MOI.
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"These words and this date indicate that there is some powerful reason why all of them should be in Paris on the 13th of February, 1832, and that not by proxies or by attorney, but in person, whether of age or under age, married or single.

"But other persons have an immense interest in preventing any one of the descendants of this family from being in Paris on the 13th of February, except Gabriel Rennepon, the foreign missionary.

"At all hazards, therefore, it is absolutely necessary that Gabriel alone be present at this interview, appointed for the representatives of this family a century and a half ago.

"To prevent the six other persons from being in, or coming to Paris on that particular day, or to prevent their attendance at the appointment, much has already been done; but a great deal more must be accomplished to ensure the entire success of this object, which is considered as the most important and vital affair of this time, because of its probable results."

"That is very true," said Rodin's employer, interrupting him, and shaking his head thoughtfully; "add, that the consequences of success are incalculable, while we dare not contemplate those of failure. In a word, it involves the very fact of existence, or virtual death for many years to come. Thus, to succeed, all means possible must be resorted to, and nothing allowed to impede the progress to perfect completion; while, at the same time, appearances must be carefully preserved."
"I have written that," said Rodin, after he had added the words dictated to him.

"Continue."

Rodin continued thus:

"To facilitate or ensure the success of the affair in question, it is necessary to give some particular and secret details as to the seven representatives of this family. These details can be verified, and, if requisite, given in full minitiae; for cross informations having been received, we have the amplest particulars. We proceed in order of the persons, and only mention facts which have occurred up to this day."

(Note, No. 1.)

"The girls Rose and Blanche Simon are twins; age, about fifteen; lovely faces, so like each other that they are mistaken one for the other; disposition, gentle and timid, but susceptible of strong impulses; brought up in Siberia by their mother, a woman of strong mind, and a Deist, they are completely ignorant of everything connected with our holy religion.

"General Simon, separated from his wife before they were born, does not know to this hour that he has two daughters.

"It was believed that they were prevented from reaching Paris on the 13th of February, by having sent the mother to a place of exile more remote than that to which she was first sentenced; but the mother being dead, the governor-general of Siberia, who is entirely devoted to us, believing (by a deplorable error) that the affair was only a personal one, affecting solely the wife of General Simon, unfortunately allowed these young girls to return to France under the protection of an old soldier.

"This man, quick-witted, faithful, and resolute, is noted as dangerous.

"The demoiselles Simon are inoffensive. There is every reason to believe that, at this time, they are detained in or near Leipsic."

Rodin's master, interrupting him, said,

"Now read the letter received by this post from Leipsic, and you will be able to perfect the information."

Rodin read, and exclaimed,

"Good news! the two young girls and their guide contrived to escape during the night from the inn of the White Falcon, but being pursued, they were overtaken a league from Mockern, sent on to Leipsic, and there locked up in jail as vagabonds; besides this, the soldier, who was their conductor, was accused and convicted of resistance, assault, and contempt of a magistrate."

"It is therefore almost certain, thanks to the tediousness of German law proceedings (and we will contrive to protract them), that the young girls will not be able to be here on the 13th of February," said the employer to Rodin.

"Add this fact to the note by a postscript."

The secretary obeyed, and added to the note the substance of Morok's letter, saying,

"I have done that."

"Then continue," said his master.

Rodin complied thus:

(Note, No. 2.)

M. François Hardy, Manufacturer at Plessis, near Paris.

"A strong-minded, rich, intelligent, active, upright, well-informed man; greatly beloved by his work-people, owing to the numerous improvements he has established in their favour; never fulfilling the duties of our holy religion; marked as a very dangerous man; but the hatred and envy which he excites in other manufacturers, particularly M. le Baron Tripeaud, his competitor, may be used against him. If other springs of action against or upon him be required, the register will be referred to: it is very full, as this individual has long been marked and watched."
"He has been so carefully misled with regard to the medal that, up to this time, he does not know the importance of the interests it represents; moreover, he is constantly watched, looked after, and led, without the slightest suspicion on his part. One of his most intimate friends betrays him, and his most secret thoughts are known."

(NOTE, No. 3.)

The Prince Djalma.

"Eighteen years of age—of energetic and noble disposition, proud, independent, and wild; a favourite of General Simon, who commands the troops of his father Kadja-Sing, in his struggle against the English in India. Djalma is mentioned only to complete the account, as his mother died very young, and her parents, who remained in Batavia, dying subsequently, their small property has not been claimed by Djalma, or the king his father, and it is presumable that they are both ignorant of the deep interests which appertain to the possession of the medal in question, which forms part of the inheritance of Djalma’s mother."

Rodin’s master interrupted him and said,

"Now read the letter from Batavia, that your information as to Djalma may be complete."

Rodin read:

"More good news! M. Joshua Van Daël, a merchant of Batavia (educated in our house at Pondicherry), has learned from his correspondent at Calcutta that the old Indian king was killed in his late battle with the English. His son Djalma, dispossessed of his throne, was sent temporarily to a fortress in India as prisoner of state."

"We are at the end of October," observed the other, "and, admitting that the Prince Djalma was set at liberty, and could now leave India, he could scarcely reach Paris by the month of February."

M. Joshua," replied Rodin, "regrets that he has not yet been able to prove his zeal in this case: if, contrary to all probability, the Prince Djalma has been released, or contrives to escape, it is certain that he would come instantly to Batavia to reclaim his maternal inheritance, as he had nought in the world beside. We might, in this event, rely on the devotion of M. Joshua Van Daël. He requests, in return, by the next courier, precise information as to the fortune of the Baron Tripeaud, manufacturer and banker, with whom he is connected in commercial affairs."

"Reply in an evasive manner, as M. Joshua has not yet shown anything but zeal. Complete the information respecting Djalma with these fresh particulars."

Rodin wrote.

At the end of a few seconds his employer said, with a singular expression,

"M. Joshua does not mention General Simon, in referring to the death of Djalma’s father and the prince’s imprisonment?"

"M. Joshua does not say a word of him," replied the secretary, as he continued his writing.

Rodin’s master kept silence, and walked thoughtfully up and down the room. At the end of a few minutes, Rodin said.

"I have written that."

"Continue, then."

(NOTE, No. 4.)

The Sieur Jacques Rennepont, called Couche-tout-Nud.

"A workman in the manufactory of the Baron Tripeaud, the competitor of M. François Hardy. This artisan is a drunkard, indolent, extravagant, riotous—not deficient in understanding, but idleness and debauchery have utterly ruined him. One of our sub-agents, a very clever fellow, and much trusted, has placed himself in communication with a girl named Cephyse Soliveau, called the Queen-Bacchanal. She is the mistress of this artisan. Through her our
agent has begun an intimacy with him, and we may look on him, from this
time, as almost withdrawn from any interest which might call for his presence
at Paris on the 13th of February."

(Nota. No. 5.)

Gabriel Rennepont, Foreign Missionary.

"Distant relative of the preceding, but knows nothing of the man or the rela-
tionship: a forsaken orphan, adopted by François Baudoin, wife of a soldier
surnamed Dagobert.

"If, contrary to all expectation, this soldier should come to Paris, we should
have a strong hold on him, through his wife, who is a worthy creature, ignorant,
credulous, of exemplary piety, and over whom we have long had entire control
and influence. It was by her intervention that Gabriel was induced to take
orders, in spite of his own repugnance to a clerical life.

"Gabriel is twenty-five years of age, and of a disposition as sweet as his
countenance; he has rare and solid virtues. Unfortunately, he was brought up
with his brother by adoption, Agricola, the son of Dagobert. This Agricola is
a poet and a mechanic—a capital workman, and employed at M. François
Hardy's; imbued with detestable doctrines; idolizes his mother; honest, hard-
working, but destitute of all religious feeling. Noted as very dangerous, which
made his intimacy with Gabriel so much to be feared.

"Gabriel, in spite of his perfect qualities, sometimes gives cause for alarm;
we have, therefore, delayed coming to a full understanding with him—a false
step might render him a most dangerous man. He must, therefore, be carefully
managed, at least until the 13th of February, because on him, and on his pres-
ence in Paris on that day, rest immense hopes and not less important interests.

"Carrying out this system of management with him, he has had leave to join
a mission to America, for he unites to an extreme gentleness of disposition per-
fect intrepidity and an adventurous spirit, which could only be satisfied by al-
lowing him to share in the perilous life of the missionaries. Fortunately, the
most rigid instructions have been given to the superiors at Charlestown that
they should not expose a life so precious. They are to send him to Paris at
least a month or two before the 13th of February."

Rodin's employer again interrupted him, saying,

"Read the letter from Charlestown, and see what it contains that will enable
you to complete this information."

Having read, Rodin replied,

"Gabriel is expected daily from the Rocky Mountains, where he insisted on
going alone on a mission."

"What imprudence!"

"Oh! doubtless he ran no risk, since he has himself announced his approaching
return to Charlestown. On his arrival, which cannot be later than the mid-
dle of this month, he will be immediately sent to France."

"Add that to the note about him," said Rodin's master.

"I have done so," was the reply, after a few minutes.

"Now, then, go on."

Rodin complied.

(Nota. No. 6.)

Mademoiselle Adrienne Rennepont de Cardoville.

"Distant relative (and ignorant of the relationship) of Jacques Rennepont,
called Couche-tout-Nud, and of Gabriel Rennepont, the missionary priest. She
is nearly twenty-one years of age, with a countenance singularly attractive, and
of remarkable beauty, though with hair of reddish tinge; an understanding re-
markable for its originality; an immense fortune; of lively passions. There is
much apprehension as to the future life of this young person, when her incredi-
ble boldness of disposition is considered. Fortunately, her acting guardian, the
Baron Tripeaud (baron since 1829, and formerly man of business to the late Count de Rennepon, duke of Cardoville), is entirely in the interest of, and almost dependant on, the aunt of Mademoiselle de Cardoville. We rely, and almost with certainty, on this worthy and respectable relative, and on M. Tripeaud, to combat and subdue the strange and unheard-of projects which this young lady, as determined as she is independent, openly announces, and which, unfortunately, cannot be usefully directed to the importance of the affair in hand, for—"

Rodin could not proceed. He was interrupted by two blows carefully struck on the door.

The secretary arose and went to see who knocked, and, remaining outside for a moment, returned, bearing two letters in his hand, saying,

"The princess has availed herself of the departure of an estafette to send—"

"Give me the princess's letter!" exclaimed the master of Rodin, not allowing him to conclude. "At length, then, I have news of my mother!"

But scarcely had he read a few lines of the epistle before he turned pale, while his features expressed the most lively astonishment mingled with the deepest distress.

"O God!" he cried, "my mother! my beloved mother!"

"Has anything happened to her?" exclaimed Rodin, rising in alarm at the sudden exclamation of his patron.

"The favourable symptoms have proved deceitful," replied the other, mournfully, "and she has relapsed into an almost hopeless state; still, her physician thinks that my presence might yet save her, for she incessantly calls for me, and prays to behold me once again, that she may die in peace. And shall I not perform so sacred a duty? to fail were to be a parricide! Heaven grant I may reach her in time! Travelling night and day, it will be two days ere I can reach the princess's estate."

"My God!" said Rodin, clasping his hands, and raising his eyes to heaven, "what a blow!"

The superior hastily rang the bell; it was answered by an old domestic, to whom he said,

"Throw into the carriage-box such things as are indispensably necessary for a journey; bid the porter take a cabriolet, and go instantly to order post-horses. I must depart within an hour."

The servant hurriedly withdrew.

"My mother! my mother! If I should never see her again! It would be dreadful!" said the master, sinking into a chair, overwhelmed with anguish, and covering his face with his hands.

And this burst of grief was sincere. This man had for his mother the most devoted affection; the divine sentiment had remained untouched and pure through all the phases of his life, guilty as some of them had been.

After some moments Rodin ventured to arouse him, by showing him the second letter, and saying,

"This has just arrived from Duplessis; it is most important, and in extreme haste."

"See what it contains, and reply to it; I cannot think now."

"But," said Rodin, presenting the epistle to his master, "this letter is confidential. I cannot open it, as you see by the mark on the envelope."

As the eyes of the superior fell on the mark, his countenance assumed an indescribable expression of fear and respect; with a trembling hand he broke the seal; the billet merely contained these words:

"Leaving all other matters, set out without an instant's delay; come—Duplessis will take your place, and has all his instructions."

"Merciful powers!" exclaimed the distracted man; "go without seeing my mother! It is dreadful—impossible! It might be the means of killing her! Yes, it would make me a parricide!"
As he uttered these words, his eyes fell on the huge globe, dotted over with small red crosses, and a sudden change came over him. He seemed to regret the impetuosity of his grief, and by degrees his countenance, though still sorrowful, recovered its calm, grave expression. Giving the fatal letter to his secretary, he said, stifling a heavy sigh, "Number and classify this paper."

Rodin took the letter, numbered it, and placed it in a particular case.

After a short pause, the master continued:

"You will receive directions from M. Duplessis, and work with him. Give him the paper concerning the medals, he will know to whom it is to be addressed. You will write to Batavia, Leipsic, and Charlestown, as I dictated. By all means, prevent the daughters of General Simon from quitting Leipsic; hasten the arrival of Gabriel, and should (though it is highly improbable) Prince Djalma arrive in Batavia, inform M. Joshua Van Dael that it is expected he will employ his zeal and energy to detain him there."

So saying, the man who could exhibit this self-possession at the moment when a dying mother called for him in vain, retired to his apartment.

Rodin occupied himself in transcribing in ciphers the replies he had been directed to send.

At the close of three quarters of an hour the bells of the post-horses were heard; the old domestic, having first discreetly tapped at the door, opened it, saying, "The carriage is ready!" Rodin gave a slight inclination of the head, and the servant retired.

The secretary, in his turn, knocked at the door of his master's chamber, who, calm and collected, but ghastly pale, came forth, bearing a letter in his hand.

"For my mother," he said; "let a courier be sent off instantly."

"This instant," replied the secretary.

"And despatch the three letters for Leipsic, Batavia, and Charlestown to-day by the usual conveyance; it is of the utmost importance, as you know."

Such were the last words of this man, who, obeying pitiless orders without pity, departed without making an effort to see his mother.

His secretary respectfully accompanied him to the carriage.

"What route do I take?" asked the courier, turning round on his saddle.

"To Italy," replied Rodin's master, with a sigh so deep that it more resembled a sob.

As the carriage dashed off at full speed, Rodin, who had bowed with profound respect, shrugged his shoulders disdainfully, and then returned to the large, cold, naked apartment. And now his attitude, demeanour, and countenance underwent a sudden transformation.

No longer the mere automaton yielding an implicit and mechanical obedience, he seemed to increase in height, while his hitherto impassive features and downcast eyes were lighted up by an expression of fiendish craft, while a sardonic grin played on his thin pale lips, and a sinister expression of joy diffused itself over his cadaverous visage.

He, too, paused before the ponderous globe, contemplating it in silence as his master had done. Then stooping over it, and almost embracing it with his long arms, he continued to feast his reptile gaze on its dotted surface: then passing his bony finger over the polished surface of the globe, he, by turns, tapped with his broad and dirty nail on three of the places marked with red crosses, and as he touched each, so widely distant from the others, he named it aloud with a malignant chuckle—"Leipsic, Charlestown, Batavia." Then he was silent, absorbed in meditation.

This old, sordid, and ill-dressed man, with his livid, death-like visage, thus crawling, as it were, over the globe, was even more fearful than his employer, when the latter, with haughty and imperious air, placed his daring clutch on the pole of that globe, which he seemed aspiring to rule by strength, audacity, and violence. The one resembled an eagle hovering over his prey, which he may
sometimes miss by the very elevation of his flight; the other reminded you of a reptile, which, following its victim in darkness and silence, never fails to entwine it with a deadly fold.

At length Rodin returned to his desk, briskly rubbing his hands, and wrote the following letter, using a cipher which was unknown to his master:

"Paris, 09 o'clock, morning.

He has gone; but he hesitated!

His dying mother called him to her side; he might, perhaps, they told him, save her by his presence. And therefore he exclaimed, 'Not go to my mother! It would be parricidal!'

Nevertheless, he has gone; but he hesitated!

'I watch him every moment.

'These lines will be at Rome as quickly as himself.

'P.S.—Tell the cardinal prince that he may rely on me, but, in my turn, I expect him to serve me actively. At any moment the seventeen votes at his command may be useful to me. He must, therefore, endeavour to increase the number of his adherents."

After having folded and sealed this letter, Rodin placed it in his pocket.

Ten o'clock struck — this was M. Rodin's breakfast hour. He arranged his papers and placed them in a drawer, of which he kept the key, brushed his greasy old hat with the sleeve of his coat, took up a patched umbrella, and went out.*

While these two men, from this obscure retreat, matured their plot against the seven descendants of a once proscribed family, a strange, mysterious protector was taking measures to preserve this family, with which he likewise claimed affinity.

* After having cited the excellent and courageous "Letters" of M. Libri, and the "Constitution of the Jesuits," it becomes our duty equally to make mention of the many daring and conscientious productions on the Society of Jesus, recently published by Messieurs Dupin l'Aubet, Michelet, Ed. Quinet, Génin, the Count de Saint-Priest—writings full of the highest and most impartial perspicacity, in which the fatal influence of the theories promulgated by this order are so admirably displayed and censured. We should deem ourselves happy if the few humble stones we bring serve to aid in the powerful and, let us hope, lasting defence raised by these noble-spirited and right-minded men against the tides of this impure and formidable stream.—E. S.
CHAPTER III.

EPILOGUE.

Look upon a scene, rural, almost savage. It is a high hill covered with vast blocks of granite, from among which, few and far between, are birch-trees and oaks, whose leaves already show the tints of autumn. These large trees stand out in bold relief against the red light of the setting sun, resembling the reflection of a fire.

From this height the eye plunges into a deep valley, which, shady and fertile, is half obscured by the thin vapour of the evening mist. The rank meadows, the clumps of umbrageous trees, the fields, shorn of their ripened grain, mingle in one sombre and uniform hue, contrasting strongly with the clear blue of the firmament.

Steeples of gray stone or slate shoot up, in various places, their sharp points from the bottom of the valley, for several villages are scattered through it, on the borders of a long line of road extending from north to west.

It is the hour of rest; it is the hour when generally the window of each hut shines with the sparkling blaze of the rustic fire, and is seen from afar through the shade of the foliage, while the curling smoke, pouring from the chimneys, ascends gently toward heaven.

Yet, strange to say, it would appear that throughout this district the hearths are untenanted—deserted. Still more strange, more fearful still, all the bells are tolling the funeral knell of the dead.

All activity, motion, life, seem concentrated in this dismal sound, which echoes far and wide. But at length, in this village almost wrapped in darkness, the lights begin to appear.
These are not produced by the bright and joyful flame of the rustic hearth, but are red and dull, like a watch-fire seen through the evening fog.

And these lights do not remain motionless; they move—move slowly toward the cemetery of each church.

Then the death-knell redoubles, the air trembles under the heavy clang of the bells, and, at rare intervals, hymns for the repose of the dead rise faintly to the summit of the hill.

Wherefore so many burials? What is this valley of desolation? Where the peaceful strains that should follow the day's labour are displaced by the hymns for the departed—where the repose of evening is replaced by the repose of death.

What is this valley of desolation, wherein each village bewails so many dead at the same time, and inter them at the same hour, on the same night?

Alas! the mortality is so rife, so rapid, so fearful, that hardly enough of the living are left to bury the dead. During the day severe and indispensable labour keeps the living in their fields, and at night only, on their return, are they able, though worn out by fatigue, to make that deeper furrow in the soil, in which they deposit their brethren—like grains of wheat in the ploughed land.

And this valley is not alone in its desolation.

For many wretched years many villages, many towns, many cities, nay, immense districts, have been like this valley, their hearth-fires extinct and forsaken; have seen, like this valley, mourning substituted for joy—the death-toll replace the festival rejoicings; have, like this valley, wept for many dead on the same day, and buried them at night by the ghastly light of the funereal torch.

For through those dreadful years a terrible traveller has slowly overrun the earth from pole to pole—from the farthest parts of India and Asia to the snows of Siberia—from the snows of Siberia to the shores of the Atlantic ocean. This traveller, mysterious as death, slow as eternity, implacable as destiny, terrible as the hand of God, was—

The Cholera!!
The noise of the funeral bells and hymns ascended still from the depths of the valley to the summit of the hill like a loud and wailing voice.

The light of the funereal torches was seen afar through the gloom of the evening mist.

The twilight was not yet obscured—that singular glimmering, which gives to forms the most defined a vague, indefinite, and fantastic aspect.

But the stony and resounding soil of the mountain path has given the echo of a slow, firm, and equal tread: a man has passed between the black trunks of the tall trees.

His stature was lofty; he kept his head bent down upon his breast; his countenance was noble, gentle, and sad; his eyebrows, united into one, extended from one temple to the other, and seemed to trace on his forehead a mark of sinister aspect.

This man seemed not to hear the distant tinklings of the funeral bells; and yet, but two days before, tranquillity, contentedness, health, and joy reigned in these villages which he had slowly traversed, and now left behind him wretched and deserted.

But the traveller wended onward, absorbed in his reflections.

"The 13th of February approaches—they come; those days in which the descendants of my beloved sister, these last branches of our race, should be assembled in Paris."

"Alas! for the third time, one hundred and fifty years ago, persecutions scattered all over the earth that family which so tenderly I have followed from age to age for eighteen centuries, in the midst of their wanderings, their exiles, their changes of religion, of fortune, and of name!

"Oh! this family, the progeny of my sister—the sister of me, a poor artisan*—what contrasts has it not presented of abasement, of obscurity, of brilliancy, of miseries, of glory!

"By how many virtues has it been illustrated, by how many vices stained!

"The history of this one family is the history of all mankind.

"Passing through so many generations, flowing through the veins of the poor and rich, the sovereign and the robber, the wise and the foolish, the coward and the brave, the pious and the atheist, the blood of my sister has been perpetuated to this time.

"What of this family remains at this hour?

"Seven descendants!

"Two orphan girls, children of a proscribed mother and a proscribed father—

"A dethroned prince—

"A poor missionary priest—

"A man in the circumstances of middle life—

"A young maiden of illustrious birth, and vast fortune—

"A mechanic—

"And among them are comprised the virtues, the courage, the degradation, the splendours, the miseries of our race!

"Siberia—India—America—France—Fate has thrown them in all these countries!

"Instinct warns me when one of them is in danger—then, from north to south, from east to west, I go to them. Yesterday, beneath the ices of the pole—today, in the temperate zone—to-morrow, beneath the tropics' scorching ray; but alas! often at the moment when my presence would save them, an invisible hand impels me, the whirlwind hurries me away, and—

"Go on! go on!

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* According to the legend, the "Wandering Jew" is a poor shoemaker of Jerusalem. When Christ, bearing his cross, passed before his house, and asked his leave to rest for a moment on the stone bench at his door, the Jew replied harshly, "Go on—go on!" and refused him. "It is thou shalt go on till the end of time!" was Christ's reply, in a sad but severe tone. For more details, our readers should refer to the eloquent and learned notice of M Charles Maguin, which introduces M. Ed. Quinet's magnificent epic of "Ahasuerus."—Eugène Sue.
"Let me finish my task!
"Go on!
"One hour only! One hour of rest!
"Go on!
"Alas! I leave those I love on the very brink of an abyss!
"Go on! Go on!
"Such is my punishment. If it is great, my crime was greater still!
"A mechanic, doomed to privation and misery, misfortune made me wicked.
"Oh! cursed—cursed forever be the day when, as I was toiling, gloomy, desperate, because, in spite of my constant labour, my family were still in want, Christ passed before my door!
"Overwhelmed with insults, borne down by blows, bearing with pain his heavy cross, he asked of me leave to rest, for one moment only, on my stone bench. His forehead poured down with sweat, his feet were bleeding, he was worn and weary; and, with touching sweetness, he said to me, 'I suffer!' 'And I also suffer,' I answered, repulsing him with rage—'I suffer; but no one comes to my aid. The pitiless make others pitiless. Go on! Go on!'
"Then he, heaving a deep sigh, said to me,

"'And thou shalt go on, until thy day of redemption; so does He will it, the Lord who is in heaven.'
"And my chastisement began.
"Too late did I see my error; too late have I known repentance; too late have I known charity; too late, in short, have I understood the Divine words of him I outraged—those words which ought to be the law of all human kind—

'LOVE ONE ANOTHER.'

"In vain, for ages, seeking to deserve forgiveness, deriving my strength and eloquence from these heavenly words, have I filled with pity and love many hearts that overflowed with envy and hatred; in vain have I inspired many souls with a holy horror of oppression and injustice.

"The day of mercy has not yet arrived!
"And as the first man, by his fall, devoted his posterity to misfortune, so may it be said, that I, an artisan, have devoted all artisans to eternal misery, and that they expiate my crime; for they alone, in eighteen centuries, have not yet been emancipated.

"For eighteen centuries, the powerful and the happy say to these sons of labour what I said to the imploring and suffering Christ—

"Go on! Go on!

"And these people, like him, broken down with fatigue, and bearing a heavy cross, say, as he did, with bitter sadness, 'Oh! for pity's sake, some moments of rest—we are exhausted!'

"Go on!

"But if we die by the way, what then will become of our little ones, our old mothers?

"Go on! Go on!

"And for ages they and I go on, and suffer—suffer, while no pitying voice says to us, Enough!

"Alas! such is my chastisement; it is terrible—it is twofold.

"I suffer in the name of all humanity, when I see the wretched people sacrificed, without relaxation, to rude and ungrateful toil.

"I suffer in the name of my family when I cannot—I, poor and wandering—come to the rescue of my own, of the descendants of a dearly beloved sister.

"But when my grief o'ermasters my strength—when I foresee for my kindred a danger from which I cannot save them—then traversing worlds, my thoughts fly to seek that woman—cursed like me—that daughter of a queen,* who, like me the son of an artisan, goes on and on, till the day of her redemption.

* According to a legend but little known, Herodias was condemned to wander till the Day of Judgment, for having demanded John the Baptist's head.
"Once only in a century, even as two planets approach each other in their revolutions, may I meet this woman—during the fatal week of the Passion.

"And after this interview, full of terrible recollections and awful grief, we, the wandering stars of eternity, again proceed on our endless course.

"And she, the only one on earth who, like me is present at the close of each century, and says, 'Again!' she, from one end of the universe to the other, responds to my thought.

"She, who alone in the world partakes my dreadful destiny, would also share the sole interest which has for ages consoled me. These descendants of my sister she too loves—protects them also. For them also, from the east to the west, from the north to the south, she goes, she comes.

"But, alas! the invisible hand impels her also—the whirlwind hurries her away likewise. And—

"'Go on!'

"'Let me but complete my task,' she too exclaims.

"'Go on!'

"'One hour—one single hour of rest!'

"'Go on!'

"'I leave those I love on the brink of an abyss!'

"Go on! Go on!"

While this man thus passed along the mountain, absorbed in his thoughts, the evening breeze, till then but light, had increased, the wind became more and more violent, and lightning darted along the sky: while deep and protracted howlings announced the coming storm. Suddenly, this accursed man, who could neither weep nor smile, shuddered.
No physical pain could reach him, yet he placed his hand suddenly on his heart, as if he had experienced some deadly shock.

"Oh!" he cried, "I feel it! At this hour, many of my race, the descendants of my dearly beloved sister, suffer and undergo great peril; some in uttermost India, others in America, others here in Germany. The struggle again commences—devilish passions are again excited. Oh! thou who hearest me, thou, wandering and accursed as I am, Herodias, aid me to protect them; let my prayer reach thee in the solitudes of America, where at this moment thou art! Oh! that we may be in time!"

Then a remarkable phenomenon occurred. It was now night.

This man made an effort to return quickly on his path; but an invisible force prevented him, and thrust him in the opposite direction.

At this moment the tempest burst forth in all its fearful majesty.

One of those whirlwinds which uproot trees and tear up rocks passed over the mountain top, rapid and terrible as the levin bolt.

In the midst of the howling of the storm, by the glare of the lightning, the man with the black-marked forehead was seen hurrying along the mountain side, and, descending with rapid strides across the rocks and trees, bent beneath the power of the hurricane.

His step was no longer slow, firm, composed; but painfully impelled, like that of one hurried on by an irresistible force, or whom a fearful storm carried away in its whirlwind.

In vain did the man extend his supplicating hands toward heaven. Soon he disappeared in the darkness of the night and the howl of the tempest.
PART III.
The Stranglers.

CHAPTER I.
The Ajoupa.

ASSING from M. Rodin, despatching his universal correspondence from the Rue du Milieu-des-Ursins, at Paris; from the daughters of General Simon, after having left the inn of the White Falcon as fugitives, and now, with Dagober, confined as prisoners at Leipsic; we go to other scenes, in which they were deeply interested, and which were occurring at the same moment, at the other extremity of the world, in the very heart of Asia, in the isle of Java, not far from the city of Batavia, the residence of M. Joshua Van Daël, one of the correspondents of M. Rodin.

Java! that magnificent and fearful clime, where the most lovely flowers conceal hideous reptiles; where the most tempting fruits contain subtle poisons; where grow those splendid trees whose shadow is death; where the vampire, an enormous bat, sucks the blood of the victims whose sleep he prolongs, by wafting over them an air full of freshness and perfume, for the most briskly agitated fan is not more rapid than the motion of the vast and scented wings of this monster.

The month of October, 1831, is nearly at its close.

It is noon, an hour almost deadly for any one who dares the burning sun, which flecks the blue enamel of the sky with streaks of blazing light.

An ajoupa, a sort of sleeping pavilion, made with mats of bulrush stretched upon thick bamboos driven deeply into the ground, might be seen in the midst
of the blue shade cast by a tuft of trees, whose verdure was as bright as the
greenest porcelain; those trees, of fantastic forms, were here bent into the shape
of arcades—there straight as arrows—there spread out like parasols, and so tufty,
so thick, so entangled one in the other, that the roof they formed was impene-
trable to rain.

The ground, always marshy in spite of the glowing heat, disappeared here be-
neath the masses of creepers, fern, and thick rushes, all in the freshness and vig-
our of rank vegetation, and which, growing almost to the top of the ajoupa, con-
cealed it like a nest amid the grass.

Nothing could be more suffocating than this atmosphere, loaded with moist
exhalations, like the steam of boiling water, and impregnated with the most
overpowering and pungent odours; for the cinnamon-tree, the ginger, the gar-
denia, the stephanotis, mingling among these trees and creepers, gave out in
volumes their penetrating odours.

The hut was covered with large banana leaves; at one end was a square apen-
ture, which served for a window, trellised very finely with vegetable fibres, to
prevent the noxious reptiles and venomous insects from entering.

The vast trunk of a dead tree, still standing, but much bent, whose top touched
the roof of the ajoupa, sprang from the underwood; from each crevice of its
black, rugged, and moss-covered bark appeared a peculiar and fantastic flower:
the wing of a butterfly is not of more fragile tissue, of more brilliant purple, or
more velvety black—those unknown birds we see in dreams have not forms
more grotesque than these orchides, winged flowers, which always seem ready
to fly from their slender and leafless stalks; winding cacti, flexible and rounded,
which seem like reptiles, also clung round the trunk of this tree, and their green
arms, laden with large bell-flowers of a silvery white, shaded within by a brill-
iant orange, hung down in clusters, shedding a strong odour of vanilla.

A little snake, of a blood-red colour, about as thick as a quill, and five or six
inches in length, thrust his flat head half out of one of these enormous perfumed
cups, in which he lay coiled and nestling.

Within the ajoupa was a young man, stretched on a mat and soundly asleep.
By his clear yellow and brilliant complexion, he might have been taken for a
statue of pale copper on which a sunbeam rested; his attitude was simple and graceful; his right arm was folded under his head, which reposed upon it, and was somewhat raised and seen in profile; his full tunic of white muslin, with loose sleeves, displayed his chest, and arms worthy of Antinous; marble is not more firm and smooth than his skin, of which the golden hue contrasted singularly with the whiteness of his dress. On his broad and powerful chest was a deep scar, which he had received from a musket-ball when defending the life of General Simon, the father of Rose and Blanche. He wore round his neck a small medal similar to that which the two sisters wore. It was the Indian Djalma.

His features were equally noble and beautiful; his hair was of a purple black, parted over the forehead, and falling wavy, but not curling, on his shoulders; his eyebrows, boldly and perfectly drawn, were of jet black, as were the long eyelids whose shade was thrown over his beardless cheeks; his lips, of a lively red, half open, gave forth an oppressed breathing, for his slumber was heavy and painful as the heat became more and more suffocating.

Without the silence was profound. There was not a breath of air stirring. After a few moments, however, the vast creepers which covered the ground began to move almost imperceptibly, as if some animal, slowly creeping along, had shaken their stalks.

From time to time this slight movement ceased, and all was again still. After several alternations of this motion and stillness, a human head appeared in the midst of the rushes, at a short distance from the trunk of the dead tree. It was a man of sinister aspect, with a complexion of greenish bronze, his long hair twisted about his head, his eyes glaring wildly, and a countenance strongly marked with intelligence and ferocity.

Holding his breath, he remained for a moment motionless; then, advancing on his hands and knees, he pushed aside the leaves so gently that not a sound was heard, and thus reached the sloping trunk of the dead tree, whose top reached nearly to the top of the ajoupa.

This man, a Malay by origin, and belonging to the sect of the Stranglers, having again carefully listened, drew himself almost entirely out of the underwood. Excepting a sort of white cotton drawers, fastened round his loins by a girdle of gaudy colours, he was entirely naked; a thick dressing of oil was smeared over his bronzed, supple, and nervous limbs.

Stretching himself upon the vast trunk, on the side farthest from the hut, and thus concealed by the bulk of the tree almost overgrown with creepers, he began to climb it with extreme care and patience. In the undulations of his backbone, the flexibility of his movements, and his restrained vigour, the full exertion of which must have been terrible, there was something which resembled the deadly and treacherous course of the tiger crawling to his prey.

Reaching thus, unobserved, the part of the tree which in its bend almost touched the roof of the cabin, he was not more than a foot from the small window. Then, stretching forth his head with the utmost caution, he cast his eyes into the interior of the hut, to discover some mode by which he could enter.

At the sight of Djalma in a deep sleep, the glittering eyes of the Strangler shone with double brilliancy, and a nervous contraction, or, rather, a silent and scornful laugh, curling the corners of his mouth, drew them up toward his cheekbones, and displayed two rows of teeth filed triangularly like the teeth of a saw, and dyed of a lustrous black.

Djalma was sleeping so near the door of the ajoupa (which opened inward from without), that if any one had attempted to open the door he would have been awakened in an instant.

The Strangler, his body still hidden by the tree, desiring to examine the interior of the cabin more closely, leaned forward, and, to maintain his position, placed his hand lightly on the sill of the opening which served for a window; this movement shook the large flower of the cactus, at the bottom of which the
small snake lay coiled, and, darting out, it twined rapidly round the Strangler's wrist.

Pain or surprise extracted from him a slight cry; and, as he hastily withdrew, still clinging to the tree, he saw that Djalma had stirred.

The young Indian, still keeping his attitude of repose, half opened his eyes, turned his head toward the little window, and breathed forth a deep sigh, for the concentrated heat under this thick vault of humid verdure was intolerable.

Djalma had scarcely stirred, when was heard from behind the tree that brief, sharp, and shrill cry which the bird of paradise utters when it takes flight, and which resembles the pheasant's.

This cry was repeated, but more faintly, as if the beautiful bird were distant. Djalma, believing that he had discovered the cause of the noise which had aroused him for the moment, slightly stretched the arm on which his head rested, and slept again almost without changing his position.

For some minutes the most profound silence reigned again in this solitude: all was silent.

The Strangler, by his skilful imitation of the cry of a bird, had atoned for the imprudent exclamation of surprise and pain which the reptile's sting had wrung from him. When he supposed that Djalma was again asleep, he carefully protruded his head, and saw that the youthful Indian was indeed slumbering soundly.

Then descending the tree with the same precautions as before, although his left hand was swollen from the bite of the serpent, he disappeared among the rushes.

At this moment was heard a distant singing, in a monotonous and melancholy strain.

The Strangler stood up, listened attentively, and his face assumed an expression of surprise and sinister displeasure.

The sound drew nearer to the cabin.
THE WANDERING JEW.

At the end of a few seconds an Indian appeared in an opening, coming to the spot where the Strangler was hidden.

The latter took a long slender cord which encircled his waist, and at one of the ends of which was a ball of lead, in shape and size like an egg. After having tied the other end to his right wrist, the Strangler again listened, and then disappeared, crawling through the tall grass in the direction of the Indian, who came on slowly, singing his plaintive and gentle ditty.

He was a youth, hardly twenty years of age, the slave of Djalma. His complexion was that of bronze. A gay handkerchief confined his blue cotton tunic, and he wore a small red turban, with rings of silver in his ears and round his wrists. He was bringing a message to his master, who, during the heat of the day, was reposing in this ajoupa, which was at some distance from the house where he resided.

When he reached a point where the path divided, the slave, without hesitating, took that leading to the hut, from which he was then hardly forty paces distant.

One of those enormous butterflies of Java, whose wings, when extended, measure from six to eight inches across, and displaying two rays of gold on a ground of ultramarine, was flitting from leaf to leaf, and had just settled on a bush of gardenias within reach of the young Indian.

He ceased his song, stopped, advanced his foot carefully, then his hand, and seized the butterfly.

At this instant, the sinister visage of the Strangler arose before him; he heard a whistling like that of a sling; he felt a cord, thrown with equal swiftness and power, encircle his neck with a triple fold, and, at the same moment, the lead with which it was loaded struck him violently on the back of his head.

The assault was so sudden and unexpected, that Djalma's attendant could not utter one cry, one groan.

He staggered; the Strangler gave a violent pull to his cord; the dark visage of the slave became a black purple, and he fell on his knees, tossing his arms wildly in the air.

The Strangler pulled him over, and drew the cord so tight that the blood rushed through the skin. The victim made a few convulsive struggles, and all was over.

During this rapid but terrible agony, the murderer, kneeling beside his victim, watched his slightest convulsions, fixed his glaring eyes on him, and seemed as if enjoying an ecstasy of fierce delight. His nostrils expanded, the veins in his temples and neck swelled, and the same sinister laugh which had curled his lips when he saw Djalma sleeping, again displayed his black and pointed fangs, while a nervous trembling of the jaw made them chatter against each other.

But soon he crossed his arms over his panting chest, bent his forehead, and murmured some mysterious words, which seemed either an invocation or a prayer, and then he resumed that savage contemplation which the sight of the corpse inspired.

The hyena and the tiger-cat, which always crouch beside their prey before they devour it, have not a look more fierce, more bloody, than this man's.

But, recollecting that his task was not yet accomplished, he tore himself away with regret from this sight of death, and, disentangling his cord from the neck of his victim, wound it about him, dragged the corpse out of the pathway, and, without attempting to despoil it of its rings of silver, hid the body in a thick tuft of rushes.

Then the Strangler, again going on his hands and knees, reached Djalma's cabin, which was made of mats fastened to bamboos.

After having listened attentively, he drew from his girdle a knife, whose keen and glittering blade was wrapped in a leaf of banana, and cut in one of the mats an incision about three feet long. This he did so rapidly, and with a blade so trenchant, that the slight noise of a diamond over glass sounds more loudly.
THE WANDERING JEW.

Seeing through this opening, which he intended to pass through, that Djalma still slept, the Strangler glided into the hut with unhesitating boldness.

CHAPTER II.

THE TATTOOING.

ight and transparent as the azure of the sky had been, it now grew dim, and the sun was partially hidden by a red and lowering mist.

This strange light gave all objects a singular appearance, such as might be produced by viewing a landscape through a piece of copper-coloured glass.

In these climates, this phenomenon, with an increase of the fierce heat, always announces the approach of a tempest.

From time to time there was a slight sulphurous smell; then the leaves, gently stirred by the electric current, trembled on their stalks; then all relapsed into silence and utter want of motion.

The weight of this burning atmosphere, saturated with acrid perfumes, became almost insupportable. Large beads of sweat stood on Djalma's brow, plunged as he was in enervating sleep, which was no refreshment or repose, but a painful oppression.

The Strangler, gliding like a serpent along the sides of the ajoupa, and crawling on his stomach to Djalma's mat, squatted down beside him, occupying the smallest possible space.

Then began a fearful scene, surrounded by mystery and silence.

The life of Djalma was at the Strangler's mercy, who, drawing himself together, and supporting his whole weight upon his hands and knees, remained with extended neck and fixed gaze, like a wild beast about to spring upon his prey, a slight convulsive tremour in his lower jaw alone disturbing his bronzed countenance; but quickly were his hideous features distorted by the struggle passing within him between the thirst for blood, the enjoyment of murder, aggravated by the recent assassination of the slave, and the command he had received not to aim at the life of Djalma, although the purpose which had brought him to the ajoupa would, perhaps, have been more abhorrent to the young Indian than death itself.
Twice the Strangler, whose gaze kindled into increased ferocity, supporting himself only on his left hand, seized the end of his cord, but twice the murderous design gave way before the all-powerful influence which bore irresistible control over the Malay. In his insensate craving for murder, he allowed precious moments to escape; Djalma, whose vigour, address, and courage were everywhere known and feared, might awake, and, though unarmed, he would have been for the Strangler a formidable adversary.

At length, with a deep sigh, he yielded to necessity, and prepared himself to accomplish his task—a task which, to any but him, would have appeared impossible. Let the reader judge.

Djalma was sleeping with his face turned toward the left hand, his head supported on his arm. It was requisite to induce him, without waking, to alter his position by turning to the right, toward the door, that, in the event of his suddenly waking, his first glance might not fall on the Malay; and, in order to effect this, it was requisite that the latter should remain some time in the pavilion.

Meanwhile the sky grew more lurid, and the heat became intense. All conspired to increase the physical prostration of the prince and to favour the designs of the Strangler, who, kneeling beside the young Indian, gently passed his fingers, made supple by oiling them, over the eyelids, forehead, and temples of Djalma, performing the operation so delicately as to render the contact of the two skins scarcely sensible.

As this sort of magnetic incantation proceeded, the perspiration which bedewed the countenance of the sleeper became more abundant; he sighed heavily, and a convulsive tremour passed over his features; for these light touches, though insufficient to break his slumber, evidently gave him a feeling of uneasiness.

Watching him with an eager, anxious eye, the Strangler continued his manoeuvre with so much patience and dexterity, that Djalma, whose sleep remained unbroken, unable longer to endure the oppressive sensations he experienced without being conscious of their origin, mechanically threw his right arm across his face, as though to free himself from the annoyance of an insect; but, yielding to the enervating effects of the heat, his hand again fell heavy and powerless on his breast.

Perceiving that he was proceeding toward the accomplishment of his design, the Strangler increased his applications to the temples and forehead. Djalma, yielding more and more to the drowsiness they inspired, and having neither will nor power to direct his hand to his face, mechanically turned his head, which sunk languidly on his right shoulder, as though seeking by this change of position to escape from the disagreeable feelings which surrounded him. This point achieved, the Malay proceeded boldly; but, anxious to render the slumber he had partially disturbed as sound as possible, he sought to imitate the vampire, waving his hands, with the rapid motion of a fan, over the burning countenance of the young Indian.

At this delightful and unexpected change from oppressive heat to refreshing coolness, the features of the prince relaxed; his chest expanded, his half-open lips seemed to court the reviving breeze, and his sleep became so much the sounder, for that it had been disturbed, and was now accompanied by agreeable sensations.

A sudden flash of lightning illumined the leafy vault which overhung the ajoupa; and the Malay, fearing that the thunder might awake the prince, lost not an instant in the fulfilment of his project.

Djalma now lay on his back, with his head on his right shoulder, while his left arm was extended at full length. The Strangler, squatting at his left, ceased, by degrees, to fan the prince, and with incredible dexterity proceeded to draw up the long white muslin sleeve of his dress to the elbow.

Then, drawing from the pocket of his drawers a small copper box, he took from it a needle of extraordinary fineness and sharpness, and a piece of a dark-coloured root, into which he plunged the needle repeatedly, and at each thrust issued forth a white viscous liquid.
When the Strangler deemed the needle sufficiently imbued with the juice, he bent over and blew gently upon the inside of Djalma's arm, in order to give it an additional sensation of coolness; then, with the point of his needle, he traced on the skin certain mysterious and symbolical characters.

All this was executed with so much skill and quickness, that Djalma was utterly unconscious of the operation, and felt not the fine and delicate point of the instrument, or the scratch it made as it slightly wounded the epidermis.

At first the marks traced by the Strangler were of a faint pink colour, so pale as to be scarcely visible, and as fine as a hair; but so penetrating was the juice into which the needle had been dipped, that, as it spread beneath the skin, in the course of a few hours it would become of a reddish violet hue, and make the characters readily apparent.

The Strangler, having thus successfully performed his mission, cast a last look of murderous craving upon the sleeping Indian, crawled away as silently as he had entered, and, regaining the opening which had admitted him within the hut, carefully closed the aperture, so as to prevent any suspicion of his visit, and disappeared just as the thunder began to grumble in the distance.

* The letters on India by the late Victor Jacquemont contain the following remarks on the almost incredible dexterity of these men. He says:

"They crawl on the ground in the ditches, in the furrows of the fields, and repair any false step they may make, or any accidental noise they may occasion, by imitating the cry of a jackal or some bird of prey, when a confederate will almost immediately respond by giving a similar note, as though from some animal in the distance; they annoy the sleeper by various sounds, by different modes of touching him, and can always oblige their victim to assume the attitude and position best suited to their designs."

M. le Comte Edward de Warren, in his excellent work on British India, which we shall have farther occasion to quote, thus expresses himself:

"These men carry their address so far as to be able to deprive you of the very sheet on which you are sleeping, without in the least disturbing your slumber; and this is not said figuratively, but as a literal fact. The movements of the Bheel are those of a serpent. Should an individual be sleeping in his tent, with a servant stretched outside each door conducting to it, the Bheel will crouch down in the shadow, and carefully listen to the respiration of all within and without the tent; as soon as the European sleeps, he is sure of his game; he knows that the Asiatic will not long resist the influence of the drowsy god. At the auspicious moment, he softly cuts a slit in the covering of the tent sufficiently large to admit his body, which he slips through so stealthily as not to disturb a single grain of sand. He is entirely naked, his body well oiled, and a small poniard suspended from his neck. Crouching beside the bed, he, with a coolness and dexterity almost passing belief, begins folding the sheet on which the sleeper is extended, in fine folds close to the body lying on it; then, passing to the other side of the couch, he commences a series of magnetic touches and light tickling, to avoid which the sleeper instinctively draws himself away, and ultimately turns completely round, leaving the sheet at the mercy of his enemy. Should he awake, and endeavour to seize the intruder, he grasps but a naked oiled body, which slips from his hold like an eel; but if he unhappily succeed in holding him, then the dagger of the assassin is plunged in his heart, and while he falls a corpse to the ground his murderer disappears."
CHAPTER III.

THE SMUGGLER.

... since had the storm of the morning ceased.

The sun was declining, some hours having elapsed since the Strangler had introduced himself into the pavilion of Djalma, and tattooed him with a mysterious sign during his slumber.

A horseman was advancing rapidly in the midst of a long avenue bordered with thickly growing trees.

Sheltered by this dense arch of verdure, a thousand birds hailed, by their warblings and their joyous twitterings, this glorious evening; green and red parrots climbed with beak and claws to the tops of the rose-acacias; the maina-mainon, a large bird with bright blue plumage, and with neck and long tail of burnished gold, pursued the lories, black like velvet, shot with orange; the turtle-doves of Kolo, of a rainbow violet colour, cooed loudly beside the birds of paradise, whose brilliant feathers united the prismatic tints of the emerald, ruby, topaz, and sapphire.

This avenue, which was along slightly rising ground, overlooked a small lake, on whose surface, here and there, dipped the green shadows of the tamrind and the tatupa trees; the water, calm and clear, showed, as though incrustted in a mass of dark-blue crystal (so motionless were they), silver fish, with fins of purple, blue fish with fins of scarlet, all resting at the surface of the lake, on which gleamed a dazzling sunbeam, and seeming to enjoy the light and warmth; a thousand insects, living jewels with wings of fire, glided, flew, and buzzed over this transparent mirror, which reflected, to a vast depth, the variegated shades of foliage and aquatic plants with which the banks were overgrown.

It is impossible to depict this exuberance of nature, so luxuriant with colours, perfumes, and sunlight, and serving, as one might say, for the frame to the picture of the youthful horseman who rode along the avenue.

It was Djalma.

He had not yet perceived that the Strangler had traced on his left arm certain ineffaceable marks.

His Javanese steed, of moderate size, was full of fire and vigour, and black as midnight. A piece of scarlet cloth formed the saddle, and, to restrain the
impetuosity of his spirited mare, Djalma made use of a light bit of steel, whose reins of scarlet-twisted silk were light as a thread.

None of those horsemen so admirably sculptured on the frieze of the Parthenon is more gracefully and proudly mounted than was this young Indian, whose fine countenance, lighted up by the rays of the setting sun, was full of happiness and tranquillity. His eye sparkled with delight; his nostrils were dilated; his lips half opened, as he inspired the perfumed breeze of the flowers and scented shrubs, for the trees were yet dropping with the heavy rain that had followed the gust. A crimson cap, resembling the Greek head-dress, covered the black hair of Djalma, and brought out the golden hue of his complexion. His neck was bare, and he was clad in his muslin caftan, with wide sleeves, and girdled by a scarlet band; his drawers were full, and of white tissue, reaching just below the knees, leaving his rounded and polished legs half naked, while their graceful contour à l'antique, was relieved against his horse's sides; those powerful limbs preserving his seat, as he had no stirrups: his small and narrow foot bore a sandal of red morocco leather.

The career of his thoughts, by turns impetuous and calm, was shown in the paces which his horse displayed—sometimes bold and rapid, as if his imagination had thrown away its reins—then steady and deliberate, like the reflection which comes after excitement.

In this wayward course his every movement was replete with a wild, proud, and independent grace.

Djalma, dispossessed of his paternal territory by the English, and at first imprisoned after his father's death, who had been killed in battle (as M. Joshua Van Daël wrote from Batavia to M. Rodin), had been subsequently set at liberty.

Then, leaving continental India, accompanied by General Simon, who had not quitted the environs of the prison which contained the son of his old friend the
king Kadja-Sing, the young Indian had come to Batavia, the place of his moth-
er's birth, to obtain the modest inheritance of his maternal ancestors.

In this inheritance, so long disdained or forgotten by his father, were found
important papers, and the medal resembling that worn by Rose and Blanche.

General Simon, surprised as well as pleased at this discovery, which not only
established a bond of relationship between his wife and the mother of Djalma,
but seemed to hold out such great prospects to the latter, leaving Djalma at Ba-
tavia to conclude certain affairs of business, had gone to Sumatra, a neighbour-
ing island, where he hoped to find a ship going straight and speedily to Europe;
for it was necessary, at all hazards, that the young Indian should be in Paris on
the 13th of February, 1832. If he should find such a vessel, he was to return
instantly for Djalma, who was waiting his arrival daily, and was then going to
the pier of Batavia in the hope of seeing the father of Rose and Blanche arrive
by the packet from Sumatra.

A few words on the infancy and youth of the son of Kadja-Sing are necessary.

Having lost his mother early, he was simply and rudely brought up, and as a
child had accompanied his father to the great tiger-hunts, as dangerous as bat-
tles; and, hardly a youth, he had followed to the wars undertaken in defence
of his territory, fierce and bloody as they were.

Having thus lived, since his mother's death, in the depths of forests and his
paternal mountains, where, in the midst of incessant combat, his vigorous and
ingenuous nature had preserved itself pure and intact, never was the surname
of Generous more fittingly bestowed. Prince, he was really a prince—a rare oc-
urrence; and, during the time of his captivity, he had won the favour of his Eng-
lish jailers by his uncomplaining dignity: no reproach, no lament, escaped his
lips; he opposed a proud, but not sullen demeanour, to the not less unjust than
cruel treatment he received, until he was set at liberty.

Accustomed until then to the patriarchal or warlike life of the mountaineers,
in his native land, which he had left only to pass some months in prison, Djalma
knew actually nothing of civilized existence.

But, without positively having the defects, Djalma pushed the qualities of this
life to extremes; of an unyielding obstinacy as to his pledged word, faithful even
to death, blindly confiding, liberal to a perfect forgetfulness of self, he was inflex-
able to any who should prove himself an ingrate, liar, or traitor—he would have
done summary justice upon perjury or disloyalty, because, had he himself been
forsworn or treacherous, he would have deemed his life the just forfeit.

He was, in a word, a man whose principles and feelings were uncompromi-
sing. Such a one, opposed to the arrangements, calculations, falsenesses, deceits,
tricks, restrictions, and hypocrisy of very refined society—that of Paris, for in-
stance—would have been a curious study.

We advance this hypothesis, because, since his journey from Java to France
had been decided on, Djalma had but one fixed, constant, and concentrated thought
—to be at Paris.

At Paris, that fairy city, which, even in Asia, that fairy land, was discoursed of
in such glowing terms.

What especially inflamed the unschooled and heated imagination of the young
Indian was the French women—the Parisiennes—so beautiful, so winning—such
marvels of elegance, grace, and fascination, who eclipsed (as the Asiatics said)
the magnificence of the capital of the civilized world.

At this moment, on this splendid and glowing evening, surrounded by flowers
and delicious perfumes, Djalma was thinking of those enchanting creatures whom
his fancy clothed in his own brightest hues.

He seemed to see at the end of the avenue, in the midst of the sheet of golden
light, which the trees encased in their frame of tufted verdure, lovely and en-
trancing forms, graceful and captivating figures, who smiled upon him, and
sent kisses to him from the tips of their rosy fingers!

No longer able to contain himself, carried away by the fervour of his imagina-
tion, Djalma uttered loud cries of almost savage joy, and, in the ecstasy of his delight, made his beautiful steed bound beneath him.

A brilliant sunray darted at this moment through the sombre vault of the alley, and lighted it all up.

For some minutes a man had been advancing quickly along a path which, at its extremity, cut diagonally the avenue where Djalma was.

The man stopped for a moment in the shade, contemplating Djalma with astonishment.

It was, indeed, charming to see, in the midst of this radiant glow of light, a young man so handsome, so full of fire, so joyous, with his white and flowing raiment, so gracefully seated on his proud black steed, which covered with foam his red bridle, and whose long tail and thick mane waved in the evening wind.

But, by a contrast which follows all human desires, Djalma soon felt the return of an indefinable and gentle melancholy; he raised his hand to his moist and downcast eyes, and let fall his reins on the neck of the fine-tempered animal that bore him.

The mare stopped instantly, extended her swan-like neck, and turned her head half toward the individual whom she saw in the path.

This man, called Mahal the Smuggler, was dressed like a European sailor; with a jacket and trousers of white linen, a wide red girdle, and a straw hat, very low in the crown; his face was tanned and strongly marked, and, although he was forty years old, he was entirely beardless.

In a moment he was by the side of the Indian.

"You are the Prince Djalma," he said, in bad French, respectfully touching his hat.

"What do you want?" said the Indian.

"You are the son of Kadja-Sing?"

"Once more, what do you want?"

"The friend of General Simon—"

"General Simon!" exclaimed Djalma.

"You were going to meet him, as you do every evening since you expected him from Sumatra?"

"Yes; but how do you know that?" said the Indian, looking at the smuggler with as much surprise as curiosity.

"He ought to reach Batavia to-day or to-morrow."

"Do you come from him?"

"Perchance I may," said Mahal, with a distrustful air. "But are you really the son of Kadja-Sing?"

"I am, I tell you. But where did you see General Simon?"

"If you are the son of Kadja-Sing," replied Mahal, still looking at Djalma with a suspicious eye, "what is your surname?"

"They called my father 'The Father of the Generous,'" replied the young Indian; and a shade of sadness stole over his handsome features.

These words seemed partially to convince Mahal of the identity of Djalma; however, anxious, apparently, to be well assured, he replied,

"You should have received, two days ago, a letter from General Simon, written from Sumatra?"
"I did; but why these questions?"
"That I may be quite certain you are the son of Kadja-Sing, and execute the orders I have received."
"From whom?"
"From General Simon."
"But where is he?"
"When I have proof that you are the Prince Djalma, I will tell you. I was told, indeed, that you would be mounted on a black mare with red housings; but—"
"By my mother's shade! will you speak?"
"I will say everything, if you tell me what printed paper was enclosed in the last letter which General Simon sent you from Sumatra?"
"It was an extract from a French newspaper."
"And did it announce good or bad news for the general?"
"Good news; for it said that, during his absence, the title and rank which the emperor had conferred upon him had been recognised, as had been done for others of his brothers in arms exiled like himself."
"Now I am sure you are the Prince Djalma," said the smuggler, after a moment's reflection, "and I may speak. General Simon landed this night in Java, but in a desert spot on the coast."
"In a desert spot?"
"Because he must be concealed."
"He," exclaimed Djalma, in surprise; "conceal himself! And why?"
"I do not know."
"But where is he?" said Djalma, with increased anxiety.
"Three leagues off, on the seashore, in the ruins of Tchandi."
"He forced to conceal himself!" repeated Djalma, whose countenance was expressive of deep alarm and anxiety.
"I am not sure, but I think he was engaged in some duel in Sumatra," said the smuggler, with an air of mystery.
"A duel! and with whom?"
"I do not know. I am not at all sure about it. But you know the ruins of Tchandi?"
"I do."
"The general awaits you there, and desired me to bring you word."
"You, then, have come from Sumatra with him?"
"I was the pilot of the little smuggling coaster from which he landed last night on the lone shore. He knew that you came every day to look for him on the road to the Mole, and I was sure to meet with you. He gave me the particulars about the last letter you received from him, which I have mentioned to you, that you might know I came from him; if he could have written to you, he would have done so."
"And he did not say why he was obliged to conceal himself?"
"Not a word to me. But, from something that fell, I suspect, as I told you, that there was a duel."

Knowing the quick temper and high courage of General Simon, Djalma thought the suspicions of the smuggler very probable.

After a moment's silence, he said to him,
"Can you lead my horse back for me? My house is without the city—down there—hidden by the trees, near the new mosque. My horse would be an obstacle in going up the Mountain of Tchandi; I would reach it sooner on foot."
"I know where you live, for General Simon told me, and I should have gone on to you had we not met here. Give me your horse."

Djalma leaped lightly down, threw the bridle to Mahal, unrolled one end of his girdle, and taking out a small silk purse, gave it to the smuggler, saying,
"You are faithful and obedient; there, it is not much, but I have no more."
"Kadja-Sing was well named 'The Father of the Fierce,'" said the smug
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gler, bowing respectfully and gratefully; and he took the route which led to Batavia, leading Djalma's courser by his bridle.

The young Indian turned down the path, and, walking with great speed, bent his steps toward the mountain where the ruins of Tchandi were, and which he could not reach before night.

CHAPTER IV.

M. JOSHUA VAN DAEL.

Joshua Van Dael, a Dutch merchant, correspondent of M. Rodin, was born at Batavia (capital of the Island of Java). His parents had sent him to be educated at Pondicherry, in a celebrated religious house long established in that city, and belonging to the Society of Jesus. He was there affiliated to the community as a professed of three vows, or lay member, commonly styled temporal coadjutor.

M. Joshua was a man whose probity was considered perfect; he was extremely exact in all matters, cold, discreet, reserved, and of singular skill and sagacity. His financial operations were almost always successful, for a protecting power gave him a timely knowledge of events which might affect his commercial transactions. The religious house of Pondicherry was interested in his business, and intrusted to him the exportation and exchange of the produce of many extensive estates which it possessed in this colony.

Speaking seldom, listening always, never discussing, exceedingly affable, giving little, but with care and discretion, M. Joshua inspired, in the absence of sympathy, that cold respect which men of his character usually command. Instead of yielding to the influence of colonial manners, so often libertine and dissolute, he appeared to live with great regularity, and his exterior presented an austere gravity which imposed on the world at large.

The following scene was passing in Batavia while Djalma was on his way to the ruins of Tchandi, in the hope of meeting General Simon there.

M. Joshua had just entered his private closet, where were rows of shelves piled with memorandum-cases, and large account-books open on the desks.

The only window of this closet, situated on the ground floor, looked on a small empty courtyard, and was guarded by thick iron bars, while a moveable blind was substituted for panes of glass, in consequence of the great heat of the climate.

M. Joshua, having placed on his desk a wax light enclosed in a glass shade looked at the clock.

"Half-past nine," said he; "Mahal will soon be here."

So saying, he went out, crossed an antechamber, and opening a second thick door, strengthened with large-headed nails, he entered the little courtyard with much precaution, that he might not be heard by the people of his establishment, and drew back the secret bolt which fastened a ponderous door, nearly six feet wide, and defended by plates of iron.

Leaving this open, he returned to his cabinet, after having successively and carefully closed after him all the other doors.

Joshua then seated himself at his desk, and took from a drawer a long letter,
or, rather, memoir, begun some time back, and written day by day. (It is unnecessary to say that the letter, addressed to M. Rodin, at Paris, in the Rue du Milieu-des-Ursins, was anterior to the liberation of Djalma and his arrival at Batavia.)

The memoir in question was also addressed to M. Rodin, and thus did M. Joshua continue it:

"Fearing the return of General Simon, of which I had been instructed by intercepting his letters (I have already said that I had contrived to have myself appointed his correspondent) — letters which I read, and then forwarded, apparently untouched, to Djalma, I have been compelled, by time and the pressure of circumstances, to have recourse to extreme means, while I have altogether preserved appearances, and rendered signal service to humanity: this latter reason especially decided me.

"A new danger, moreover, imperiously ruled my conduct. The steamboat, The Ruyter, reached here yesterday, and sails to-morrow.

"This vessel goes to Europe by the Arabian Gulf; her passengers land at the Isthmus of Suez, which they cross, and at Alexandria they take another vessel, which conveys them to France.

"This journey, as rapid as it is direct, only occupies seven, or eight weeks: this is the end of October, and Prince Djalma might, therefore, reach France about the beginning of the month of January; and, according to your instructions (of the cause of which I am ignorant, but which I execute with zeal and submission), it was requisite, at all hazards, to prevent his departure, as you told me one of the gravest interests of the society would be compromised by the arrival of this young Indian at Paris before the 13th of February. If I succeed, as I hope, in making him miss the Ruyter, it will be physically impossible that he can reach France before the month of April, for the Ruyter is the only vessel which takes this quick and direct route, all the other ships being from four to five months in reaching Europe.

"Before I tell you the means I have been forced to use to retain Prince Djalma here — means of which at this moment I do not know the result, good or bad, I should make you acquainted with some facts.

"There has been discovered, in Anglo-India, a community whose members called themselves Brothers of the Good Work, or Phansegars, which simply means Stranglers. These murderers do not shed blood; they strangle their victims, less to rob them than to fulfil a homicidal vocation and obey the laws of an infernal deity, called by them Bohwanie.

"I cannot give you a better idea of this horrible sect than by transcribing a few lines from the introduction to Colonel Sleeman's report, who has tracked this murderous confraternity with indefatigable zeal. The report was published two months ago; this is the extract, and the colonel himself speaks:

"From 1822 to 1824, when I was charged with the magistracy and civil administration of the district of Nersingpour, there was not a murder, or the smallest theft by a common bandit, but I was instantly informed of it. And if any one had come and told me, at this time, that a band of professed and hereditary assassins lived in the village of Kundelia, about four miles, at most, from my court of justice; that the lovely groves of the village of Mundesoor, a day's march from my residence, were one of the most fearful centres of assassination in all India; that numerous bands of the Brothers of the Good Work, coming from Hindostan and the Deccan, annually met in these thickets, as at a solemn festival, to carry on their infernal calling on every road and by-path which crossed this locality, I should have taken my informant for a madman, who had been alarmed at some silly invention: yet nothing was more true. Travellers, by hundreds, were every year interred in the groves of Mundesoor: a whole tribe of assassins lived at my very door while I was supreme magistrate of the province, and extended their butcheries to the cities of Poonah and Hyderabad!

"I shall never forget that, to convince me, one of the strangler chiefs, who had
denounced his associates, exhumed, from the very spot on which I had pitched my
tent, thirteen carcasses, and offered to dig up from the soil all around an unlimited
number."

"These few lines from Colonel Sleeman's report will give you some idea of
this terrible society, whose laws, duties, and customs are at variance with all
laws, human and divine. Devoted to one another, even to heroism, blindly sub-
servient to their chiefs, who style themselves the immediate representatives of
their dark divinity, considering as foes all who are not united with them, adding
to their numbers in all quarters by a fearful system of proselytism, these apos-
tles of a religion of murder go about preaching in secrecy their abominable doc-
trines, and enclosing India in a vast net.

"Three of their principal chiefs and one of their adepts, flying from the hot
pursuit of the English governor, which they contrived to elude, had reached the
northern point of India at the Straits of Malacca, which is but a short distance
from Java. A smuggler and pirate, affiliated with them, and named Mahal,
took them on board his coasting bark, and conveyed them hither, where, for
some time, they believed themselves in safety, for, according to the smuggler's
advice, they took refuge in a thick forest, in which are several ruined temples,
whose numerous caverns afford them a shelter.

"Among these chiefs, all three of remarkable intelligence, is one particularly,
Faringheea by name, who is a man of extraordinary energy, and of qualities so
superior, as to make him a man to be feared. He is a Métis, that is, the son
of a white father and Indian mother. He has dwelt long in cities where Euro-
peans carry on business, and speaks English and French very well; the other
two chiefs are a negro and an Indian; the adept is a Malay.

"Mahal, the smuggler, reflecting that he might obtain a good reward by be-
traying these three chiefs and their disciple, came to me, knowing, as all the
world knows, my extreme intimacy with a person who is most influential with
our governor, and offered, two days since, on certain conditions, to give up the
Negro, the Métis, the Indian, and the Malay. His conditions were, a consid-
erable sum of money, and the guarantee of a passage on board some ship going to
Europe or America, in order to escape from the implacable vengeance of the
Stranglers.

"I instantly seized this opportunity of delivering to human justice these three
murderers, and I promised Mahal that I would intercede for him with the gov-
ernor, on certain conditions on my side, very innocent in themselves, but con-
cerning Djalma. I will tell you my project at length if it be successful, which
I shall soon know, as I expect Mahal here almost immediately.

"Waiting until I close my despatches, which will go to-morrow for Europe
by the Ruyter, on board which I have taken a passage for Mahal, if he is suc-
cessful, I will advert to another subject which is very important.

"In my last letter, in which I told you of the death of Djalma's father, and
the young man's imprisonment by the English, I requested information as to the
solvency of the Baron Tripeaud, a banker and manufacturer at Paris, who has
a branch establishment at Calcutta. Now this information is no longer requi-
site, if what I learn is unfortunately true, and, in that case, you will act accord-
ingly.

"His house at Calcutta owes us, i.e., to me and our college at Pondicherry,
very large sums of money, and I am informed that M. Tripeaud's affairs are in
a most embarrassed condition. Desirous of establishing a concern which should
ruin, by its unrelenting rivalry, an immense business long since founded by M.
François Hardy, a most extensive manufacturer, I learn that M. Tripeaud has
already sunk vast capital in his undertaking, and lost it all. He has, no doubt,
done M. Hardy considerable harm, but, at the same time, he has greatly injured
his own property, and, if he fails, his disaster will be greatly detrimental to us,
as he owes us and our connexions very considerable sums of money.

* This extract is from an excellent work of M. le Comte Edward de Warren on British India in 1831.
"In this state of things it would be very desirable that the great means in our power should be employed to injure the credit of the house of François Hardy, already hurt by the fierce opposition of M. Tripeaud. If this combination could be made to operate, M. Tripeaud might, in a short time, recover all he has lost; the ruin of his rival would be his own making, and our debts would thus be paid.

"No doubt it would be painful, it would be grievous to be compelled to employ such extreme measures to recover our moneys; but, in these days, are we not authorized to use means which are incessantly employed against us? If we are driven to this by the injustice and wickedness of men, we must console ourselves by the reflection that, if we strive to preserve our earthly possessions, it is all for the greater glory of God, while, in the hands of our enemies, these possessions are but dangerous means of perdition and scandal.

"This is but a proposal, which I humbly submit to you. If I had the power in my own hands of taking the initiative on the subject of these credits, I should do nothing of myself—my will is not my own; with all I possess, it belongs to those to whom I have sworn a blind obedience."

A slight noise without interrupted M. Joshua Van Daël, and attracted his attention.

He rose quickly, and went to the window.

Three gentle taps were struck from without on one of the blinds.

"Is it you, Mahal?" inquired Joshua, in a low voice.

"It is," was the reply from without, also in a suppressed tone.

"And the Malay?"

"Has succeeded."

"Really!" exclaimed M. Joshua, in a tone of deep satisfaction; "are you sure?"

"Quite sure. There never was devil more skilful and more daring."

"And Djalma?"

"The passages from General Simon's last letter, which I quoted to him, convinced him that I came from the general, and that he would find him at the ruins of Tchandi."

"So, then, at this moment—"

"Djalma is at the ruins, where he will find the Black, the Méâtis, and the Indian. They appointed the spot as a rendezvous for the Malay after he had tattooed the prince during his sleep."

"Have you reconnoitered the subterranean passage?"

"I went yesterday. One of the stones of the statue's pedestal turns on a pivot; the staircase is wide, and will do very well."

"And the three chiefs have no suspicion of you?"

"None. I saw them this morning, and this evening the Malay came and told me all before he went to rejoin them in the ruins of Tchandi; for he was obliged to remain concealed in the bushes, not daring to venture there in the daylight."

"Mahal, if you have told me the truth, if all succeeds, your pardon and a handsome reward will be yours. Your place is engaged on board the Ruyter; you will go to-morrow, and thus be out of reach of the Stranglers' revenge, who would else pursue you even here to avenge the death of their chiefs. Since Providence has selected you to deliver these three great criminals to justice, God will bless you. Go now and await me at the governor's door; I will introduce you to his excellency, for such important matters are now in hand that I shall not hesitate to waken him, although it is midnight. Go quickly, and I will follow."

There were then heard the rapid steps of Mahal, as he departed, and all was silent.

Joshua returned to his desk, and added these words hastily to his long memoir:

"Whatever happens, it is now impossible that Djalma can leave Batavia.
Be assured that he will not be in Paris on the thirteenth of February next year.

"As I foresaw, I shall be on foot all night. I am now going to the governor. To-morrow I will add a few words to this long memoir, which the steamboat, the *Ruyter*, will convey to Europe."

After having closed his desk, Joshua rang his bell loudly, and, to the great surprise of his establishment at seeing him go out so late at night, went away with a rapid pace to the governor of the island.

We now conduct our reader to the ruins of Tchandi.
CHAPTER V.

THE RUINS OF TCHANDI.

The night of tranquil beauty had followed the storm in the middle of the day—that storm, whose approach had so well served the design of the Strangler on Djalma.

The moon's disc rose slowly behind a mass of imposing ruins, situated on a hill, in the midst of a thick wood, three leagues from Batavia.

Large rows of stones, high brick walls mutilated by time, vast porticoes covered with parasitical vegetation, were clearly defined against the silvery light which blended in the horizon with the clear blue of the sky.

Some rays of moonshine, stealing through the opening of one of the porticoes, fell on two colossal statues placed at the foot of an immense staircase, whose disjointed stones were almost entirely concealed beneath the rank grass, moss, and underwood.

The remains of one of these statues, broken in the middle, were scattered on the ground; the other, which was still upright, was frightful to behold.

It represented a man of gigantic proportions, with a head three feet in height, the expression of whose countenance was ferocious, and two eyes of black and shining schistus were inlaid in its stone-gray face; the mouth large, wide, and opened to its utmost stretch, had become the nest of reptiles, a swarm of which might be seen crawling in and out of the lips disgustingly.

A wide girdle, ornamented with symbols, encircled the waist of this statue, and supported the long sword which hung by its side. The giant had four extended arms, and in his four huge hands he supported an elephant's head, a coiled snake, a human scull, and a bird resembling a heron.

The moon, which lighted this statue on one side, threw a full glare on the profile, which added to the singular fierceness of the countenance.

Here and there, inserted in the midst of the brick walls, half destroyed, were fragments of bas-relief, also of stone, and very boldly carved; one of these, in the best state of preservation, represented a man with an elephant's head, with wings like a bat, and devouring a child.

Nothing could be more repulsive than these ruins, encompassed by thickets of gloomy trees, covered with frightful emblems, and seen by the moon's pale light in the profound silence of night.

Against one of the walls of this ancient temple, dedicated to some mysterious and bloody Javanese deity, was erected a hut, clumsily constructed of fragments of brick and stone; the door, made of bulrush stalks, was open, and there issued from it a reddish light, casting its warm glare on the tall weeds with which the earth was covered.

Three men were in this hovel, lighted by a clay lamp, in which burned a wick made of the cocoa-tree fibre and fed with palm oil.

One of these, a man about forty years of age, was dressed in shabby European attire, his pale and almost white complexion proving that he was of Mulatto race, the child of a white man and an Indian mother.

The second was a robust African Negro, with blubber lips, muscular shoulders, and spindle legs; his woolly hair was becoming gray, and, covered with tatters, he was standing upright near the Indian.
A third person was asleep on a mat in the corner of this lair.

These three men were the three chiefs of the Stranglers, who, pursued in continental India, had sought refuge in Java under the guidance of the smuggler Mahal.

"The Malay does not return," said the Mulatto, whose name was Faringhea, the most redoubtable of this homicidal sect; "he may have been slain by Djalma in executing our orders."

"The morning's storm has brought the reptiles out of their holes in swarms," said the Negro; "perhaps the Malay has been bitten, and his carcass may now be only a serpent's nest."

"To advance the good work," said Faringhea, gloomily, "death in all shapes must be braved."

"And inflicted," added the Negro.

A stifled cry, followed by several inarticulate words, attracted the attention of the two chiefs, who turned quickly toward the sleeping man.

He was about thirty years of age, and his beardless chin and copper-coloured skin, his dress of coarse stuff, his small striped turban of yellow and brown, evinced that he belonged to the pure Hindoo race. His sleep was agitated by some painful dream; abundant perspiration covered his features, contracted by terror; he spoke, and his voice was stifled and moaning, while his frame shook with convulsive agitation.

"Always this dream," said Faringhea to the Negro; "always the remembrance of that man!"

"What man?"

"Don't you recollect, five years ago, that savage, Colonel Kennedy—the Indians' executioner—came on the banks of the Ganges to hunt the tiger, with twenty horses, four elephants, and fifty attendants!"

"Yes, yes!" said the Negro; "and we three, men-hunters, we had better sport than he had. Kennedy, with his horses, elephants, and large train, did not
FRANCOISE BAUDOIN.
catch his tiger; but we had ours,” he added, with fierce irony. “Yes, Kennedy, that tiger with a human face, fell into our ambush, and the ‘Brothers of the Good Work’ offered up this glorious prize to their goddess Bohwanie!”

“If you remember, it was at the moment when we had encircled Kennedy’s neck with the last twist of our cord, that we suddenly perceived this traveller—he had beheld us, and we were compelled to make away with him. Since that,” added Faringhea, “the recollection of the murder of that man follows him” (pointing to the sleeping Hindu) “even in his dreams.”

“And when he is awake, too,” said the Negro, looking significantly at Faringhea.

“Hark!” said the latter, pointing to the Indian, who, in the agitation of his dream, began speaking again in muttering and broken tones. “Hark! he is repeating the replies of that traveller when we told him he must die, or join us in the good work. His mind is unsettled—always in disorder.”

At this moment he uttered in his sleep a sort of mysterious interrogatory, of which, by turns, he gave the questions and replies.

“Traveller,” he said, in a voice broken by abrupt pauses, “why hast thou that black mark on thy brow? It extends from one temple to the other—it is a fatal brand; thy look is as sad as death itself. Hast thou been a victim? Come with us—Bohwanie avenges the injured. Thou hast suffered? Yes, suffered deeply! For a long time? Yes, for a very long time! Thou still sufferest? Forever! What wouldst thou bestow on him who hath so done to thee? Pity! Wilt thou return blow for blow? I would return love for hatred! Who art thou, then, that wouldst return good for evil? I am he who loves, suffers, and forgives!”

“Dost hear him, brother?” said the Negro to Faringhea; “he has not forgotten the words of the traveller before his death.”

“The vision follows him still. Listen—he speaks again. How ghastly he looks!”

The Indian, still under the influence of his dream, continued thus:

“Traveller, there are three of us; we are fearless, and have death in our hands; thou hast seen us already make a sacrifice to the good work; join us or die—die!—die! Oh, what a look! Not so—do not look at me so—”

As he uttered these words, the Hindu made a sudden motion, as if to drive away an object that approached him, and awoke with a start.

He passed his hand over his forehead, which was reeking with perspiration, and looked wildly around him. [See cut, on next page.]

“Brother, always this dream!” said Faringhea to him. “For a hardy hunter of men, thy head is weak. Fortunately thine heart and thine arm are strong.”

The Indian did not reply for some moments, but hid his face in his hands.

“After a pause he said, “For a long while I have not dreamed of this traveller.”

“Is he not dead?” said Faringhea, shrugging his shoulders. “Didst not thou thyself cast the cord around his neck?”

“I did!” said the Indian, shuddering.

“Did we not dig his grave close to that of Colonel Kennedy? Did we not bury him, as we did the English butcher, under the sand and bulrushes?” asked the Negro.

“Yes, we dug his grave,” said the Indian, deeply agitated; “and yet it is now a year ago that I was at Bombay, when, one evening, as I was awaiting one of our brethren, at sundown, near the pagoda which is at the side of the little hill—I still behold the scene—seated under a fig-tree, I heard a slow, firm, and quiet footsteps; I turned my head—‘twas he, leaving the city.”

“A dream!” said the Negro. “Nothing but a dream!”

“Yes, a vision,” added Faringhea; “or some vague resemblance.”

“I knew him at once by the black mark which shrouds his brow—‘twas he! I remained motionless with fear—my eyes starting out of my head. He stopped, and cast on me his mild and melancholy glance; in spite of myself, I exclaimed, ‘Tis he!”
"It is I," he replied with his gentle voice; "and all those you have slain will rise again as I have done." Then he pointed toward Heaven, and continued, "Why slay? Hearken! I came from Java; I am going to the other end of the globe, to a country of eternal snows; there or here, whether on a flaming soil or an icy land, yet I shall be for eternity. Thus will it be with the souls of all who fall under thy deadly cord, either in this world or the other; in this earthly form, or in some other, the SOUL will always be a SOUL—thou canst not extinguish THAT. Then wherefore slay?" And then, shaking his head sorrowfully, he went on his way, always walking slowly, with his forehead bowed. He ascended the hill of the pagoda, and I followed him with my eyes, unable to move. As the sun set, he paused on the summit; his tall figure stood out against the sky, and then he disappeared. Oh, 'twas he!" said the Indian, trembling violently as he spoke; and then again, after a long pause, "Yes, 'twas he!"

This recital of the Indian had never varied, and he had frequently narrated his mysterious adventure to his comrades. This pertinacity on his part shook their incredulity, or, rather, made them endeavour to find some natural solution for an event which appeared supernatural.

"Perhaps," said Faringhea, after some reflection, "the knot which choked the traveller was not tight enough, and a breath of life might remain in him; the air may have penetrated the rushes with which we covered his grave, and so he returned to life."

"No, no!" said the Indian, shaking his head; "this man was not of our race—"
"What do you mean?"
"Now I know—"
"Know what?"
"Listen!" said the Hindoo, in a solemn voice. "The number of victims that the children of Bohwanie have sacrificed since the beginning of ages is nothing to the immensity of dead and dying this terrible traveller leaves behind him in his march of destruction."

"He!" exclaimed the Negro and Faringhea.

"He!" replied the Indian, with an accent of conviction which deeply impressed his companions. "Hearken and tremble! When I met this traveller at the gates of Bombay, he had come from Java, and was going toward the north, as he said. The next day Bombay was ravaged by the cholera; and, some time afterward, we learned that this scourge had burst forth here at Java."

"That is true," said the Negro.

"Listen again," resumed the Hindoo. "I am going toward the north—to a country of eternal snow," said the traveller to me; and has not the cholera also gone northward, passing Mascata, Ispahan, Tauris, Teflis, and reached Siberia?"

"True," replied Faringhea, thoughtfully.

"And the cholera," resumed the Indian, "only proceeded at the rate of five or six leagues a day—a man's journey. It never appeared in two places at once, but advanced slowly, equally, always at the pace of a man's daily travel."

At this singular comparison, the two comrades of the Hindoo looked at each other in amaze.

After some minutes' silence, the affrighted Negro said to the Indian,

"And you believe that this man—"

"I believe that this man, whom we killed, restored to life by some infernal divinity, has been missioned to spread this terrible scourge over the earth, and to scatter death wheresoever he may wander, though he himself cannot die. Remember," added the Indian, with gloomy emphasis; "remember, this terrible traveller has passed through Java—the cholera has devastated Java; this traveller has passed through Bombay—the cholera has devastated Bombay; this traveller has gone northward—the cholera has devastated the north—"

And the Indian, pausing, fell into a deep revery.

The Negro and Faringheawere overcome by deep astonishment. The Indian was right as to the mysterious progress (hitherto unexplained) of this fearful scourge, which, as we know, never advanced more than five or six leagues a day, and never appeared simultaneously in two places.

Nothing can be more striking than to follow, on maps drawn at the time, the steady advance of this progressive scourge, which presents to the astonished eye all the caprices, all the incidents, of the march of a wayward traveller.

Going here in preference to there; choosing certain districts in a country, and certain cities in those districts, certain quarters in those cities, certain streets in those quarters, certain houses in those streets; having even its places of rest, and then resuming its slow, mysterious, and terrible progress.

The words of the Indian, which described these fearful wantonings, made, necessarily, a deep impression on the Negro and Faringhea, fierce as were their dispositions, and directed by revolting doctrines to the monomania of murder.

It is an established fact, that there are in India sects of this abominable community, creatures who, almost always, commit their murders without motive or excitement—who kill for murder's sake—for the pleasure of slaying—for the sake of substituting death for life—to make of a living being a dead corpse—as they have declared in answer to questions put to them.

Thought is lost in the attempt to penetrate to the cause of such monstrous phenomena. By what incredible series of events have men become vowed to such a priesthood of Death?

Doubtless, such a religion can flourish only in countries devoted, like India, to the most atrocious system of slavery—to the most pitiless dealings of man with his fellow-man.
Such a religion must be the outbreak of the hatred of humanity exasperated, beyond endurance, by oppression. Perhaps, too, this homicidal sect, whose origin is lost in the night of ages, is perpetuated in these regions as the only possible protest of slavery against despotism. Perhaps the Almighty, in His impenetrable designs, has created the Phansegars as he has created tigers and serpents.

It is very remarkable, in this repulsive community, that a mysterious link unites all the members together, and isolates them from their fellow-men; for they have laws of their own, customs of their own; they devote themselves to each other, sustain and aid each other, but they have neither country nor family. They recognize only a dark and mysterious power, whose behests they blindly obey, and in whose name they wander abroad and "make corpses," to use one of their own ferocious expressions.

For some moments the three Stranglers preserved a profound silence.

Outside the hovel the moon was shedding her broad silver light and vast blue shadows on the imposing mass of ruins. The stars shone brilliantly, and, from time to time, the fitful breeze shook the bright and clustering leaves of the bananas and the palm-trees.

The pedestal of the gigantic statue, which was preserved entire, and was at the left of the portico, rested on large slabs, half concealed under rank weeds.

Suddenly, one of these slabs appeared to give way.

From the opening, which was effected noiselessly, a man, clothed in uniform, half emerged, and looked carefully about him, listening with much attention.

Seeing the light of the lamp which lighted up the interior of the hut glimmer on the tall herbage, he withdrew, made a signal, and then he and two other soldiers climbed, with the greatest precaution and silence, up the lower steps of this subterranean staircase, and moved stealthily across the ruins.

For some moments their moving shadows were thrown on the ground, where the moonbeams shone, and then they disappeared behind pieces of the fallen walls.

At the moment when the thick slab resumed its place and level, the heads of several other soldiers were visible in the concealment of this excavation.

* We append some extracts from the very curious book of M. le Comte de Warren on British India in 1831:—

"Beside the robbers who kill for the sake of the booty which they trust to find on travellers, there is a class of masoaaa, organized into a society, with chiefs, a service, a free-masonry, and even a religion, which has its fanatics and its devotion, its agents, its auxiliaries, its assistants, its moving bodies, its passive comrades, who contribute by their subscriptions to 'the good work.' It is the community of Thugs, Phansegars (cheats or stranglers, from thugma, to cheat, and phanesma, to strangle), a religious and working confraternity, who war against the human race by exterminating the aged and whose origin is lost in the night of ages.

"Up to 1815, their existence was not only unknown to their European conquerors, but even to their native government. Between the years 1815 and 1830, many bands had been taken in the fact and punished; but, up to the latter period, all the revelations made on this subject by officers of high experience seemed too monstrous to obtain public attention and belief, and had been refused credence, as the dreams of a wild imagination. Yet for very many years, at least for half a century, this social plague-spot had consumed immense populations, from the foot of the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from Kutch to Assam.

"It was in the year 1830 that the confessions of a celebrated chief, whose life was spared on condition that he should denounce his accomplices, unfolded the whole system. The foundation of the Thuggee confraternity is a religious belief, the worship of Bohwanie, a dark divinity, who loves nothing but carnage, and hates especially the human race. Her most acceptable sacrifices are human victims, and the more of these are offered up in this world, the more will you be compensated in the next by joys of the soul and the senses, and by females always young, fresh, and lovely. If the assassin should meet with the scaffold in his career, he dies with enthusiasm, a martyr whom a palm awaits. To obey his divine mistress, he murders, without anger and without remorse, the old man, the woman, and the child. To his colleagues he must be charitable, humane, generous, devoted, sharing all in common, because they, as well as he, are ministers and adopted children of Bohwanie.

"The destruction of fellow-creatures who do not belong to the same community, and the diminution of the human species, are the objects they pursue. It is not a road to fortune, for the booty is but a secondary consideration, a collateral accessory, a mere item, no doubt, but of minor estimation. Destruction is the great aim and end, the heavenly mission, the absorbing vocation. It is a delicious gratification; the hunting down of men is the most intoxicating sport in the world. 'You find great pleasure,' was said by one of these criminals, 'in poisoning the wild beast to its lair, in attacking the wild boar and tiger, because there are dangers to face, energy and courage to display. Only think, then, how that fascination must be redoubled when the struggle is with men, when it is man whom you destroy! Instead of the exercise of worldly faculty, courage, you have at once to envenome courage, cunning, foresight, eloquence, diplomacy. How many springs to move! how many strings to touch! To play with all the passions, to cause vibration on the chords of love and friendship, to lead your prey into your net—it is a glorious chase, it is sublime—captivating, I say.'

"What a picture! What an era will remember the stupendous and 1832 of the discovery of this vast infernal machinery spread throughout society. A great number of magistrates of the provinces refused to believe it, and could not comprehend how a system so vast had for so long a time absorbed the social body under their eyes, silently, and without betraying itself."—British India in 1831, by M. Edward de Warren, 2 vols. Gros Paris, 1844.
The Mulatto, the Indian, and the Negro, plunged still in deep thought, saw nothing of this.
CHAPTER VI.

THE AMBUSCADE.

ONGING to dispel the gloomy thoughts which the discourse of the Indian on the mysterious progress of the cholera had suggested, the Mulatto, Faringhea, suddenly changed the conversation. His eye shone with a wild glare, and his countenance assumed an expression of fierce enthusiasm, as he exclaimed,

"Bohwanie will always watch over us, fearless hunters of men. Courage, brothers, courage! The world is wide, and our prey is everywhere. The English drive us from India—us, the three chiefs of the good work! What matters that? We leave behind us brethren as well concealed, as numerous, as terrible, as the black scorpions, which only betray their presence by their deadly sting! Exile but widens our domain! Brother, to thee is America!" said the chief to the Hindoo, with an air of inspiration; "Brother, to thee is Africa!" he said to the Negro; "Brothers, to me is Europe! Wherever there are men, there are executioners and victims; wherever there are victims there are hearts swelling with hatred: be it our task to influence those hatreds with all the fiercest longings for vengeance! It is reserved for us, by dint of stratagems and seductions, to draw around us, servants of Bohwanie, all whose zeal, courage, and boldness can be useful to us. Among ourselves, and for ourselves, let us rival each other in devotion, in self-denial. Let us lend each other force, help, and support. Let all who are not with us be our prey. Let us isolate ourselves in the midst of all, against all, in spite of all. For us let there be no country, no family! Our family is our brethren; our country, the universe!"

This savage eloquence deeply impressed the Negro and the Hindoo, who were usually under the influence of Faringhea, whose intelligence was greatly superior to their own, although they themselves were among the most eminent leaders of this sanguinary fraternity.

"You are right, brother," exclaimed the Hindoo, fired by the enthusiasm of Faringhea; "be the world ours! Here, even in Java, let us leave a trace of our passage. Before we go hence, let us establish the good work in this island; it will increase, for here misery is great. The Dutch are as rapacious as the English. Brothers, I saw in the marshy rice-fields of this isle, always deadly to those who cultivate them, men whom want forced to this suicidal labour; they were livid as corpses. Some, extenuated by sickness, fatigue, and famine, fell never again to rise! Brothers, the good work will increase in this land!"

"The other evening," said the Mulatto, "I was on the border of the lake behind a rock; a young woman came thither having on a few miserable rags, which scarcely covered her lean and sun-scorched frame: in her arms she bore a young child, which she, weeping, pressed against her dried-up breast. She embraced the infant thrice, saying, 'Thou, at least, shalt not become miserable like thy father!' and she cast it into the waters; uttering a shriek, the child disappeared. At this sound, alligators, concealed in the reeds, dashed joyously into the lake. Brothers, here mothers kill their children for pity's sake. Oh, the good work will increase in this land!"

"This morning," said the Negro, "while they were mangling one of the
black slaves with the lash, a little old man, a merchant of Batavia, left his country-house to return to the city. In his palanquin he received, with the indolence of palled appetite, the sad caresses of two of the young creatures with whom his harem is peopled, by purchasing them of their parents, too poor to bring them up. The palanquin which held this old man and the two young girls was borne by a dozen young and powerful men. Brethren, there are mothers here who, from want, sell their children; slaves who are scourged; men who carry other men like beasts of burden. Yes, yes, the good work will increase in this country!"

"In this country? yes, and in every country of oppression, misery, corruption, and slavery."

"Should we succeed in engaging Djalma to join us, as Mahal, the smuggler, advises," said the Indian, "our voyage to Java will be doubly profitable; for, before we go, we shall include in our ranks this bold and daring young man, who has so many motives for hating mankind."

"When he comes we will sharpen his animosities."

"Let us remind him of his father's death."

"The slaughter of his people."

"His own captivity."

"If hatred but inflame his heart, he is ours."

The Negro, who had been for some time lost in thought, said abruptly,

"My brothers, what if the smuggler Mahal has deceived us?"

"He!" exclaimed the Indian, almost indignantly; "why, he gave us refuge on board his coaster, and effected our escape from the mainland; he will take us on board the schooner which he is to command, and convey us to Bombay, where we shall find vessels for America, Europe, and Africa."

"What motive can Mahal have for betraying us?" inquired Faringhea; "he knows how impossible it is to escape the vengeance of the sons of Bohwanie."

"Then, too," said the black, "he has promised, by a trick, to bring Djalma here among us this evening; and, once here, he must become one of us."

"Besides, was it not the smuggler who said to us, 'Order the Malay to go to Djalma's ajoupa, to surprise him during sleep, but instead of killing him, as he might, let him mark on his arm Bohwanie's name?' Thus Djalma will judge of the resolution, address, and devotion of our brotherhood, and know what there is to hope and fear from such men. Through admiration or fear, then, he must join us."

"But should he refuse to do so, in spite of the reasons he has to hate his fellows?"

"Then Bohwanie will decide upon his destiny," said Faringhea, with a gloomy air. "I have my plan."

"Think you the Malay will succeed in surprising Djalma during his sleep?" said the Negro.

"It is impossible for man to be bolder, more adroit, and more active than the Malay," said Faringhea. "He has had the daring to surprise a black female panther in her lair while she was suckling; he killed the mother and carried off the cub, which he afterward sold to the captain of a European vessel."

"The Malay has succeeded!" exclaimed the Hindoo, listening to a singular cry which resounded through the deep silence of the night and woods.

"Yes, it is the cry of the vulture bearing off his prey," said the Negro, also listening. "It is the signal by which our brethren announce their success."

Shortly afterward the Malay appeared at the door of the hut. He was dressed in a large piece of cotton striped with bright colours.

"Well," said the Negro, anxiously, "have you succeeded?"

"Djalma will all his life bear the mark of the good work," said the Malay, exultingly. "To get at him, I was compelled to offer up to Bohwanie a man who crossed my path; I left his carcass under the bush near the ajoupa. Djalma bears our sign: Mahal the smuggler was the first to know that."
"And Djalma did not awake?" said the Indian, amazed at the Malay's address.

"If he had awaked, I must have perished," he replied, calmly, "for I was ordered to spare his life."

"Because his life may be more useful to us than his death," replied the Mulatto. Then, addressing the Malay, "Brother, in risking your life for the good work, you have done to-day what we did yesterday, and must do again to-morrow. To-day you obey; another day you will command."

"We all belong to Bohwanie," said the Malay. "What is next to be done? I am ready."

As he spoke, the Malay turned to the door of the hovel, and said suddenly, in a low voice, "Here is Djalma; he is approaching the cabin: Mahal has not deceived us."

"He must not see me yet," said Faringhea, going to the farther corner of the hut, and concealing himself beneath a mat. "Try and persuade him; if he resists I have my plan."

Faringhea had scarcely disappeared when Djalma reached the door of the hovel. At the sight of these three persons, with countenances so repulsive, Djalma recoiled with surprise. Ignorant that these men belonged to the sect of the Phansegars, and knowing that in this country, where there are no public houses, travellers often pass the night under tents, or in ruins which they pass, he made a step toward them. When his first surprise was over, recognizing in the bronzed features and peculiar costume of one of these individuals, a Hindoo, he said to him, in his native tongue,

"I expected to find here a European—a Frenchman."

"The Frenchman has not yet come," replied the Indian, "but he will not be long."

The Indian, comprehending by Djalma's question the means which Mahal had made use of to draw him into this snare, hoped to gain time by not undeceiving him.

"Do you know this Frenchman?" asked Djalma of the Phansegar.

"He appointed to meet us here as well as yourself," replied the Indian.

"And for what?" said Djalma, more and more astonished.

"You will know when he arrives."

"Was it General Simon who told you to be here?"

"It was General Simon."

There was a momentary pause, during which Djalma in vain endeavoured to expound this mystery.

"And who are you?" he inquired of the Indian, with a suspicious air, for the profound silence which the two companions of the Phansegar observed began to excite his suspicion.

"Who are we?" replied the Hindoo; "we are yours if you will be ours."

"I have no need of you: you have no need of me."

"Who knows?"

"I know it."

"You deceive yourself: the English killed your father; he was a king. You have been a captive, proscribed, and now possess nothing."

At this remembrance, Djalma's brow became clouded; he started, and a bitter smile curled his lips. The Phansegar continued:

"Your father was just and brave; beloved by his subjects: he was called the Father of the Generous, and well named was he. Will you let his death pass away without vengeance? Hatred is gnawing at your heart; shall it bite into you in vain?"

"My father died weapon in hand. I revenged his death on the English, whom I slew in battle. He who has been to me as a father, and also fought for him, has told me that it would be folly, madness, for me to seek to contend against
The English to recover my territory. When they set me at liberty I swore never again to set foot in India, and I will keep my word."

"They who despoiled you, who made you captive, who killed your father, are men; and there are other men on whom you may take vengeance: let your hate fall on them."

"You, who speak so of men, are not you also a man?"

"I, and those who are with me, are more than men. We are to the rest of the human race what the bold hunters are to the fierce beasts which they track in the woods. Will you become as we are—more than a man? Will you wreak surely, widely, fully, safely, the hatred that devours your heart, after all the ill, the injury they have done you?"

"Your words become more and more obscure. I have no hatred in my heart," said Djalma. "When an enemy is worthy of me, I fight him; when he is unworthy, I despise him; and so I do not hate either the brave or the coward."

"Treachery!" exclaimed the Negro, suddenly, pointing to the door with a quick gesture: for Djalma and the Indian had moved, in the course of their conversation, toward one of the corners of the hut.

At the cry of the Negro, Faringhea, whom Djalma had not perceived, threw rapidly from him the mat behind which he was concealed, drew his dagger, and, with a leap like a tiger's, was out of the cabin. Seeing then a body of soldiers approaching cautiously, he struck one of them dead with his poniard, dashed down two others, and disappeared amid the ruins.

This occurred so instantaneously that, at the moment when Djalma turned to seek the cause of the Negro's alarm and cry, Faringhea had disappeared.

Djalma and the three Stranglers were then immediately under the fire of the pointed muskets of many of the soldiery, while others hastened in pursuit of Faringhea.

The Negro, the Malay, and the Hindoo, seeing the inutility of resistance, rapidly exchanged some words, and then extended their hands to the cords with which the soldiers were provided.

The Dutch captain who commanded the detachment entered the cabin.

"And this one," he said, pointing out Djalma to the soldiers who had bound the three Phansegars.

"Each in his turn, sir," said the old sergeant; "we were going on to him."

Djalma remained petrified with surprise, wholly unable to comprehend what took place around him; but when he saw the sergeant and two soldiers advance to bind him, he repulsed them with violent indignation, and hastened to the door where the officer was standing.

The soldiers, supposing that Djalma would submit to his fate as quietly as his companions, did not anticipate this resistance; but struck, in spite of themselves, with the noble and dignified air of Kadja-Sing's son, they retreated a pace or two.

"Why would you bind me as you have these men?" exclaimed Djalma, speaking in Indian to the officer, who understood the language, having long served in the Dutch colonies.

"Why bind you, wretch? Because you are one of this gang of assassins; and you, are you afraid of him?" he said, in Dutch, to his men. "Bind him; tie your knots about his wrists; he'll have a tighter one round his neck."

"You mistake," said Djalma, with a calmness and dignity which astounded the officer. "I have been here scarcely a quarter of an hour. I know nothing of these men. I expected to find a Frenchman here."

"You are not a Phansegar like them? Who will believe that lie?"

"Like them?" exclaimed Djalma, with a movement of horror so natural that the officer signed to his soldiers to be quiet. "These men form part of that horrible body of murderers! and do you accuse me of being their accomplice? Then I am quite reassured, sir," said the young man, shrugging his shoulders, and smiling disdainfully.
"Your expression of confidence will not suffice in this case, as, thanks to certain information we have received, we are cognizant of the mysterious signs which designate a Phansegar."

"I repeat, that you yourself, sir, cannot hold this murderous sect in greater abhorrence than I do! That I came here to—"

The Negro, interrupting Djalma with ferocious joy, addressed the officer, saying,

"You have spoken well. The sons of the good work are known by the characters tattooed on their skin. Our hour has come, and we submit to our fate. Full oft has our fatal cord encircled the necks of such as were enemies of the good work. Look at our arms, then examine those of this young man."

The officer, imperfectly understanding the words of the Negro, turned to Djalma, saying,

"It is clear that if, as this Negro asserts, you do not bear on your arm the mysterious symbol—and of that we shall easily satisfy ourselves—and if you can sufficiently account for your presence here, you will be liberated in two hours."

"You do not comprehend me," said the Negro to the officer. "Prince Djalma is of us, and bears on his left arm the name of Bohwanie."

"Yes," added the Malay, "he is, like us, a son of the good work."

"He is a Phansegar, as we are," rejoined the Indian. These three men, irritated by the horror with which Djalma learned that they were Stranglers, took a ferocious delight in creating the belief that the son of Kadia-Sing was a member of their horrible association.

"What answer do you make to all this?" said the officer to Djalma.

The prince, smiling disdainfully, replied only by thrusting back with his right hand the loose hanging sleeve from his left arm, and extending it bare to the shoulder.

"Unparalleled audacity!" exclaimed the officer, as he beheld, in Hindoo characters of deep red, the name of Bohwanie traced just below the bend of the elbow.

Passing rapidly to the Malay, the officer pushed back his sleeve, and saw the same letters traced there. Not yet satisfied, he examined the arms of the Negro and Indian; each bore the words written on the arm of Djalma.

"Wretch!" cried the officer, turning to the prince in a paroxysm of rage, "you are more abhorrent than even your associates! Handcuff him like a cowardly assassin, he added, to the soldiers, "like a cowardly assassin who lies even on the verge of the grave, for assuredly his punishment will not be long deferred."

Stupified and overwhelmed, Djalma remained gazing on the fatal marks, his whole being absorbed in dismay and wonder at a fact so bewildering.

"Have you the effrontery to deny these characters?" exclaimed the officer, indignantly.

"I cannot deny," returned the prince, in accents of intense suffering, "what I see—what is there."

"Tis well, unhappy man! that you at length avow your guilt," replied the officer. "Soldiers, watch over this person and his accomplices on your peril."

Djalma, who could not but think himself the sport of a fearful dream, made no resistance, but allowed the soldiers to manacle his limbs and lead him away.

The officer, with a party of soldiers, sought diligently throughout the ruins in hopes of discovering Faringhea, but in vain; and at the end of an hour he followed the prisoners, who had been despatched to Batavia under escort.

A few hours after these events, M. Joshua Van Daël thus terminated his long memoir, addressed to M. Rodin, at Paris:

"Circumstances rendered it impossible for me to act otherwise; and, after all, if a small mischief has been done, it has been to effect a great good.

Three atrocious murderers have been delivered into the hands of justice,
and the temporary arrest of Djalma will only serve to display his innocence in
a stronger light.

"I have already been this morning to the governor to plead in his behalf;
for," said I, "since it is owing to me that three great criminals have fallen into
the hands of justice, I have a claim upon the gratitude of the public authorities,
which they may evince by using every exertion to clear the character of Prince
Djalma, already so justly esteemed for his noble qualities, and commiserated
for his misfortunes. "Certainly," I added, "when I hastened yesterday to apprise
the governor that a meeting of the Phansegars would take place in the ruins
of Tchandi, I was far from expecting that the adopted son of General Simon,
whom I know to be a most honourable man, and with whom I have had many
satisfactory transactions, would be confounded with them.

"We must, therefore, at any cost, penetrate the inconceivable mystery which
has placed Djalma in his present dangerous position. And," I added, "I am so
convinced of his innocence that, for his own sake, I ask no favour or indul-
gence; the prince has too much pride and dignity to leave his prison until his
innocence is made clear."

"You will perceive that, in thus expressing myself, I in no respect departed
from the truth, since no person can be more perfectly satisfied of the innocence
of Djalma than myself.

"The reply of the governor was what I expected. He said that, morally
speaking, he was equally convinced with myself of the young prince's innocence,
and that he entertained for him the most kindly feelings; but that justice must
take its course, because it afforded the only certain method of demonstrating
the falsity of the charge, and of discovering by what incomprehensible fatality
the mysterious characters were tattooed on the arm of Djalma.

"Mahal the smuggler, who alone could clear up this point, will have quitted
Batavia within an hour to embark on board the Ruyter, which will land him in
Egypt; and he will be furnished with a note from me, certifying that he is the
individual whose passage I have engaged and paid for: he will also bring you
this long letter, for the ship I am referring to sails in an hour, and the letters
for Europe were made up last night. I wished, however, to see the governor
this morning, before closing my packet.

"You perceive, therefore, that Prince Djalma will be forcibly detained here
for at least a month; and the opportunity of sailing by the Ruyter thus lost, it
will be impossible for the young Indian to be in France before the 13th of
February in the coming year.

"Thus have I, to the best of my ability, blindly followed your directions,
considering only the end which should justify the means employed; for you
have told me that great interests of the society are involved. In your hands I
have been what we all should be in the hands of our superiors—a mere instru-
ment—since, for the greater glory of God, our superiors make of us, so far as
the freedom of our will is concerned, dead bodies.*

"Let them deny our union and our power; circumstances appear adverse,
but only events change—we change not. Obedience and courage, secrecy and
patience, craft and boldness, union and zeal among ourselves, who have the
whole earth for our country, our brethren for kindred, and Rome for our
queen.

J. V."

About ten o'clock in the morning, Mahal the smuggler departed with his
sealed despatches to go on board the Ruyter, but an hour afterward his body,
strangled after the manner of the Phansegars, was hidden among the rushes of
a wild spot, whither he had gone for his boat in order to go on board the Ruyter.

The Ruyter was gone when the body of the smuggler was discovered, but in

* It is known that the doctrine of passive and absolute obedience, the grand pivot on which the body of Jesuita turned,
was summed up in the terrible dying words of Loyola: "Let each member of the order be in the hands of his superiors
LIKE A CORPSE-PERINDE AC CADAVER."
vain did M. Joshua cause the strictest search to be made for the voluminous packet intrusted to him; not a trace could be discovered of it, or of the letter addressed to the captain of the Ruyter, identifying Mahal as the passenger he was to expect: neither were the close researches made after Faringhea successful.

The dangerous chief of the Stranglers was never again seen in Java.
PART IV.

THE CHATEAU DE CARDOVILLE.

CHAPTER I.

M. RODIN.

Three months have passed since Djalma was cast into prison at Batavia, accused of belonging to the murderous sect of the Phan-segars or Stranglers. The scene we now describe is in France, at the beginning of the month of February, 1832, at the Chateau de Cardoville, an ancient feudal habitation, situated on the high cliffs of the coast of Picardy, not far from St. Valery, a very dangerous seashore, where almost every year ships are lost in gales from the northwest, which render the navigation of the channel so full of peril.

In the interior of the chateau was heard the roaring of a wild tempest which had arisen in the night, and, at intervals, a loud roar, like a discharge of artillery, came thundering from afar, and was echoed by the hollows of the rocks. It was the sea, which dashed with fury against the high cliffs that towered around the old manor-house.

It was about seven o'clock in the morning, and daylight had not penetrated the windows of a large apartment on the ground floor of the chateau; it was lighted by a lamp, before which was seated a woman of about sixty, with an open and good-tempered face, clothed after the fashion of the respectable farmers' wives of Picardy, and occupied with needle-work, although it was so early. At a little distance was her husband, about her own age, seated before a large table, and sorting out and putting into small bags samples of wheat and oats. The countenance of this gray-haired old man was intelligent and honest, expressive of good sense and integrity, lighted up by a look of mirthful humour. He wore a jacket of green cloth, and tanned-leather gaiters, coming above the knees of his black velvet breeches.

The terrible storm which was raging outside seemed to make this peaceable interior even still more comfortable. An excellent fire was blazing in a chimney-place of white marble, which threw the reflection of its cheerful glare on the carefully waxed floor. Nothing could be more gay than the hangings and curtains of old Persian cloth, with red Chinese figures on a white ground, and nothing more pleasing than the paintings above the doors, which represented rustic scenes in the style of Watteau. A mantel-clock of Sévres porcelain, rose-
wood furniture inlaid with buhl-work, and old-fashioned, crooked, twisted, copulent, and massive, completed the fitting up of the apartment.

The tempest continued to roar without, and the wind from time to time howled in the chimney, or violently shook the casements. The man who was occupied in assorting the samples of grain was M. Dupont, the land-steward of the Chateau de Cardoville. [See cut, on page 163.]

"Holy Virgin! my dear," said his wife to him, "what awful weather! This Monsieur Rodin, whose arrival the head steward of the Princess de Saint-Dizier has told us we are to expect this morning, has selected a very uncomfortable day for his journey."

"Why, in truth, I have not often known such a tempest. If M. Rodin never saw the sea in a rage, he may to-day amuse himself with the sight."

"What is this M. Rodin coming here for to-day?"

"Indeed, I don't know; the intendant of the princess desires me in his letter to show him every attention, and obey him as I would my master. It will be for M. Rodin to explain himself, and for me to obey his orders, since he comes from the princess."

"Why, to be quite precise, it is from Mademoiselle Adrienne that he ought to come, as the estate belongs to her since the death of her late father, the Count-duke de Cardoville."

"Yes, but the princess is her aunt, and her chief agent does the business of Mademoiselle Adrienne; so, whether he comes from her or the princess, it's all the same thing."

"Perhaps M. Rodin intends to purchase the estate, although the stout lady, who came purposely from Paris a week ago to see the chateau, seemed very anxious to have it."

At these words the steward laughed.

"What makes you laugh, Dupont?" inquired his wife, who was an excellent
woman, but not remarkable for the brilliancy of her understanding or the acuteness of her penetration.

"I laughed," replied Dupont, "because I was thinking of the face and figure of that stout, that enormous woman. Only imagine, with such an appearance, that any female should call herself Madame de Sainte-Colombe! Mercy on me! what a saint and what a dove! She is as big as a kilderkin, with a voice like a dram-drinker, and gray mustaches, like a grenadier of the line! And I heard her say to her servant, 'Come, get on, my trump!' And she calls herself Sainte-Colombe!"

"Really, Dupont, you make very strange remarks. She didn't choose her own name, you know; and as to her beard, she cannot help that."

"Yes, but it is her fault if she calls herself De la Sainte-Colombe; you can't believe that it is her real name. Ah, my poor Catherine! you are as simple as ever."

"And you, my poor Dupont, you cannot help saying little sharp things. Now I think the lady seemed very respectable. The first thing that she asked for when she arrived was the chapel belonging to the chateau, of which she had been informed. She said she would embellish it; and when I told her that there was no church in this small district, she appeared quite distressed at being without a cure in the village."

"Yes—ah! yes—the first thing your parvenus do is to play the charitable, and meddle with the affairs of the parish, like a great lady."

"But Madame de la Sainte-Colombe has no occasion to play the great lady, for she is so already."

"She a great lady?"

"Yes; why only think how beautifully she was dressed, with her shot-silk gown and her violet-coloured gloves, as handsome as a bishop's; and, then, when she took off her hat, she had round her false hair a bandeau of diamonds, and ear-rings of diamonds as large as my thumb-nail, and rings on every one of
her fingers! Depend upon it, she is a person of consequence, or she would not wear so many jewels in the open day."

"Um! um! you are a very clever body."

"That is not all."

"Go on—what else?"

"She talked of nothing but dukes, marquises, counts, and very rich people, who visited her, and were her friends; and then, when she saw the little pavilion in the park, which was half burned by the Prussians, and which the late count would not repair, she said, 'What ruins are these?' I replied, 'Madame, this pavilion was burned when the Allies were in this country.' "Indeed, my dear," said she; 'the Allies—the good Allies—the dear Allies; they and the Restoration began to make my fortune.' "Then I said to myself, Dupont, 'Ah! I see, she is an ancient émigré.'"

"Madame de Sainte-Colombe!" shouted the steward, bursting with laughter; "oh, my poor wife! my poor wife!"

"Ah, because you were three years in Paris, you think you know everything."

"Catherine, my dear, let us talk of something else; you will make me say something I do not wish. There are things, my love, which good and simple-hearted creatures like you ought never to know."

"I do not know what you mean by that, but, pray, try not to say such ill-natured things of people; for if Madame de Sainte-Colombe does buy the estate, you wish to remain as steward, don't you?"

"To be sure I do, for we are growing old, Catherine, dear; and, having been here twenty years, we have been too honest to save money for our old age; and, faith! it would be hard, at our time of life, to have to seek another home, and perhaps not find it. Ah! what I regret is, that Mademoiselle Adrienne will not keep the estate, for it seems that it is she who will sell it, and that the princess did not wish her to part with it."

"Why, Dupont, you surely do not see anything very extraordinary in Mamselle Adrienne's desire to spend some of her large fortune, so young as she is?"

"Oh, the thing is natural enough. Mamselle, having neither father nor mother, is her own mistress, and she has a wilful little head of her own. Don't you remember ten years ago, when the count, her father, brought her here one summer, what a Tartar she was! what a temper! and such eyes! how they sparkled and shone even then!"

"'Tis truth to be said, Mamselle Adrienne had a very singular expression in her look—very strange for her age."

"If she has grown up what was promised in her bright and laughing face, she must be very handsome now, in spite of the rather peculiar hue of her hair; for, between ourselves, if she was a little shop-girl, instead of a damsel of high birth, everybody would say she was red-haired."

"For shame! again something ill-natured."

"Of Mamselle Adrienne! Heaven forbid! for she promised to be as good as she was handsome; and it is not to wrong or scandalize her that I call her red-haired. On the contrary; for I remember that her locks were so fine, so bright, so golden, and suited so admirably her snow-white skin and black eyes, that I would not have them altered if I could. And I am sure that now this auburn colour, which would be detrimental to others, will make Mamselle Adrienne only more charming; and she must now be a real little sprite."

"Oh, as to that, she was always full of tricks; running in the park, teasing her governess, climbing the trees, and a hundred little mischievous ways."

"I agree that Mamselle Adrienne was a very little devil, but then, so full of sense and kindness, and so good-hearted!"

"She was, indeed. Didn't she once give her shawl and new merino dress to a little beggar-girl, and go back to the chateau with nothing but her petticoat on, and with her arms bare?"
"Yes, heart, plenty of heart, wife; but her head—ah! what a head!"
"Oh, a wild, very wild head; and I fear it may lead her into mischief; for it seems that in Paris she does things—such things!"
"What things!"
"Oh! my dear, I dare not tell."
"Come, tell away."
"Well, then," said the worthy housewife, with a sort of embarrassment and concern, which showed how deeply such enormities affected her, "they do say that Mamselle Adrienne never sets foot in church; that she lives all alone in an idolatrous temple at the end of the garden of her aunt's hotel; that she is waited on by women in masks, who dress her up like a goddess, and she scratches them all day long, for she gets tipsy, and then all night she plays on a hunting-horn of solid gold; and all this, as you may well suppose, is terribly afflicting and annoying to her poor aunt the princess."

At this moment the steward burst out into so loud a fit of laughter, that he quite interrupted his wife.
"Really!" said he, when he had finished; "and who told you these fine stories about Mamselle Adrienne?"
"Why, Rene's wife, who went to Paris to get a child to nurse. She called at the Hôtel de Saint-Dizier to see Madame Grivois, her godmother; she, you know, is first femme-de-chambre to the princess. Well, Madame Grivois told her all this, and, of course, she must know all about it, as she belongs to the household."

"Oh, that Grivois is a nice gossip, a worthy woman! Why, not long ago she was one of the gayest ladies; and now she is, like her mistress, so pious and sanctimonious! Umph! why she is now a devotee! Like mistress, like maid. And the princess, too, she who is now so stiff-starched—why, I remember the time when she used to play fine pranks; about fifteen years ago what a frolicsome miss was she! You remember that handsome hussar colonel who was quartered at Abbeville? You must remember—an emigrant who had served in Russia, and to whom the Bourbons gave a regiment at the Restoration!"

"Yes, I remember very well; but there you go again with your scandal."
"Not I, indeed; I only tell the truth. The colonel spent all his time at the chateau, and the world said that he was on very good terms with the pious princess of to-day. Ah! what a time we had of it then! Every evening, plays or fêtes at the chateau. What a rattler that colonel was! How well he acted! I recollect—"

The steward was cut short in his recollections by a stout female servant, wearing the Picardy costume and cap, who came into the room in a hurry, and said to her mistress,
"Mistress, there is a man asking for master; he has just come from St. Valery in a post-chaise, and he says his name is Monsieur Rodin."
"M. Rodin!" said the steward; "ask him in directly."

A minute afterward M. Rodin entered. He was, according to custom, more than modestly dressed. He made a low bow to the steward and his wife, who, on a sign from her husband, left the room. The cadaverous countenance of M. Rodin, his almost imperceptible lips, his small, reptile-like eyes, half covered by the lax upper lid, and his almost beggarly clothes, combined to make his appearance anything but prepossessing. Yet this man, when it was requisite, knew how, with a devilish skill, to assume so much kindness and sincerity, to make his discourse so agreeable and insinuating, that, by degrees, the disagreeable and repulsive effect his appearance conveyed was destroyed, and he almost always succeeded in seizing his dupe or victim in the folds of his crafty and subtle eloquence. It is said that the ugly and the evil have their fascination as well as the handsome and the good.

The honest steward looked at this individual with surprise, remembering the
pressing recommendations of the intendant of the Princess de Saint-Dizier. He expected a totally different personage, and could hardly conceal his astonishment when he said,

"I have the honour of seeing M. Rodin?"

"Yes, sir; and here is another letter from the intendant of the Princess de Saint-Dizier."

"Pray, sir, draw near the fire while I read this letter. The weather is so bad," said the steward, with much respect; "may I offer you anything?"

"A thousand thanks, my dear sir; I leave again in an hour."

While M. Dupont was reading, M. Rodin cast a scrutinizing glance at the interior of the room; for, like a skilful man of the world, he often drew his most correct and useful inferences from appearances, which often betray the taste and habits, and afford some idea of character; but, for once, his sagacity was at fault.

"Very well, sir," said the steward, after he had finished the letter; "the intendant renews his instructions that I shall place myself entirely at your orders."

"Oh, I shall give you but very little trouble, and not detain you long."

"Sir, it is an honour." 

"I know how fully you must be employed, for, as I came in, I was struck with the order and perfect arrangement which I observed everywhere—a proof, my dear sir, of the care which you take."

"Sir—really—you flatter me."

"Flatter you! a poor old man like me does not think of that; but, to business. You have here a room which is called the Green Chamber?"

"Yes, sir; it is the apartment which the late Count-duke de Cardoville used as his study."

"Have the kindness to conduct me to it."

"Unfortunately, sir, that is impossible. After the death of the count, and when the seals were removed, a quantity of papers were shut up in the chamber in a cabinet, and the lawyers took the keys with them to Paris."

"Here are the keys," said M. Rodin, showing the steward a large key and a small one fastened together.

"Ah, sir, that alters the case. You want some papers, then?"

"Yes, certain papers, and a small wooden casket with silver hinges; do you know it?"

"I do, sir; I have often seen it on the table of the count when he was writing, and it must be in the large China cabinet, of which you have the key."

"Be so good, then, as to lead me thither, as I have the authority of the Princess de Saint-Dizier."

"Yes, sir; and is the princess quite well?"

"Perfectly; she is, as usual, wholly absorbed in heavenly things."

"And Mademoiselle Adrienne?"

"Alas! my dear sir," said M. Rodin, with a deep and commiserating sigh. 

"Merciful heavens! Surely, nothing has happened to that excellent young lady?"

"You do not understand me."

"Is she ill?"

"No, no! she is well. Unhappily, her health is only equalled by her extreme beauty."

"Unhappily!" repeated the registrar, in amazement.

"Alas! yes," replied Rodin; "for when youth, beauty, and high health are joined to a perversive spirit, to a character without its like on earth, it were better to be without these advantages, which become so many lures to perdition. But let me pray of you, my dear sir, to speak of other things—the subject is too painful for me," added M. Rodin, in a voice of deep emotion, and wiping the corner of his right eye with the tip of the little finger of his left hand, as though a tear had gathered there.
The registrar did not perceive the tear, but he saw the action, and was much struck with the emotion shown in M. Rodin's voice; he therefore replied, in a tone of sympathizing regret, "Let me crave your pardon for my inadvertence; I was not aware—"

"Nay, my good friend, it is rather I who must ask you to excuse this involuntary weakness—tears are rare visitors at my age; but had you seen, as I did, the despair of that excellent princess, whose only fault has been that of being too indulgent to her niece, and so encouraging her in her— But again, let us change the subject of our discourse, my very dear sir."

After a momentary silence, during which M. Rodin appeared to regain his usual calmness, he said to M. Dupont,

"As far as regards the green chamber, then, my dear sir, one part of my mission is fulfilled: there is still another, and, before I mention it, I must recall to your memory a circumstance which you may have forgotten—the fact of a Marquis d'Aigrigny, then a colonel of hussars quartered at Abbeville, having, about fifteen or sixteen years since, passed some time here."

"Ah! a fine, soldierly man. I was talking of him to my wife just now; he was the life and soul of the chateau; and such a clever actor! he always played the wild, rollicking characters. In the 'Two Edmonds,' for instance. He used to play the drunken soldier admirably! And what a voice he had! when he sang the music of Jocote he everybody said there was not such a singer in Paris."

Rodin, after politely listening to the registrar, proceeded:

"You know, doubtless, that, after a terrible duel with a fierce Bonapartist, named General Simon, the Marquis d'Aigrigny (whose private secretary I have now the honour of being) forsook the world, and devoted himself to the Church?"

"Is it possible? That handsome colonel!"

"Yes, that handsome colonel—rich, noble, everywhere sought after—resigned all these advantages to assume a lowly black robe; and, spite of his name, his rank, his high family connexions, and his reputation as a great preacher, he is just what he was fourteen years ago, a simple abbé, instead of being an archbishop or a cardinal, like many are who do not possess either his merits or his virtues."

M. Rodin said this in so natural and unaffected a manner, and the facts he presented seemed to be so incontestable, that M. Dupont involuntarily exclaimed, "What a noble picture you have drawn!"

"Nay," answered M. Rodin, with an inimitable air of ingenuousness, "nay, my dear friend, you overrate it; to a heart like that of M. d'Aigrigny such conduct was very simple and natural. But, among his many fine qualities, he particularly possesses that of never forgetting men of honour, probity, and conscience; that is to say, my worthy M. Dupont, he has not failed to remember you."

"What! the marquis has condescended to—"

"Only three days since I received a letter from him, in which you were mentioned."

"He is, then, in Paris?"

"He is shortly expected to arrive there. About three months ago he set out for Italy; during the journey, he received the afflicting intelligence of the death of his mother, who had gone to pass the autumn at one of the estates belonging to the Princess de Saint-Dizier."

"Indeed! I was not aware of that."

"Yes, indeed; the blow fell on him with a crushing weight. But we must all resign ourselves to the will of Providence."

"And what was it M. le Marquis did me the honour to say in his letter respecting me?"

"I am about to inform you: in the first place, you must know this chateau is sold; the agreement was signed the evening before I left Paris."

"Ah! now you renew my fears."
"As regards what?"
"I am fearful the new proprietor may not continue me in my present office."
"Really, this is a fortunate coincidence! for it was precisely respecting your situation I wished to speak with you."
"Is it possible?"
"Certainly; and knowing the interest the marquis takes in you, I am most anxious, most desirous for you to retain your employment, and I will do all in my power to serve you, if—"
"Ah, my benefactor!" exclaimed Dupont, interrupting Rodin; "what thanks do I not owe you! Heaven has surely sent you to my assistance."
"Nay, now you flatter me, my worthy M. Dupont; I am compelled to attach a condition to the service I propose to render you."
"Oh, if that be all, speak on."
"The new occupant of the chateau is an elderly lady, worthy of the highest consideration and respect: Madame de la Sainte-Colombe is the name of this excellent lady."
"Bless me!" cried the steward; "is it possible that she has bought the chateau? Madame de la Sainte-Colombe!"
"You are acquainted with her, then?"
"Why, sir, about a week ago, she came here to look at the estate. My wife insists upon it, she is a great lady; but, between ourselves, from certain words she let fall—"
"Ah, you are an accurate observer, I see, my worthy M. Dupont. Madame de la Sainte-Colombe is not what may be styled a lady; I believe she was neither more nor less than a milliner in the Palais Royal. You see I use no reserve with you."
"And she to talk of the French and foreign noblemen who were in the habit of frequenting her house!"
"Of course, when they came to order hats and caps for their wives. However, one thing is certain, that she contrived to amass a large property; and having been in her youth, as well as more mature age, indifferent—alas! more than indifferent—to the well-being of her soul, Madame de la Sainte-Colombe is now in a most praiseworthy and excellent course, and this makes her, as I said just now, worthy of all respect and veneration: for what is more respectable than a hearty and sincere repentance? But that her eternal welfare may be effectually secured, we must have your co-operation, my worthy friend."
"And what can I do?"
"You may do much; and in this manner, for example. You have no church in this hamlet, which is situated at equal distances between two parishes. Madame de la Sainte-Colombe, being naturally anxious to choose between the two ministers, and aware that yourself and Madame Dupont have long inhabited this part of the country, will be sure to inquire of you and your wife touching their merits."
"Oh, we shall not be long in answering that question; the cure of Danicourt is one of the best men breathing."
"And that is precisely what you must not tell Madame de la Sainte-Colombe."
"How?"
"On the contrary, you must cry up to her, day and night, the cure of the other parish, M. de Roiville, that this dear lady may confide to him the salvation of her soul."
"And why him rather than the other?"
"For a very sufficient reason. If you and your wife can induce Madame de la Sainte-Colombe to choose as I wish her to do, you may rely upon being continued in your office of steward; to that I pledge my honour; and what I once promise I never fail to perform."
"I doubt not, monsieur, your having this power," said Dupont, convinced by the tone and look of authority assumed by Rodin; "but I should much wish to know—"
"One word more," said Rodin, interrupting him. "It is but right; and I am quite willing to explain to you why I insist upon the preference which I wish you to bring about. I should be grieved to have you fancy even the shadow of an interested motive, when my only desire is to perform a good action. The curé of Roiville, for whom I ask your kind offices, is a person in whose welfare M. le Abbé d'Aigrigny takes a lively interest; though poor, he has an aged mother entirely dependant on him; were he intrusted with the spiritual guidance of Madame de la Sainte-Colombe, he would effect a more decided improvement than any person less endowed with patience and zeal. And then there would be occasional little gifts from this worthy lady by which the poor mother would profit. Here is all the secret of this great machination. When I became aware of this lady's intention to buy the estate contiguous to the parish of our protégé, I wrote to M. le Marquis; and he, recollecting you, replied by despatching a letter requesting me to solicit of you this little service, which, as you perceive, it is to your interest to grant; for I repeat, and I will prove my words, that it is in my power to retain you as steward."

"Listen, sir," said Dupont, after a few moments' reflection; "you are so candid and polite that I will follow your example: in proportion as the curé of Danicourt is beloved and respected throughout the country, so is the curé of Roiville, to whom it is your wish to give the preference, disliked for his intolerance. And, besides—"

"Go on."

"People do say—"

"Well, what do they say?"

"They say that he is—a Jesuit."

At these words M. Rodin burst into a fit of laughter so hearty that the steward was riveted to the spot with astonishment; for the face of M. Rodin had a singular expression when he laughed.

"A Jesuit!" repeated M. Rodin, whose hilarity seemed to increase. "A Jesuit! My dear M. Dupont, how is it possible a person of your good sense, intelligence, and knowledge of the world can listen to such nonsense? A Jesuit! Are there such things nowadays? Can you really put faith in these absurd, jacobinical tales, these hobgoblins of decayed Liberalism? I'll wager that you have been reading all this in the Constitutionel!"

"Still, sir, folks say—"

"Say! what is there that people will not say? But wise and enlightened men, such as yourself, never listen to what 'they say;' they busy themselves only with their own affairs, and do not throw away an excellent situation, which will ensure them comfort for life; for I tell you candidly that, unless you obtain for my protégé the preference I desire as regards Madame de la Sainte-Colombe, you will not retain your place."

"But—but, sir!" exclaimed poor Dupont, "it will not be my fault if the lady, hearing the other curé extolled, should prefer him to the one you wish me to recommend?"

"True; but if Madame de la Sainte-Colombe hears the curé of Roiville praised by people of long standing and good reputation in the place, and then hears, from the same individuals, the most atrocious character of the minister of Danicourt, she will prefer my protégé, and you will remain land-steward."

"How can I calumniate an innocent man?" exclaimed Dupont.

"My dear Monsieur Dupont," returned M. Rodin, with an air of painful reproach, "how can you suppose me capable of asking such a thing? I was merely putting before you a supposition. You are anxious to be retained in your situation, and I merely pointed out a certain means of obtaining your wish. It is for you to decide."

"But, M. Rodin—"

"One word more, or, rather, one condition more, which, indeed, is of equal importance with the other. Unfortunately, the ministers of our holy religion X
are sometimes known to take advantage of the age and weakness of their pen-
itents, either for their own advantage or that of others. Now, though I believe
our protegés incapable of conduct so base, yet, to guard my own responsibility
and yours also—you having all the merit of introducing the spiritual adviser of
Madame de la Sainte-Colombe—I wish you to write me, twice in each week,
a full and minute detail of all you see in the conduct, character, and habit of
Madame de la Sainte-Colombe, even the books she reads; for it is in these
daily minutia the influence of a spiritual director is most clearly traced, and I
wish to be perfectly satisfied as to the deportment of my protegé without his
being at all aware of it; so that if you should notice anything blameable, I
should be immediately apprized of it through your weekly journal."
"But, surely, sir," remonstrated the unfortunate steward, "this is the office
of a spy!"
"My dear M. Dupont, I cannot allow you to bestow so injurious an appella-
tion on one of the most sacred wants of humanity. Confidence! I ask you, in
strict confidence, to write me from day to day all that passes here, even to the
most minute details. On these two conditions, which cannot be separated from
each other, you remain land-steward. Otherwise, with deep regret, I shall be
obliged to appoint another to serve Madame de la Sainte-Colombe."
"Ah, sir!" cried Dupont, trembling with emotion, "I conjure you to be gen-
erous without imposing these conditions. This situation is the sole maintenance
of myself and wife, and we are now too old to seek another; do not set the
probity of forty years against the horrors of want and misery, lest I sink under
the temptation."
"My very good friend, you really talk like a mere child; pray, show more
good sense. By this day week you will let me have your decision."
"Oh! sir, have mercy!"
The conversation was here interrupted by a loud noise, re-echoed by the
surrounding heights.
"What can that be?" inquired M. Rodin.
Scarcely had he spoken, when the same noise was repeated with increased
loudness.
"Guns are firing!" said Dupont, hastily rising; "probably some vessel is in
distress, or requires a pilot."
"Husband!" exclaimed the steward's wife, as she hastily entered, "you may
see from the terrace a steam-vessel, and a ship almost entirely dismayed; the
waves are driving them on shore. The ship fires signals of distress. She must
be lost!"
"Dreadful!" cried M. Dupont, taking his hat and preparing to go out; "and
to think we can only look on, and behold our fellow-creatures perish!"
"Are there no means, then, of succouring these vessels?" inquired M. Rodin.
"Succour! If they are drawn on these rocks no human power can save
them. Since the commencement of the equinox two vessels have already per-
ishèd on this coast."
"Perished, with all on board!" exclaimed M. Rodin. "It is, indeed, most
melancholy!"
"In such a tempest," said the steward, addressing his wife, "the chances of
saving the passengers are very slight. Nevertheless, I will take all the farm-
pople out with me, and try to rescue some of them. Have fires lighted in sev-
eral rooms; get dry linen and garments ready, cordials and restoratives. I
dare not hope to save the poor souls, but we must try. Will you accompany
me, M. Rodin?"
"I should esteem it a sacred duty to do so," replied M. Rodin, who felt no
inclination to expose himself to the storm, "could I be in any way serviceable;
but my age and weakness make me of little use. If, therefore, your wife will
show me to the green chamber, I will take from it the articles I came to seek,
and then immediately return to Paris, as I am pressed for time."
"As you please, sir; Catherine will conduct you."

"And you," added the steward, speaking to the servant, "go and ring the alarm-bell, and bid the people on the farm come to me at the foot of the cliffs with ropes and handspikes."

"Husband!" said the steward's wife, "be careful of yourself."

"Kiss me," answered the steward; "that will give me good luck." And he ran out, exclaiming,

"Quick, quick! By this time, perhaps, there is not a single plank of these vessels."

"My dear madam," said the immovable Rodin, "may I ask you to lead me to the green chamber?"

"Please to follow me, sir," said Catherine, drying the tears which filled her eyes at the thoughts of her husband's danger, whose courage she well knew.
CHAPTER II.

THE TEMPEST.

Looking out upon the sea, the view was terrible. Enormous waves of dark green, crested with a white foam, marked their rise and fall, by turns lofty and deep, against a broad streak of red light which overspread the horizon.

Above were piled heavy masses of black clouds, and, driven by the violence of the wind, some light racks of a reddish gray hurried over the lowering sky.

The pale winter's sun, before it was lost in the heavy clouds behind which it was slowly rising, threw a few cold gleams on the raging billows, and lighted up here and there the foaming crests of the highest waves.

A belt of snow-white foam boiled and dashed furiously, until it was lost in the distance against the reefs with which this rocky and dangerous coast is studded.

In the distance, half way up a rocky promontory which ran a long way into the sea, was the Chateau de Cardoville. Its windows glittered in a ray of sunlight, and its brick walls and pointed roof stood out in bold relief against the vapory sky.
A large ship, disabled, which had but fragments of sails fastened to the stumps of her masts, was driving fast toward the shore.

Now she plunged into the depths of the yawning waves, and now rose on their summits.

A flash is seen, followed by a dull sound, hardly to be heard amid the roar of the tempest. It is the last signal of distress from this vessel, which must be dashed to pieces on the iron-bound coast.

At this moment a steamboat, with her stream of black smoke above her, coming from the east and going westward, is making every effort to keep off from the coast and leave the reefs on her lee.

The dismasted ship must of necessity pass before the steamer in her fatal course toward the rocks, on which the wind and tide impelled her.

In a moment a monstrous wave struck the steamship on the side, and dashed furiously over the deck; the chimney was thrown down, the paddle-box broken, and one of the wheels destroyed. A second wave dashing over the stern, so aggravated the disaster that she no longer answered helm, but drove rapidly toward the shore in the same direction with the ship.

The latter, although farther from the reefs, yet offering to the wind and waves a larger surface than the steam-vessel, drove along more rapidly in their common track, and they soon came so near together that there was danger of the two ships coming in collision—a new danger added to the horrors of the now certain shipwreck.

The three-masted ship was English, and called the Black Eagle. She was from Alexandria, with the passengers who had arrived from India and Java by the Red Sea, on board the steamship Ruyter, and had left that vessel to cross the Isthmus of Suez. The Black Eagle, on leaving the Straits of Gibraltar, had touched at the Azores, and was on her way to Portsmouth when she took the gale from the northeast, then blowing in the channel.

The steamer was the William Tell, coming from Germany by the Elbe, and, having left Hamburgh, was making for Havre.

These two vessels, the sport of mighty waves, driven by the tempest and swept along by the sea, were running upon the reefs with fearful rapidity.

The decks of both ships presented a dreadful sight. The death of all the passengers seemed certain, for a tremendous sea was dashing against the rocks at the foot of a precipitous cliff.

The captain of the Black Eagle, standing erect at the stern, holding on by a part of the broken mast, even in this extremity, gave his orders with calmness and decision. The boats had all been washed overboard, and the only chance of safety, in case the ship did not go to pieces the moment she went on the reefs, was to establish a pass-rope between the ship and the rocks—a sort of communication which is full of danger.

The deck was covered with passengers, whose cries and terror increased the universal confusion. Some, stupified, clung to the shrouds and rattlins, awaiting death in a sort of insensibility; others wrung their hands in despair, or rolled themselves on the deck, uttering dreadful imprecations.

Here were women on their knees at prayer, while others hid their faces in their hands as though unable to look upon the approach of death. A young mother, pale as a ghost, holding her infant closely pressed against her bosom, went from one sailor to another, beseeching them, and offering a purse full of gold and gems if they would but save her child.

These cries, anguish, and tears contrasted with the silent and gloomy resignation of the sailors, some of whom, seeing death staring them in the face, took off a portion of their clothing, preparing, by a last, vigorous effort, to struggle for their lives by buffeting with the waves; others, renouncing all hope, braved death with a stoical indifference.

Here and there touching or terrible episodes were seen, having their rise in deep and dark despair.
THE WANDERING JEW.

A young man, eighteen or twenty years of age, with jet black hair and eyes, and a bronzed complexion, with features of perfect and most beautiful regularity, gazed on this scene of desolation and terror with the calm resignation which is peculiar to those who have often braved great perils. Wrapped in a cloak, with his back leaning against the netting of the bulwarks, he maintained himself in his position by bracing his feet against the side of the cabin bulkhead. At this moment the unhappy mother, who, with her child in her arms and gold in her hand, had in vain addressed herself to the sailors, entreat]ng them to preserve her child, seeing the young man with the dark complexion, threw herself at his feet, and held up her child before him in an attitude of inexpressible anguish. The young man took the child, shook his head mournfully, and pointed to the furious waters, but, with an expressive gesture, seemed to promise that he would try to save it; and then she, with a wild ecstacy of hope, bathed his dark hands with tears.

On another part of the deck of the Black Eagle was a passenger who seemed animated by the most active pity.

He was hardly twenty-five years of age, and long, curling, light hair waved around his attractive features. He wore a black cassock and white band. Going to the most despairing, and from one to the other, he gave them words of pious hope and resignation; and to hear him comfort some, encourage others, in language full of zeal, tenderness, and perfect charity, he might have been supposed unaware or regardless of the perils he participated.

In this beautiful and mild face might be seen cool and holy intrepidity, a religious abstraction from all earthly thoughts, as from time to time he raised his full blue eyes, beaming with gratitude, love, and composure, as though humbly thanking God for having placed him in one of those formidable positions of trial in which a man of high-wrought feeling and courage can devote himself for his fellow-creatures, and, if not save all, at least die with them, pointing the way to heaven. In a word, he might be deemed an angel, sent by the Creator to temper the assault of an inexorable fatality.

Singular contrast! Not far from this young man, glorious as an archangel, was a being who resembled the Demon of Evil.

Boldly stationed on the shattered end of the bowsprit, where he held on by some broken ropes, this man looked around on all that was passing on the deck. [See cut, on opposite page.]

A fierce, brutal, and horrid delight overspread his yellow features, of that peculiar tint which characterizes the offspring of a white and a mulatto Creole. He only wore a shirt and cotton drawers, and round his neck was suspended by a cord a long tin case, such as that in which soldiers keep their discharge.

As the danger increased, as the ship drew nearer to the fatal reefs, or seemed in danger of being dashed against the steamer—a frightful collision, which would apparently send both to the bottom, even before they touched the rocks—the more did the fiendish joy of this passenger reveal itself in frightful exultation. He seemed desirous of hastening, with savage impatience, the work of destruction which was at hand.

To see him feed greedily on the agony, the terror, and despair which were displayed before him, he might be taken for an apostle of one of those bloody divinities who, in barbarous climes, preside over murder and carnage.

The Black Eagle, driven by the wind and the towering billows, now neared the William Tell so closely that from the former vessel the passengers were seen collected on the deck of the Tell, which was almost as helpless as the ship.

Her passengers were but few. The sea that struck her, carrying away the paddle-box, and injuring the wheel, had also carried away nearly all the bulwark on that side; and the waves, at every moment washing over the breach they had made, swept the deck with irresistible violence, carrying away in each rush several victims.

Among the passengers who seemed to have escaped this peril only to be
dashed on the rocks, or crushed by the shock of the two vessels, was a group which claimed the tenderest, the most painful interest.

Standing quite aft, was a tall old man, with bald head and gray mustache, who had tied round his body a piece of rope; and thus fastened to the ship's side, he clasped in his arms, and tightly to his breast, two young girls, of fifteen or sixteen years, half wrapped up in a reindeer-skin cloak: a large dog, dripping with water, and barking furiously at the angry waves, was at their feet.

These young girls, embraced in the old man's arms, clung also to each other; but far from looking around them with fear, they raised their eyes to heaven, as if, full of confidence and ingenuous hope, they were expecting to be saved by the interposition of some supernatural power.

A fearful cry of horror and despair was uttered by all the passengers on board both vessels, which resounded far above the uproar of the tempest.

At the moment when, plunging into the abyss of a monster wave, the steamboat presented her broadside to the bow of the three-master, the latter, lifted up on high by a mountain of water, was suspended, as it were, in air above the William Tell for the second which preceded the collision of the two vessels.

It was a spectacle of sublime horror which no words can describe.

Yet during such catastrophes, quick as thought, we may sometimes retain pictures, so rapidly sketched by the mind's eye that they seem but as a flash of lightning.

Thus, when the Black Eagle, uplifted by the waves, was about to descend upon the William Tell, the young man with the angel countenance and light and flowing hair, stood upright in the bow of the three-master, ready to dash into the sea to save some victim from the closing waters.

All at once he perceived on board the steamboat, which was fully visible to him from his elevated position, the two young females, who stretched toward him their hands in supplication.
They seemed to recognise him, and gazed at him with a sort of ecstasy—of religious adoration.

For a second, and in despite of the tempest’s din—the coming wreck—the eyes of these three beings met.

The features of the young man then expressed a sudden, a deep commiseration, for the two girls, with joined hands, implored his aid as their expected saviour.

The old man, who had been struck down by the fall of a piece of the bulwark, was prostrate on the deck.

Soon all disappeared!

A volume of deluging waters impetuously dashed the Black Eagle upon the William Tell in a torrent of boiling foam.

At the fearful collision of these two masses of wood and iron, which, grinding against each other, went down in a moment, there was one universal, harrowing cry.

A cry of agony and of death!

One cry, raised by a hundred human creatures sinking simultaneously into the abyss of waters!

And then nothing was seen!

A few moments after, in the hollows or on the summits of the waves might be seen the broken timbers of the two ships, and here and there the contracted arms, the livid and despairing faces, of some wretches trying to gain the reefs, at the risk of being dashed on them by the rebounding waves, which broke against them furiously.
MAHAL.
CHAPTER III.
THE SHIPWRECKED.

As we now to the Chateau de Cardoville. While the steward proceeded to the coast to aid such of the passengers as might escape from the inevitable shipwreck, M. Rodin, conducted by Catherine to the green chamber, had selected the articles he was to convey to Paris.

After two hours passed in this chamber, M. Rodin, who gave himself little concern about the rescue of the unfortunates, in which the inmates of the chateau were employed, returned to the apartment occupied by the steward, which opened upon a long gallery. It was empty when he entered, bearing under his arm a small ebony casket, with silver clasps, blackened by time, while in the breast-pocket of his half-closed great coat might be seen the end of a large, red morocco pocket-book.

For some minutes he appeared to be absorbed in thought, when his reflections were interrupted by the entrance of Madame Dupont, busily engaged in preparations to receive her shipwrecked guests.

"Now, then," she said, speaking to a servant, "light a fire in the next room, and set this warm wine before it; we may expect your master every minute."

"Well, my dear madam," said Rodin, "is there hope of saving any of these poor creatures?"

"Indeed, sir, I cannot say; my husband has been gone these two hours, and my knowledge of his courage and imprudence makes me dreadfully uneasy."

"Ha!" muttered Rodin to himself; "courageous even to imprudence! I like not that!"

"And now," resumed Catherine, "I am getting warm clothes and restoratives ready. Heaven grant they may be of service!"

"We must always hope," answered Rodin. "I assure you, my dear madam, I felt much regret that my age and infirmities did not permit me to aid your worthy husband. I equally regret being unable to await the result of his exertions, and to congratulate him if successful, for I am, unfortunately, compelled to depart immediately—my very moments are reckoned. May I beg of you to order my carriage?"

"Directly, sir," said Catherine, going.

"One word, my dear, my excellent Madame Dupont. You are a woman of sense and admirable judgment; I have pointed out a way by which, if your husband chooses, he may continue to hold his present situation."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Catherine. "Oh, what thanks do we not owe you! What would become of people at our age if my husband was to lose his employment?"

"I have only added two conditions to my promise—mere nothings. He will explain all that to you."

"Ah, sir! Heaven has sent you to save us!"

"You are too good. But these two little conditions—"

"Were there a hundred, we should accept them! Think, for a moment,
sir, what would become of us without resources; if we lose this place, absolutely without resources."

"I may reckon, then, upon you; for your husband's sake, try to persuade him."

"Madam! mistress!" exclaimed a servant, rushing into the chamber; "master has returned!"

"Has he many persons with him?"

"No, madam; he is alone."

"Alone? Quite alone!"

"Yes, madam, quite."

A few seconds only elapsed when M. Dupont entered the room; his clothes were streaming with wet, and his leathern gaiters covered with mud and clay; while, in order to prevent his hat from being blown away, he had tied it on his head with his cravat, which was placed over the crown and knotted under his chin.

"Oh, how thankful I am to see you back safe and sound!" said his wife, affectionately embracing him.

"Up to the present moment we have only saved three!"

"God be praised, my worthy M. Dupont!" said M. Rodin; "your efforts have not been wholly in vain!"

"Three! only three! Merciful Father!" said Catherine.

"I am only speaking of those I saw myself, near the small bay of Goélans; let us hope that along other parts of the coast a still greater number may have found safety."

"True; and, happily, all parts of this coast are not so dangerous."

"And where are these poor creatures?" said M. Rodin, who could not avoid remaining a little longer.

"They are coming along the cliffs, by the aid of our people. I hurried on to reassure my wife, and to give some orders for their accommodation. In the first place, you must get some female attire ready."

"Is there, then, a woman among the persons saved?"

"There are two young girls, fifteen or sixteen years of age at the utmost—mere children, but so lovely!"

"Poor little things!" said M. Rodin, pathetically.

"They owe their lives to the individual by whom they are accompanied; and a noble fellow he is, too—a real hero!"

"A hero?"

"Yes; just fancy—"

"You shall tell me all this by-and-by. First of all, take off that wet coat, and slip on this dry dressing-gown, and take a little of this hot wine."

"I will not refuse so good an offer, for I am almost frozen. I was saying that the person who saved these young girls was a hero; the courage he displayed exceeded anything I ever heard of. When I left the house with the men, we descended by the little winding path from the extreme point of the cliff till we reached its base. You know the little bay of Goélans, which is, fortunately, somewhat protected from the swell of the sea by five or six enormous blocks of stone; well, at the extremity of the bay what do you think we found? Why, the two young girls I was telling you of, quite insensible, their feet still in the water, but set against a rock, as though some one had placed them there after having withdrawn them from the sea!"

"Poor dear young creatures! what a piteous tale!" said M. Rodin, applying, as usual, the tip of the little finger of his left hand to the corner of his right eye, as though to dry a tear, which was rather difficult to find there.

"What most struck me was the perfect resemblance they bore to each other," added the steward. "Unless you were in the daily habit of seeing them, it would be impossible to know one from the other."

"Twin sisters, no doubt," said Madame Dupont.
“One of these poor young things,” pursued the steward, “held between her clasped hands a small bronze medal, suspended around her neck by a chain of the same metal.”

M. Rodin generally stooped, as though bent with age and infirmities; but he suddenly sprang up at these words, while a slight tinge of red diffused itself over his colourless cheeks. In any other, these trifling alternations might have passed unnoticed; but in a person who, like M. Rodin, had long habituated himself to control each impulse, and hide every emotion, they indicated a violent revulsion of feeling. Approaching the steward, he inquired, in a slightly agitated voice, but with the most indifferent manner imaginable,

“Did you observe what device or inscription this medal bore? Some pious relic, no doubt.”

“Indeed, sir,” answered the steward, “I did not think to look.”

“And the resemblance between these young persons is very great, I think you said?”

“So great that one might easily be taken for the other. Probably they are orphans, for they are dressed in mourning.”

“Ah! dressed in mourning!” cried M. Rodin, with a second start.

“How sad! So young, and orphans!” said Madame Dupont, wiping away her tears.

“Well,” resumed the steward, “we removed them, insensible as they were, to a place where the sand was dry. While we were busied with them, we saw the head of a man appear over one of the rocks, which he was endeavouring to climb, grasping it with one hand; we hastened to him, and, happily, just in time, for his strength was exhausted, and he fell quite lifeless into the arms of our men. This was he of whom I said, he is a hero; for, not content with having courageously saved the two girls, he had tried to rescue a third person also, and had gone back, amid all the violence of the sea; but his strength had quite failed him, and we were barely in time to save him from perishing.”

“You may well say he acted nobly!”

M. Rodin, bending downward till his head almost rested on his breast, appeared not to hear this conversation; his consternation, his surprise increased. These two young girls, attired in deep mourning, their age, their singular resemblance to each other, the medal around the neck of one of them, could be no other than the daughters of General Simon; but by what unaccountable chance had they been participators in the horrors of the shipwreck? How had they obtained their liberty? And how was it he had never been apprized of the fact? Could they have contrived to make their escape? or had they been set at liberty? Why had he not been informed of all that had taken place? These secondary thoughts, which presented themselves in crowds to the mind of M. Rodin, were lost in the one overwhelming reflection—these children of General Simon were on the spot; the web so skilfully, so artfully spun was destroyed.

“When I speak of the saviour of these two girls,” continued the steward, addressing his wife, and without observing the deep revery of M. Rodin, “I dare say you picture to yourself a Hercules; but, bless you! nothing of the kind. My hero is almost boyish in appearance—so slight, so fair, and with such delicate features and light curling hair! When we found him, he had on only his shirt, a pair of black knee-breeches, and black worsted stockings, which struck me as being a very strange style of dress; so I left the poor fellow a cloak.”

“It was a curious dress, certainly,” answered Catherine; “sailors never wear such garments as that.”

“Besides, though the vessel he belonged to was English, I fancy my hero is a Frenchman, for he spoke our language as well as you or I. But what brought the tears to my eyes was to see the two poor girls, when they came to themselves, go down on their knees, and, looking at him with an air of religious admiration, seem to thank him for their safety, as people give thanks to God;
then they looked anxiously around, as though seeking some other person, after
which they uttered a few words, and threw themselves into each other's arms,
sobbing aloud.

"How distressing! Alas! how many victims may not this storm have swal-
lowed up!"

"Before we left the cliffs the sea had cast ashore seven dead bodies, portions
of the wreck, chests, &c. I notified the custom-house officers, who will remain
the whole of the day to keep watch; and if, as I hope, any others reach the
shore, they are to be sent here. But listen! I hear the sound of voices! Yes,
t'is the poor shipwrecked souls!"

So saying, the steward, accompanied by his wife, ran to open the door which,
as we before mentioned, opened upon a long gallery, while M. Rodin, biting his
flat nails convulsively, awaited with deep anxiety the arrival of the strangers;
and quickly did a most touching picture present itself to his view.

From the bottom of this gallery, which was dark, and only lighted on one
side by some lancet-paned windows, three persons, conducted by a countryman,
advanced slowly.

This group consisted of two young girls and the intrepid person to whom they
owed their lives. Rose and Blanché were one on each side of their rescuer, who,
walking with much difficulty, leaned lightly on their arms.

Although he was full twenty-five years of age, the youthful countenance of
this man did not show it. His long, light-brown hair, parted in the middle, fell
wet and soft on the collar of a large brown cloak, with which he had been cov-
ered. It would be difficult to describe the heavenly goodness which beamed in
his pale and gentle face, as pure as any ideal which the pencil of Raphael ever
produced; for this divine artist alone could portray the saddened expression of
those lovely features, the calmness of his heavenward look, and his eye as clear
and blue as an archangel's, or that of a martyr ascended to the skies.

Yes, of a martyr! for a blood-red circle already encompassed his beautiful
head.

It was painful to see above his light-brown eyebrows, and made still more
bright in its ruddy colour by the cold, a slender scar, which had been made
some months before, and seemed to encircle his fair brow with a cord of purple.
It was still more sad to behold his hands pierced as by crucifixion, and his feet,
which had been subjected to the same infliction; and he walked with pain, for
his wounds had opened afresh over the sharp-pointed rocks.

This young man was Gabriel, the priest attached to the foreign missions, and
the adopted child of Dagobert's wife.

Gabriel was a priest and a martyr, for in these our days there are also mar-
tyrs, as in the time when the Caesars threw the early Christians to the lions and
tigers of the circus.

For in our days the children of the people—it is among them that are found
the heroic and disinterested—it is the children of the people who display cour-
age and sincerity, and go to all parts of the world to propagate their faith, and
brave death with fearlessness and devotion.

How many of them, victims of barbarism, have perished, obscure and un-
known, in the solitudes of the two worlds! And these simple soldiers of the
cross, who have nothing but their faith and their courage, when they return—
which is, indeed, but seldom—receive none of the lucrative and splendid digni-
ties which the Church bestows. The purple or the mitre never conceals their
scarred brows, their mutilated limbs; but, like most soldiers of the army, they
die forgotten!

* We remember with deep interest the end of a letter written two or three years ago by a missionary, son of some
peasants of Beauce. He wrote to his mother from Japan, and ended his letter thus:

"Farewell, my dear mother; they tell me there is much danger where I am going. Pray to God for me, and tell
all our good neighbours that I love them, and often think of them."

This simple phrase, addressed from the centre of Asia to poor peasants in a hamlet of France, appears to us exquis-
itably touching in its simplicity.
In their ingenuous gratitude, the daughters of General Simon, once restored to their senses after the shipwreck, and sufficiently strong to climb the rocks, would not yield to any other the care of supporting the faltering steps of him who had snatched them from certain death.

The black clothes of Rose and Blanche were streaming with water; their faces, which were excessively pale, expressed deep grief, and tears were in their eyes, which were sorrowful, downcast, and quivering with emotion and cold, as they reflected that they should never again see Dagobert, their guide and friend; for he it was whom Gabriel had in vain attempted to save by helping him to ascend the rocks. Unfortunately, strength had failed them both, and the soldier was swept away by a receding wave.

The appearance of Gabriel was a fresh surprise for Rodin, who had retired into a corner, whence he might observe all; but this surprise was so fortunate, and he was so delighted to see the missionary saved from the death which seemed so imminent, that the shock he had experienced at the sight of General Simon's daughters was somewhat abated. It must not be forgotten that M. Rodin's plans required the presence of Gabriel in Paris on the 13th of February.

The steward and his wife, greatly affected at the sight of the orphan girls, approached them with eagerness.

"Sir! sir! good news!" said a country lad, as he entered. "Two more persons saved from the wreck!"

"Heaven be praised! Heaven be blessed!" said the missionary.

"Where are they?" inquired the steward, going to the door.

"There is one who can walk, and is following on with Justin, who is leading him: the other was wounded against the rocks, and they are carrying him on a litter made of the branches of trees."

"I will run and have him placed in the lower room," said the steward, going out. "You, wife, can attend to the young maidens."

"And the shipwrecked man who is able to walk, where is he?" inquired the steward's wife.

"Here he is," said the peasant, pointing to some one who came along the gallery with a quick step. "When he learned that the two young ladies were saved and here, although he is old and was bruised on the head, he made such quick strides that it was as much as I could do to get here first."

The peasant had scarcely pronounced these words, when Rose and Blanche, rising together by a spontaneous impulse, hurried to the door. They arrived there at the same moment with Dagobert.

The soldier, unable to articulate a word, fell on his knees at the threshold, and held out his hands to the daughters of General Simon, while Killjoy, running to them, began licking their hands.

The emotion was too strong for Dagobert; when he had clasped the orphans in his arms his head fell back, and he would have sunk prostrate but for the care of the countrymen. Despite the observations of the steward's wife, as to their weakness and emotion, the two young girls would accompany the fainting Dagobert, who was carried into an adjoining apartment.

At the appearance of the soldier, M. Rodin's face was contracted as though by a spasm, for he had till that moment supposed the guide of the general's daughters dead.

The missionary, overwhelmed with fatigue, was leaning on a chair, not having yet observed M. Rodin.

Another person, a man with a yellow and sallow complexion, entered the apartment, and coming to the missionary, said to him in French, but with a foreign accent.

"The Prince Djalma will be brought in directly; his first word was to ask for you."
"What does that man say?" exclaimed Rodin, advancing to Gabriel's side.

"Monsieur Rodin!" exclaimed the missionary, greatly surprised.

"Monsieur Rodin!" exclaimed the other shipwrecked man; and from that instant his eye never quitted the correspondent of Joshua Van Dael.

"You here, sir!" said Gabriel, approaching Rodin with an air of deference mingled with fear.

"What did that man say to you?" repeated Rodin, with a faltering voice.

"Did he not utter the name of Prince Djalma?"

"Yes, sir; Prince Djalma was one of the passengers on board the English vessel which came from Alexandria, and which has now been wrecked. This vessel put in at the Azores, where I was, the ship that brought me from Charleston having been obliged to remain there on account of severe damage. I embarked on board the Black Eagle, where I met Prince Djalma. We were bound for Portsmouth, and thence I intended to make my way to France."

Rodin did not interrupt Gabriel. This fresh shock completely paralyzed his thoughts. At length, like a man who tries a last effort, although he knows beforehand that it is vain, he said to Gabriel,

"And do you know who this Prince Djalma is?"

"A young man as brave as good, the son of an Indian king, dispossessed of his territory by the English."

Then, turning to the other shipwrecked man, the missionary said to him, in a tone of deep interest,

"How is the prince? Are his wounds dangerous?"

"They are bruises, not mortal, but very serious," was the reply.

"God be praised!" said the missionary; and turning to Rodin, "here, you see, is another saved."

"So much the better," replied Rodin, in a brief and imperious tone.

"I will go to him," said Gabriel, submissively, "unless you have any orders to give me."

"Shall you be ready to set out in two or three hours, in spite of your fatigues?"

"Yes, if it is necessary."

"It is. You will go with me."

Gabriel bowed to Rodin, who fell back in his chair like one overcome, while the missionary left the room with the servant.

The man with the sallow complexion remained, unperceived by Rodin.

This man was Faringhea the Mulatto, one of the three Strangler chiefs, who had evaded the pursuit of the soldiers in the ruins of Tchandi. After having murdered Mahal the smuggler, he had possessed himself of the despatches written by M. Joshua Van Dael to Rodin, and also of the letter by which the smuggler was to be received as a passenger on board the Ruyter. Faringhea having escaped from the hut in the ruins of Tchandi without being seen by Djalma, the latter, when he met him on shipboard, after his escape (the particulars of which will be hereafter explained), not knowing that he belonged to the Phansegars, had treated him during the voyage as a compatriot.

Rodin, with his eye fixed, his countenance livid with suppressed rage, was biting his nails to the quick, not perceiving the Mulatto, who, after having silently approached him, placed his hand familiarly on his shoulder, and said to him,

"Your name is Rodin?"

"Who are you?" asked Rodin, starting, and lifting up his head quickly.

"Your name is Rodin?" repeated Faringhea.

"It is. What then?"

"You live in the Rue Milieu-des-Ursins, at Paris?"

"Yes. But I again ask, what do you want?"

"Nothing now, brother; hereafter, much."

And Faringhea went away slowly, leaving Rodin terrified; for this man, who
quailed at nothing, had been struck by the sinister and repulsive physiognomy of the Strangler.

CHAPTER IV.

DEPARTURE FOR PARIS.

After in the night, profound silence reigned through the Château de Cardoville. The tempest had subsided, and the hoarse sound of the waves, dashing heavily upon the shore, now only was heard.

Dagobert and the orphans were established in warm and comfortable chambers on the first floor of the chateau.

Djalma, too severely hurt to be carried to the upper rooms, remained in a lower apartment. At the moment when the ships struck a despairing mother had placed her infant in his arms. In vain did he attempt to snatch the unhappy babe from a certain death; the effort only impeded his own struggle for his life, and he narrowly escaped being dashed to pieces on the rocks.

Faringhees, who had contrived to induce belief in his affection for Djalma, remained to watch over him.

Gabriel, after having passed some time with Djalma, returned to the chamber allotted to him; and faithful to his promise to Rodin, to be ready to set out in two hours, would not lie down, but, having dried his garments, went to sleep in a large high-backed chair before a good fire.
This apartment was near those occupied by Dagobert and the two sisters.

Killjoy, as if with all confidence in the honesty of the chateau, had left the door of Rose and Blanche's chamber, and laid himself down before the fire, in the warmth of which the missionary was sleeping.

Killjoy, with his muzzle resting on his extended paws, enjoyed all the delight of repose after so many perils by flood and field. We will not take upon us to affirm that he thought constantly of poor old Jovial, unless it was a proof of his remembrance that he had an irresistible impulse to bite all the gray horses he met since the death of his venerable companion, although up to that time he had always been the most inoffensive dog in the world to horses of every colour.

After a few moments one of the doors of the chamber opened, and the two sisters timidly entered. Having awaked from a restoring sleep, and dressed themselves, they began to be uneasy concerning Dagobert, although the steward's wife, after having shown them his apartment, came again to tell them that the village doctor did not find any cause for apprehension in the old soldier's condition; still they left their room, hoping to meet some one who could give them more specific information.

The high back of the old-fashioned arm-chair in which Gabriel was sleeping completely concealed him, but the orphans, seeing Killjoy quietly lying at the foot of the chair, thought it was Dagobert who was reposing there, and they ap

To their great astonishment, they saw Gabriel sleeping there. Quite surprised, they stood motionless, neither daring to advance nor recede for fear of waking him.

The long, light chestnut locks of the missionary were no longer wet, and now curled round his neck and shoulders, while the paleness of his complexion was the more striking from the deep purple of the damask cover of the chair. Gabriel's beautiful countenance expressed a painful melancholy, either arising from the operation of an oppressive dream, or that he always repressed strong emotions which betrayed themselves when he was sleeping. In spite, however, of this sadness, his features preserved their character of heavenly sweetness and attraction, for nothing is more touching than suffering goodness. The two young girls cast down their eyes and blushed as they perceived the sleeping missionary.

"He sleeps, my sister," said Rose, in a gentle whisper.

"So much the better," answered Blanche, in a low tone; "we shall be able to observe him more at our ease. While coming here from the shore we dared not."

"How sweet is the expression of his countenance! It must be he we have seen in our dreams."

"Assuring us that he would protect us."

"And well has he kept his word."

"But this time, at least, we see him."

"Not as it was that gloomy night in the prison at Leipsic."

"He has saved us again."

"This morning we should have perished but for him."

"But yet, sister, it seems to me that, in our dreams, his countenance seemed as though shining with a radiant brightness."

"Yes, you know it almost dazzled us to behold him. And then, he did not appear so sad."

"That was because, you see, he came to us from heaven; but now he is on earth!"

"And, sister, had he then this deep red scar round his forehead?"

"Oh, no! or we should have observed it."

"And his hands! See these marks of wounds."

"But if he has been wounded, he cannot be an archangel."

"Why not? Suppose he received these wounds while seeking to prevent evil, or in preserving unfortunate beings, like ourselves, from death."
"You are right. If he did not incur danger in behalf of those whom he protects, he would be less admirable."

"What a pity he does not open his eyes!"

"Their expression is so kind and gentle."

"I wonder he never spoke to us of our mother on the way."

"We were never alone with him; he did not like to mention her before others."

"But we are alone now."

"Shall we ask him to tell us of her?"

"What a pity he does not open his eyes!" said Blanche, sure that her every feeling was reciprocated by her sister; "and yet it is a happy sensation, as though some great blessing were in store for us."

The two sisters approached the arm-chair on which the young priest was sleeping, stepping cautiously, and kneeling down, one on each side of him, held up their clasped hands, forming a picture an artist would have delighted to copy.

Then looking up to Gabriel, whispering in the tender voice which well assorted with the youthful sweetness of their faces, they said, "Gabriel! tell us of our mother."

At the sound of his name the missionary gave a slight start, half opened his eyes, and, with the imperfect consciousness of one just roused from slumber, a sudden feeling of delight possessed him at the sight of the two fair creatures kneeling at his feet, and invoking his name in such sweet voices.

"Who calls?" he said, at length, awaking thoroughly, and raising his head.

"We—Rose and Blanche."

It was now Gabriel's turn to blush, as he recognised the maidens he had saved.

"Rise, my sisters!" he said; "you should kneel only to your God!"

The orphans obeyed, and placed themselves by his side, each holding the other by the hand.

"It seems you know my name," said the young missionary, smiling at them.

"Oh, yes! we have not forgotten it."

"But from whom did you learn it?"

"From yourself!"

"From me?"

"When you came to us from our mother; when you told us she had sent you, and that you would ever watch over us."

"I, my sisters!" cried the missionary, at a loss to comprehend a word of this discourse. "You are under some great mistake. I see you to-day for the first time in my life."

"But in our dreams!"

"Yes! Remember! In our dreams?"

"The first time was in Germany, about, three months ago. Look at us well."

Gabriel could not restrain a smile at the simplicity with which these children besought him to recollect their dreams; then, still more and more perplexed, he exclaimed,

"In your dreams?"

"Yes, when you gave us those excellent counsels!"

"And when we suffered so much sorrow in our prison, we thought of your words, and were comforted and filled with fresh courage."

"Was it not you who freed us from our dungeon at Leipsic that dark night, when we could not see you?"

"I?"

"Who but you would thus have come to our aid, and that of our old friend?"

"We told him truly that you would love him, because he loved us, although he would not believe in angels."
"And this morning, during the raging of the storm, we were scarcely at all afraid."

"We expected you would come to save us!"

"Yes, my sisters, the Almighty did, this day, graciously send me to your assistance. I was returning from America, but I have never been at Leipsic; it was not I, then, who liberated you from prison. Tell me, my sisters," he continued, smiling kindly on the orphans, "for whom do you take me?"

"For a good angel, whom we have already seen in our dreams, and whom our mother has sent from heaven to protect us."

"My dear sisters, I am only a poor priest, who, by some chance, doubtless, resemble an angel you have seen in your dreams, where alone you can see him, for mortals are not permitted to behold the angels."

"Not behold the angels!" said the sisters, looking sorrowfully at each other.

"Heed not that, my dear sisters," said Gabriel, affectionately, taking the hands of the young girls within his own; "dreams, like everything else, proceed from God; and since the remembrance of your mother was mingled with yours, bless Him doubly for sending it."

At this instant a door opened, and Dagobert appeared.

Up to the present moment, the innocent pride the orphans felt in the idea of being protected by an archangel had made them entirely overlook the circumstance they had heard from Dagobert, of his wife having adopted a deserted child, named Gabriel, who was now a priest and a missionary.

The soldier, although he obstinately persisted in declaring his hurt nothing but a whitewound (to use a favourite term of General Simon), had been carefully attended to by the surgeon of the village, and wore a black bandage round his forehead, which increased the natural ruggedness of his features.

Great was his surprise, on entering the apartment, to see a stranger familiarly clasping the hands of Blanche and Rose within his own; and his astonishment may be conceived when it is known that Dagobert was ignorant of Gabriel's having saved the orphans, as well as of his having attempted to save him also. While tossing among the waves and vainly striving to cling to the rocks, the soldier had only very indistinctly perceived Gabriel at the moment when, after having snatched the sisters from a certain death, he had struggled in vain to come to his succour. And when, after being conveyed to the chateau, Dagobert had found the sisters in safety, fatigue, emotion, and the pain of his wound had thrown him into a state of utter unconsciousness, so that he had not observed the presence of Gabriel.

The veteran's thick gray eyebrows began to work under his black bandage when he saw a stranger so familiar with Rose and Blanche, but his anger was quickly dissipated by these marks of affection, although he kept glancing in a suspicious manner at the missionary, who had now risen from his seat, and was so placed that his countenance could not be perfectly seen by Dagobert.

"And how is your wound?" inquired Rose, anxiously; "we learned that, happily, it was not dangerous."

"Does it still give you pain?" asked Blanche.

"No, my children; but the commanding officer of the village would insist upon wrapping me up in this manner. Why, if I had my head sliced all over with sabre-cuts, I could not have more fuss made about it. I look like an old milksop. It is nothing but a white wound, and I have a great mind—" and the soldier raised his hand to his bandage.

Rose caught his arm. "Will you leave that alone?" she cried. "At your age to be so unreasonable!"

"Well, don't scold, and I will do as you choose! I will not take this thing off my head." Then, drawing the sisters into a corner of the room, he said to them, looking toward the young priest from the corner of his eye,
"Who is that gentleman who was holding your hands when I came in? He looks like a clergyman. But you see, my children, you must be careful, because—"

"Who is that gentleman?" exclaimed the sisters, both at once. "Why, but for him we should not have the happiness of embracing you at this moment."

"What do you mean?" cried the soldier, suddenly drawing up his tall figure, and eagerly observing the missionary.

"It is our guardian angel!" added Blanche. "But for him we should have perished in the wreck this morning."

"He! Was it he?"

Dagobert could say no more; his heart swelled, tears filled his eyes, and rushing, with extended hands, to the missionary, he exclaimed, in a tone of gratitude impossible to describe,

"Sir, I owe to you the lives of these children! I know the debt of gratitude it lays me under. I say no more, because that says all."

But, struck by a sudden recollection, he added, "But, tell me, was it not you who, when I was trying to cling to a rock, to prevent myself from being carried away by the waves—was it not you who held out your hand to me? Yes, I am quite sure, now I see your light hair, your youthful countenance. Yes, yes! you it was, indeed! Now I recognize you!"

"Unhappily, sir, my strength failed me, and I had the grief to see you fall back into the sea."

"I can offer you no more thanks than I have already done," said Dagobert, with touching simplicity; "in preserving these children for me, you had done more for me than if you had saved my own life. But what courage! what a noble spirit!" cried the soldier, with admiration; "and so young, and with a look gentle as that of a young maiden!"

"What!" said Blanche, joyfully; "did our Gabrielle come to your assistance also?"

"Gabriel!" said Dagobert, interrupting Blanche, and addressing himself to the priest. "Is your name Gabriel?"

"It is, sir!"

"Gabriel!" repeated the soldier, more and more surprised. "Are you a priest?"

"A priest of the foreign missions?"

"And who brought you up?"

"An excellent and generous woman, whom I venerate as the best of mothers; for she took pity on my helpless state, and treated me as her own son."

"Françoise Baudoin, was it not?" said the veteran, deeply moved.

"Yes," replied Gabriel, in his turn greatly astonished. "But how do you know this?"

"The wife of a soldier!" pursued Dagobert.

"Yes, of a brave soldier, who, from a spirit of noble devotion, is passing his life in exile far from his wife and son, my excellent brother—for proud, indeed, I am to call him by that name."

"When! oh, when did you quit my Agricola—my wife?"

"Can it be possible? Are you the father of Agricola? Oh, I knew not, until now, the debt of gratitude I owed to God!" said Gabriel, joining his hands with an expression of deep thankfulness.

"And my wife! my child!" resumed Dagobert, in a tremulous voice; "how are they? Have you heard from them?"

"The last accounts I received, three months ago, were as good as you could wish."

"This is too much, almost," sobbed the old soldier; "too much."

And, unable to bear the sudden rush of happiness, the veteran fell back in a chair.

Then, for the first time, the sisters called to mind the letter of their father
relative to the wife of Dagobert having adopted a deserted child, named Ga
briel, and they gave free utterance to their emotions of delight.

"Then our Gabriel and yours is the same!" cried Rose. "Oh, what hap-
piness!"

"Yes, my darlings! he belongs to us all equally." Then addressing Gabriel, the soldier said, with passionate emotion, "My child! my noble, intrepid child! give me your hand! My own boy—for are you not my Agricola's brother?"

"Oh, sir, what goodness is this!"

"Come, come! no thanks, after all you have done for us."

"And is my adopted mother aware of your return?" said Gabriel, to escape the praises of the soldier.

"I wrote to her five months since, but said I should return alone. I will tell you hereafter my reasons for so doing. Does she still reside in the Rue Brise-Miche? Was it there my Agricola was born?"

"She does."

"In that case she must have received my letter. I would have written to her from my prison at Leipsic, but it was impossible."

"In prison! Do you come from a prison?"

"Yes; I came from Germany by the Elbe and Hamburgh, and I should be at Leipsic now, but for an event which would make one believe in the devil—only a devil of a good sort."

"What do you mean? Pray, explain yourself."

"That would be difficult, for I cannot even explain it to myself; but these two young ladies," he added, pointing, with a smile, to Rose and Blanche, "pretend to know more about it than I do, and are continually saying to me, 'It was the good archangel that came to our relief; Dagobert, it was our guardian angel, we tell you. Now will you persist in declaring that Killjoy is the best defender we can have?'"

"Gabriel, I await you!" suddenly uttered a harsh voice, which made the missionary start.

The whole party quickly turned in the direction of the voice, while Killjoy growled.

The words had been spoken by M. Rodin, who was standing at an open door which communicated with the corridor: his features were calm and impassive; his piercing glance rapidly surveyed the soldier and the two sisters.

"Who is this man?" inquired Dagobert, at the first glimpse of M. Rodin's countenance, disliking the singularly unprepossessing expression it wore. "What does he want with you?"

"I must go with him," answered Gabriel, in a constrained and mournful tone. Then addressing Rodin, he said, "A thousand pardons, sir! I will attend you instantly."

"What!" exclaimed Dagobert, stupified with astonishment; "depart the very instant we meet! No, no! I swear you shall not go! I have too much to inquire of you and to tell you. Let us bear each other company to Paris."

"It is impossible! He is my superior, and I must obey."

"Your superior! Why, he is dressed in plain clothes!"

"He is not obliged to wear an ecclesiastical dress."

"Oh, nonsense! Since he is not in uniform, and you have no police-officer in your service, send him to the right-about—"

"Believe me, were it left to my own choice whether to go or remain, I would not hesitate one instant."

"I was not wrong, then," muttered Dagobert, "in feeling sure that man's ill-looking visage boded no good;" then added, with a vexed and impatient manner, "Shall I tell him that he would particularly oblige us by going alone?"

"I entreat of you," said Gabriel, "not to interfere; it would be of no avail. I know my duty, and have no will but that of my superior. Upon my arrival at Paris I will hasten to see yourself, my adopted mother, and my good brother Agricola."
"Well, if it must be so, it must! I have been a soldier, and know what subordination means," said Dagobert, sulkily. "We must take the fortune of war as we find it. So, farewell, my brave boy, till the day after to-morrow! Rue Brise-Miche, for I shall be in Paris to-morrow evening, so they tell me here and we start directly. I say, though, you seem to keep up a strict discipline in your corps!"

"Yes," said Gabriel, with an involuntary shudder; "the discipline is rigid and severe."

"Well, then, let's say good-by at once; after all, it is but twenty-four hours, which will soon pass away."

"Adieu! adieu!" replied the missionary, in a voice tremulous with emotion, and affectionately returning the grasp of the old soldier's hand.

"Farewell, Gabriel," murmured the orphans, sighing, and their eyes suffused with tears.

"Adieu, my sisters!" responded Gabriel, quitting the room with Rodin, who had not lost one word or incident of this scene.

Two hours afterward, Dagobert and the orphans left the castle to proceed to Paris, ignorant that Djalma remained at Cardoville, being prevented by the severe injuries he had received from continuing his journey.

The Mulatto, Faringhea, unwilling, as he said, to abandon his countryman, remained with the young prince.

We shall now conduct the reader to the residence of Dagobert's wife, in the Rue Brise-Miche.
CHAPTER I.

DAGOBERT'S WIFE.

HAVING the Chateau of Cardoville, we turn now to Paris; the time is the day succeeding that on which the survivors of the wreck were taken to the chateau.

Nothing could be more gloomy or forbidding than the aspect of the Rue Brise-Miche, one end of which led into the Rue Saint Merry, and the other into the small square of the cloisters adjoining the church.

At this end the street, or lane, which was barely eight feet wide, was shut in by two immense, black, dirty, dilapidated walls, whose excessive height shut out both light and air; even during the longest day of the year it was rare for a straggling sunbeam to find admittance, while in the damp, cold winter weather, a thick, chilling fog, which seemed to penetrate the very bones, pervaded this species of oblong well, the pavement of which was ever covered with slippery mud.

It was about eight o'clock in the evening, and the faint, lurid light of the lamp suspended at its entrance could scarcely pierce the murkiness of the fog, when two men, half hidden in an angle of the wall, held the following discourse with each other: [See cut, on page 196.]

"Now," said one, "you understand? You are to watch in the street till you see them enter No. 5."

"I know!" answered the other.

"And when you have seen them go in, in order to be doubly sure, ascend to the room occupied by Francoise Baudoin—"

"Under pretext of asking whether the little humpbacked seamstress lives there? she that is sister to the woman known as the Queen Bacchanal?"

"All right. Be sure to find out where this Bacchanal Queen lives; her
humpbacked sister will tell you; this is important; such persons as she is change their nest as often as a bird, and her track is lost."

"Make yourself easy; I will do my best with the humpback to get out of her where her sister lives."

"And to give you courage, I will await your return at the little public house opposite the cloisters, and you shall have your share of some hot wine."

"That is too good an offer to refuse, for it is infernally cold to-night."

"You need not tell me that! Why, this morning the water froze upon my sprinkling-brush, and I was almost stiffened like a mummy in my chair at the church-door. Ah, my boy, it is no sinecure to be a distributor of holy water!"

"Luckily it brings in something."

"Now, then, good luck attend you! Don't forget No. 5, the little alley beside the dyer's shop."
"All right! all right!" and the pair separated, one proceeding toward the
square of the cloisters, the other to the end of the lane, where it led into the
Rue Saint Merry. It was no difficult matter to find the number sought; a high,
narrow building, exhibiting the same wretched appearance as the other houses
in the street. Having ascertained the tenement he wished for, the man com-
enced walking backward and forward before its door. If the exterior of these
houses was uninviting, no words can adequately describe the equalor, the gloom,
and misery of the interior. No. 5 even exceeded its neighbours in dirt and
dilapidation. The water, which oozed from the walls, trickled down the dark,
filthy staircase. On the second floor a few bundles of straw had been thrown
on the narrow landing-place, for the purpose of wiping the feet; but this straw,
rotten from wet and long lying there, augmented the sickening accumulation of
fetid odours arising from want of air, from damp, and foul exhalations; a few
openings made in the almost ladder-like staircase admitted a few rays of dim
and glimmering light.

In this neighbourhood, one of the most densely populated in Paris, such houses
as this are occupied by the working classes, who congregate in masses in these
wretched, cheerless, and unwholesome dwellings.
No. 5 had tenants of this description.
A dyer occupied the ground floor, the deleterious vapours from his workshop
increasing the stench of the whole premises; various artisans, with their families,
carried on their trades in apartments on the upper floors.
A chamber, four stories high, was the residence of Françoise Baudoin, the
wife of Dagobert. A single candle flickered in this humble abode, consisting
of a room and small closet adjoining. Agricola occupied a little garret at the
very top of the house.

The walls of the chamber were covered with a dingy drab paper, rent here and
there by the cracks in the plaster; in one corner stood the bed, and scanty cur-
rains, running on an iron rod, concealed the windows; the floor, washed, but not
waxed, had the dull-red colour of bricks; at one end was a round iron stove, on
which was placed an earthen pot, forming the culinary apparatus. On a wooden
chest of drawers, painted in imitation of marble, stood a master-piece of patience
and skill in the shape of a small house, made of iron, every part of which had
been fashioned by the hand of Agricola Baudoin, son of Dagobert.
A plaster crucifix, suspended against the wall, and surrounded by branches
which had been blessed, and various images of saints, coarsely coloured, evinced
the devotional bias of the soldier's wife.

Between the windows stood an old fashioned walnut-tree press, black with
age; an old arm-chair, covered with green velvet (Agricola's first present to his
mother), a few rush-bottomed chairs, and a work-table, on which lay several
pieces of coarse dyed cloth, completed the furniture of this poor room, badly
secured by a worm-eaten door: the adjoining closet contained a few household
requisites. Poor and comfortless as this dwelling may appear, to many labour-
ing persons it would seem enviable, for the bed had two mattresses, clean sheets,
and a warm counterpane; the press contained a supply of linen; and the wife
of Dagobert had, for her exclusive occupation, a room as large as those in which
many honest and industrious artisans are fain to huddle together, only too happy
if the males and females can have separate beds, and the counterpane or one of
the sheets is not consigned to the guardianship of the pawnbroker.
Françoise Baudoin, seated beside the little stove, which, in so cold and damp
an evening, gave out but little warmth, was busy in preparing the evening meal
for her son Agricola. [See cut, on opposite page.]
The wife of Dagobert was about fifty years of age; she wore a short jacket of
blue cotton, with small white figures, and a stuff petticoat; a white handkerchief
was tied round her head and fastened under her chin: her face was pale and
thin, her features regular, and expressive at once of the most perfect goodness
and the utmost resignation. A better or more industrious mother could not
be found. With no means save the labour of her own hands, she had contrived, not only to bring up her son Agricola, but also Gabriel, who, deserted when an infant, found a friend and parent in this admirable woman.

In her youth she had, as it were, bartered her coming life in exchange for twelve years of gain, made such by incessant toil, which great privations made almost murderous; for in that time (and wages then were lavish to what they are now), by dint of unremitting diligence and wakeful nights, Françoise had sometimes managed to earn fifty sous a day, with which she contrived to bring up her son and her adopted son also.

At the end of the twelve years her health was ruined, her strength all but exhausted; but, at least, her boys had wanted for nothing, and had received such education as mechanics can bestow upon their children. Agricola was with M. François Hardy as an apprentice, and Gabriel was preparing to enter a seminary under the active patronage of M. Rodin, whose communications with the confessor of Françoise Baudoin had, since about the year 1820, become frequent.

This woman, whose piety had always, however unenlightened, been extreme, was one of those children of simplicity and perfect goodness whose ignorant, yet devoted attachment to their faith borders upon heroism—one of those pure and heavenly minds in whom the instinct of the heart almost supplies intelligence.

The only evil consequence resulting from this blind bigotry was an invincible determination, when Françoise thought herself called upon, to obey the spiritual guide to whom for so many years she had yielded implicit submission; and believing his word as emanating from a Being her very soul adored, no power, no representation could induce her to dispute it: if any discussion arose on the subject, no inducement could move her from her fixed resolve to follow the path marked out by her confessor; her resistance was, like herself; calm and gentle, but, like her conscience, firm and uncompromising.

In a word, Françoise Baudoin was one of those pure-minded, but ignorant and credulous persons, who may sometimes become, in wicked hands, the unwitting instruments of fearful actions.

For some time past, the ill state of her health, and, above all, the weakness of her sight, had compelled her, against her will, to rest from her labours; and, now that she could with difficulty work two or three hours a day, she passed the rest of her time at church.

At the end of a few moments Françoise arose, cleared one side of the table from the cloth at which she had been working, and proceeded to arrange her son's supper with maternal solicitude. She took from the press a small leather
bag, containing a battered silver cup and a fork and spoon, so thin and worn
that the edge of the spoon was sharp as that of a knife; these she diligently
wiped and polished, and placed her silver service (Dagobert's wedding present
to her) beside the plate of her son. These articles, independent of their trifling
intrinsic value, were the most precious of all Françoise's possessions, from the
associations connected with them, and bitter had been the tears shed by her
when, under the pressure of some extremity, such as illness or cessation from
employment, she had been compelled to carry them to the pawnbroker.
Françoise then took from the lower shelf a bottle of water, and another about
two thirds full of wine, which she placed beside her son's plate, and then re-
sumed her place to watch his supper.
Although the hour for Agricola's return was but little past, the countenance
of the mother expressed uneasiness and sorrow; and it was easy to perceive, by
her red and swollen eyes, that she had been weeping. The poor woman, after
long, painful uncertainty, had arrived at the conviction that her sight, which had
been long failing, would ere long prevent her from working even the two or
three hours she had latterly been enabled to employ.
An excellent needlewoman in her youth, as her sight failed she was compelled
to relinquish the finer descriptions, and take work of a coarser sort, for which
the pay was necessarily less, till, at the time of her appearing before the reader,
her only occupation was making sacks for the army, which required sowing
about twelve feet round, and the price for making which was two sous a piece,
she finding her own thread; this work being laborious, she could not, at the ut-
moest, earn above six sous a day.
It is grievous, to think of the many unhappy females whom ill health, priva-
tions, and old age have so weakened, that it is with extreme difficulty they can
even earn this paltry pitance. Their gains decrease at the very period when,
from years and infirmities, their wants are daily increasing.
Happily for Françoise, she had an excellent prop in her son. A first-rate
workman, and profiting by the liberal and just scale of prices in M. Hardy's
establishment, his labour brought in as much as five or six francs a day, at least
double that gained by workmen in other shops; therefore, admitting that his
mother gained nothing, he could well have maintained them both.
But the poor woman, so economical as to refuse almost necessaries for herself,
had, since her daily and assiduous visits to the sacristy, contracted habits of the
most ruinous expense. Scarcely a day passed in which she did not cause two
or three masses to be said, or tapers to be burned, either in reference to Dagobert,
from whom she had been so long separated, or for the safety of her son's soul,
whom she believed in the high road to perdition.
Agricola possessed so good, so generous a heart, so tenderly did he love and
revere his parent, and so affectionate was the motive of her proceeding, that
never once did he murmur at seeing his week's earnings, the whole of which he
regularly gave to his parent, thus appropriated to pious uses.
Occasionally only had he remarked to his mother (with as much respect as
tenderness), that it pained him to see her denying herself those comforts her
years and failing health required, that she might expend the means required for
her own comfort in devotional purposes.
But what could he reply, when his exemplary parent would say to him, her
eyes overflowing with tears, "My child, it is to procure your eternal welfare
and that of your father!"
To argue with Françoise as to the efficacy of masses or candles in securing
the present or future salvation of Dagobert, would have been to open a contro-
versy from which Agricola, out of respect for his mother's sincerity, had ever
abstained; he, therefore, gave up those visions of ease and happiness for her
which had nerved his arm to toil.
To a low, cautious tap at the door, Françoise answered, "Come in!"
The visiter entered.
CHAPTER II.

THE SISTER OF THE QUEEN BACCHANAL.

The person who came in was a young woman of about eighteen, diminutive in stature, and cruelly deformed. Without being absolutely humpbacked, her figure was entirely awry; she stooped excessively, so much, indeed, as to cause her chest to fall inward in a complete hollow, while her head was buried between her shoulders. Her features were tolerably regular, but the face was long, thin, and pallid, marked by the smallpox, and expressive at once of sweetness and melancholy. By a strange caprice, Nature had bestowed hair so beautiful and luxuriant as might have excited the envy of the most favoured, which she wore in one thick, lustrous plait round her head, forming a rich bright knot at the back of it.

She carried an old basket in her hand. Though miserably clad, the neatness and cleanliness of her apparel struggled powerfully with its meanness. Spite of the extreme cold, she wore a cotton gown, of indefinable colour, spotted with light flowers; but, from frequent washing, the primitive hue, as well as pattern, was effaced beyond recognition.

It was easy to read in the expression of resigned suffering marked on the features of this poor girl, a long endurance of slights, miseries, and pain. From her very birth she had been an object for jests and jeers; and, in consequence of the dreadful distortion of her figure, she had been nicknamed La Mayeux ("Humpy"). And so completely did custom familiarize her friends with a name which must ever remind her of her affliction, that even Françoise and Agricola, as kind and compassionate to her as others were unfeeling and brutal, never called her by any other.

La Mayeux, as we shall henceforward style her, had been born in the house in which Dagobert's wife had resided for the last twenty years. The girl had, in a manner, been brought up with Agricola and Gabriel.

It would appear as though some unfortunate beings were doomed to misfortune from their birth. La Mayeux had a very beautiful sister, on whom their mother, Perrine Soliveau, the widow of a small, ruined tradesman, lavished all her blind and absurd affection, bestowing on her less favoured child only contempt, dislike, and ill usage. Frequently would the poor weeping girl fly to the kind-hearted Françoise, who consoled and encouraged her, and taught her all she knew herself—to read and to sew.

Accustomed by their mother's example to commiserate La Mayeux, Gabriel and Agricola, far from imitating the rude boys of their age, who would even
inflict blows on the unoffending girl, took delight in loving, assisting, and protecting her.

The sisters had reached the respective ages of fifteen and seventeen, when their mother died, leaving them both in a state of the greatest destitution. Céphyse was a good-hearted girl, though ridiculously spoiled by her mother. She was clever, intelligent, and active, but, unlike her sister, one of those restless, vivacious natures, whose animal spirits are ever overflowing, and requiring constant bustle, excitement, and diversion.

For some time listening to the sage counsels of Françoise, Céphyse tried to restrain her love of pleasure and ease. She, too, acquired a knowledge of plain sewing, and worked steadily for a year; but unable to endure the privations consequent upon her slender earnings, Céphyse, young, beautiful, and impetuous, beset with seductive propositions and brilliant offers—for so they appeared to the young seamstress, when they promised her food, warmth, comfortable clothing, and an exemption from working fifteen hours a day in a close and unhealthy garret—yielded to the vows of a clerk in an attorney's office, who afterward abandoned her, when she transferred herself to the protection of a merchant's clerk; fickle, in her turn, quitted him for a travelling clerk, and, finally, changed her lover almost as often as the fashion of her robe.

Briefly, after a year or two of changes in her loves and lovers, Céphyse had become the idol of a world composed of grisettes, students, and clerks; and so great was the celebrity she had obtained in all the bal des barrières by her decided tone and manner, by her really original humour, her indefatigable ardour in the pursuit of pleasure, and, above all, by her frolicsome gayety and flow of spirits, that she was unanimously styled "The Queen Bacchanal," a dignity she showed herself capable of supporting at all points.

From the time of her accession to this noisy elevation, La Mayeux heard of her only at long intervals. She deplored her sister's mode of life, and devoted herself with unceasing industry to her needle, with difficult yearning four francs a week. Her employment was making coarse shirts for the army and working classes, for which her payment was three francs a dozen!! She had to cut them out, to stitch the collars, wristbands, &c., to overcast the button-holes, and sew on buttons, &c., so that, working without intermission, she could barely complete fourteen or sixteen shirts in eight days. The result of all these weary hours of labour was an income of four francs a week!

Neither was this poor girl's a peculiar or exceptional case. No! thousands of young women could no more then than now earn a larger sum.

The remuneration of female labour is as unjust as it is cruel, unworthy of a civilized age. They receive but half the pay of men who occupy themselves with the needle, such as tailors, waistcoat-makers, glovers, &c., &c.; yet women work an equal number of hours, are weak, delicate, and liable to have their wants doubled by maternity.

La Mayeux subsisted, then, upon four francs a week!! She lived; that is to say, by dint of toiling incessantly fourteen or sixteen hours a day, she did manage to avoid being actually starved to death, or perishing with cold. But the privations she endured! No! privations will not sufficiently express the wretchedness, the destitution, the daily and hourly need of all that is required to preserve the body in health, to keep alive that vital spark breathed into man by the breath of God—healthful air and shelter, wholesome and sufficient food, and warm clothing. Mortification would better express the total want of those comforts essentially needful for the prolongation of our existence, which, in a right organization of society, ought to be within the reach of the active and industrious, since civilization has taken from them their right to a share of the soil, and left them only strength to labour as their patrimony.

The savage does not enjoy the benefits of civilization, but, at least, he is free to subsist upon the animals of the forest, the birds of the air, the fishes of the
river, the fruits of the earth, and to use for shelter and fuel the branches of
great trees.

The civilized man, disinherited from these gifts of God, looking upon the
rights of property as sacred, may then justly demand, in return for his daily
labour, which gives wealth to his country, the means of living healthfully, neither
more nor less. But is it living, this eternal struggle with cold, and hunger, and
sickness, in the narrow region which separates life from death?

To show how grinding is the mortification to which society inexorably con-
demns thousands of honest and laborious human beings by its pitiless disregard
of all questions pertaining to the just remuneration of toil, we will present the
manner in which a poor young girl may live on her four francs per week. At
least, some pitying sympathy may be awakened for this multitude of unfortunates,
enduring, with fortitude, an existence so joyless, which gives them just enough
of vital power to feel all the sufferings and sorrows of humanity.

Yes, to live in such a condition is to be virtuous; a society thus organized,
which permits and condemns to such hardships, has no right to cast reproach on
those who abandon themselves to evil courses, not from love of riot and excess,
but to escape the miseries of cold and hunger.

See, then, how this young girl lived with her four francs per week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Six pounds of bread, second quality</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two pails of water</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lard or dripping (butter being too dear)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse salt</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A bushel of coals</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A measure of dried vegetables</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three measures of potatoes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candles</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needles and thread</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 396 centimes.

To save her fuel, La Mayeux prepared a species of soup only twice or thrice
in the week, on a small stove placed on the landing-place of the fourth story;
the intermediate days she took the soup cold.

There remained to her, then, less than a franc (ninety-one centimes) to pro-
vide clothing, fire, and lodging.*

By a rare good fortune, the position of La Mayeux was rendered easy in one
respect. Agricola, who well knew the over-sensitiveness of the poor girl, had
arranged with the porter to let her have a small chamber at the very top of the
house for twelve francs a year; for this confined space, which barely admitted
a bed, a table, and a chair, Agricola also paid eighteen francs per annum, making
the thirty which formed its real price. So that, after defraying her share of the
monthly rent, there remained about a franc and seventy centimes for all other
purposes.

As for the numbers of seamstresses who, earning no more than La Mayeux,
enjoy a less enviable condition than hers, if they have no family or permanent
lodging, they buy a morsel of bread and some other cheap provision for their
daily food, and at the cost of a sous, or perhaps two sous for the night, share the
miserable sleeping-place of a companion in some wretched chamber, generally
containing five or six beds, most of which are generally occupied by men, these
being the majority of lodgers. Yes, and notwithstanding the repugnance that
must be felt by a pure and virtuous female to such community of place for re-
pose, it must be submitted to; the keepers of lodging houses cannot provide
separate apartments for males and females.

* Some of these details, which have been submitted to the most rigid scrutiny, are taken from a clever work by M.
Jasoma, a mechanist, published in the Rucke Populaire, a journal conducted by artisans and working people, with as
much impartiality as truth, under the superintendence of M. Dupinse, a printer. M. Jasoma adds, and with but too
much truth, "We have known women and children subsisting for months together on soup made without either butter
or grease—nothing but bread boiled in water, with a little salt!" The same writer justly remarks that the work-
women cannot purchase their provisions in large quantities, because her employer has not always work to give her;
thus she is constrained to buy a small loaf, a slice of bread, a single candle, &c., which is much to her disadvantage,
frustrations always being on the profit side of the seller.

We shall add, that, under any circumstances, the poor always pay nearly double the price given by the rich, from
being compelled to buy in small quantities, and to pay ready money. Thus a load of wood, which might have been
bought for half the sum, is sold out in fagots to the poor, and realizes from seventy to eighty francs the load.
202 THE WANDERING JEW.

If a seamstress should desire to provide a furnished room for herself, however mean, an outlay of from thirty to forty francs is indispensable. And how is this sum to be made up from the pittance of four or five francs a week, which barely suffices to give her clothing and to buy so much food as shall prevent her from being starved to death?

No; the unhappy victim must resign herself to this repulsive mode of life, which, by imperceptible degrees, wears away that modest and chaste reserve which has preserved her from the attacks of the libertine or the seductions of the wicked. She sees in vice only a means of escape from the intolerable hardships of her condition; she yields to her fate, and another lost creature furnishes a theme for the animadversion of the rich fundholder, who, seeking a governess for his daughters, inveighs against the profligacy of the lower orders.

And yet this life of the seamstresses, deplorable as we have seen it, is relatively fortunate. Suppose there is no work for a day—for two days! Or if sickness comes!—sickness almost invariably caused by insufficiency or unwholesomeness of food, by want of fresh air, of precaution, of rest—sickness too enfeebling for labour, yet not serious enough to procure for the sufferer admission into a hospital.

Then what becomes of these destitute creatures? The imagination turns away from the painful and appalling picture.

The insufficient payment of female workers is the source of unimaginable guilt, wretchedness, and despair; and, be it remembered, we are not describing an individual case, but the misery of an entire class. The history of La Mayeux, as we shall endeavour to present it, may serve as a picture of the moral and physical condition of thousands of fellow-creatures living at Paris upon four francs a week!

Poor Mayeux, spite of the assistance she owed, though unconsciously, to the generosity of Agricola, lived miserably. Her health, always feeble, became seriously affected by her many privations; yet, by an excess of delicacy—although ignorant of Agricola’s generous aid—she pretended to earn more than she really did, in order to avoid those offers of service which would have been most painful to her from her knowledge of the many wants experienced by Françoise and her son, and from the naturally susceptible turn of her mind, which her constant humiliations and hardships had wrought up to a state of morbid sensitiveness.

But, strange to say, the distorted body enclosed a loving and generous soul, a mind of even poetical taste and cultivation. Let us hasten to explain by saying that this phenomenon had arisen from the example of Agricola Baudoin, whose poetical genius had quickly developed itself, and with whom La Mayeux had been brought up.

The poor girl had been the first confidant of the young smith’s literary essays, and when he talked to her of the delight, the recreation he found in poetry after a hard day’s toil, the seamstress, endowed with a mind of no ordinary stamp, began to think how such a pursuit might also cheer her in her weary hours of solitude and neglect.

One day, to the great astonishment of Agricola, who had just read to her his last verses, La Mayeux turned very red, hesitated, and at length confided to him a poetical secret of her own.

The verses were, doubtless, deficient both in rhythm and harmony, but they were touching and simple, like a complaint unmarked by envy, and merely intended to reach the heart of one loved friend. From this hour she and Agricola consulted and encouraged each other; but, with the exception of the young smith, no creature in the world suspected La Mayeux of being poetical: on the contrary, thanks to her extreme shyness, she passed with most persons as almost a fool.

The soul of this unfortunate girl must have been noble and magnanimous, for never, in her untaught verses, did one word of anger, hatred, or discontent at her lot find admission: it was a strain of gentle sadness, of despair mingled with
submission; a continued flow of infinite tenderness, of mournful sympathy, of universal charity and good-will toward all unhappy beings, doomed, like herself, to bear the double burden of deformity and misery, still, occasionally breaking out in eulogiums upon beauty, which she praised without envying, and admired at a distance with the admiration she experienced at beholding the bright and glorious sun.

But she did not recite all her compositions even to Agricola; there were some she would have died ere he should hear. The young smith, without being regularly handsome, had a fine, manly countenance; was as good as noble, ardent, courageous, and generous; his disposition was mirthful, frank, and gentle, and his mind was of the highest order.

The young girl, brought up with him, loved him as only such an unfortunate can love, when, in the dread of a cruel and disdainful mockery, she is forced to hide her passion in the deepest recesses of her heart. Compelled to this reserve, this profound concealment, La Mayeux sought not to subdue her love. Why should she? To whose knowledge would it come? Her well-known sisterly affection was a sufficient explanation of the lively interest she took in all that concerned him; and from this cause the deadly anguish she felt when, after having bravely combated in 1830, Agricola was carried home to his mother's, covered with blood and wounds, passed without remark or wonder.

Deceived equally with others as to the nature of this sentiment, the son of Dagobert had never suspected the attachment of La Mayeux.

Such, then, was the humbly-attired girl who entered the chamber of Françoise while she was engaged in preparations for her son's supper.

"Is it you, my poor Mayeux?" said she: "I have not seen you all day. You have not been ill, I hope? Come, give me a kiss."

The young girl embraced the mother of Agricola, and replied,

"I had some work I was obliged to finish. Madame Françoise, and I did not
wished to lose a minute. I have only just finished it. I am going out for coals; do you want anything?"

"No, my child, thank you. But I am very uneasy. It is half past eight, and Agricola is not yet returned." Then she added, with a sigh, "He works himself to death for me. Ah, my dear Mayeux, I am very unhappy! My sight is quite gone; at the end of a quarter of an hour I can see nothing—nothing at all; not even to sew these coarse sacks. The idea of being a burden on my son almost breaks my heart."

"Ah, Madame Françoise! what would Agricola say if he heard you?"

"Oh, I know. The dear boy thinks of nothing but me, and that makes me grieve the more. And then, too, I always remember that, because he will not quit me, he denies himself the advantages his fellow-workmen enjoy from their excellent employer, M. Hardy. Instead of inhabiting here a wretched garret, where air and light can scarcely find admittance, he might, like the rest of the establishment, have, at a cheap rate, a light chamber—well aired in summer, warm and comfortable in winter—looking out upon trees and gardens, of which he is so fond; besides saving the long walk to his workshop, which is without the walls of Paris."

"But he forgets all his fatigue when he sees you, Madame Baudoin; and as he knows how greatly you love this place in which he was born— Why M. Hardy has offered to give you apartments with Agricola in the establishment he has built for his workpeople at Passy."

"But then, my child, I must have abandoned my church, and I cannot do that."

"Hush, Madame Françoise! I hear him coming," said La Mayeux, her pale cheeks turning a deep red.

And as she spoke the sounds of a rich, sonorous voice, chanting a merry song, were heard on the stairs.

"I must not let him find me in tears," said the affectionate mother, wiping the large drops from her eyes. "This is his only respite from toil and fatigue; do not let me destroy the only peaceful enjoyment he ever obtains."
CHAPTER III.

AGRICO LA BAUDO IN.

The and active, though of powerful frame, was the poet-smith, about four-and-twenty years of age, with a healthy complexion and black hair and eyes, an aquiline nose, and a bold, energetic, open countenance. His resemblance to Dagobert was the more striking, as he wore, according to the custom of the time, a thick, brown mustache, and his beard, cut to a point, only covered his chin, his cheeks being cleanly shaved from the angle of the jaw to the temples. He was attired in velveteen trousers, a blue blouse stained with the smoke of the forge, a black silk handkerchief tied carelessly round his sinewy neck, and a cap with a narrow shade. The only thing that contrasted with these garments of toil was a magnificent large flower of deep purple, with petals as white as silver, which the smith held in his hand.

"Good-evening, mother dear," he said, as he entered and embraced Francoise; then, nodding his head in a friendly way to the young girl, he added, "Good-evening, little Mayeux."

"You are late this evening, my dear boy," said Francoise, turning to the little pan in which was the small repast of her son; "I was getting uneasy."

"Uneasy about me or the supper, mother?" inquired Agricola, gayly. "Oh, the deuce! will you never forgive me for keeping my supper waiting a little bit, though it is because you think it will spoil? You epicure, go along with you!"

And as the smith said this he kissed his mother again.

"Leave off, you naughty boy! you will make me upset the pan."

"That would be a pity, mother, it smells so good. Let's see what you've got for me."

"No, no; wait and see."

"I'll bet that it is potatoes fried in lard, which I adore."

"Isn't it Saturday?" said Francoise, in a tone of gentle reproach.

"True," said Agricola, exchanging a knowing smile with La Mayeux. "But, talking of Saturday, here, mother, is my week's wages."

"Thank you, my dear boy; put it in the wardrobe."

"I will, mother."

"Oh!" said the young workgirl, as Agricola was placing the money in the wardrobe, "what a beautiful flower you have in your hand, Agricola! I never saw such a one; and in the depth of winter, too! Only look, Madame Francoise."

"Find it, mother!" said Agricola, laughing. "Diable! do you think such

* The splendid flower of the Crinum enoble, a beautiful bulbous hot-house plant.
flowers are picked up on the way from the Barrier du Maine to the Rue Brise-Miche?"

"And how, then, did you get it?" said La Mayeux, who shared Françoise's
curiosity.

"Ah! what, curious? Well, then, I'll tell you; and it will account for my
being a little later than usual, my dear mother, although something else detained
me as well. It has been really an evening of adventures. I was coming home at
a good pace, and had already reached the corner of the Rue de Babylone, when
I heard a little, low, and plaintive howl. It was still light, and when I looked
down I saw one of the prettiest little dogs I ever beheld, no bigger than my
fist, black and red, with its ears falling down to its feet, and its hair trailing on the
ground."

"It was lost, no doubt," said Françoise.

"Yes. I took the poor little thing up, and it began to lick my hands. It had
round its neck a piece of wide red satin ribbon, tied in a large bow. I looked
under the ribbon, and discovered a small collar made of little links of gold, or
gilded metal, with a small plate. I took a match out of my tobacco-box, rubbed
it, and obtained light enough to read,

"'Lutine belongs to Mademoiselle Adrienne de Cardoville, Rue de Babylone,
No. 7.'"

"Why, fortunately, you were in the very street," said La Mayeux.

"As you say. So I took the little thing under my arm, and, turning down
the street, I came to a long garden wall, at the end of which I reached the door
of a little lodge, which, no doubt, belongs to a large mansion at the farther end
of the park wall; for this garden is just like a park. I looked up and saw the
No. 7, which had been freshly painted, over a small wicket door. I rang the
bell, and, after a few minutes, which, no doubt, were passed in examining me
(for I thought I saw two eyes through the grating), the door opened. But, now,
you'll hardly believe what I am going to say."

"Why not, my child?"

"Because it is like a fairy tale."

"A fairy tale?" said La Mayeux.

"Yes; for I was and am still quite dazzled and bewildered with all I saw.
It is like the vague remembrance of a dream."

"Well, go on! go on!" said the good mother, so interested that she did not
perceive that her son's supper was beginning to burn.

"Well," replied the young smith, smiling at the curiosity which his recital in-
spired, 'a young woman opened the door, so handsome, and so attractively and
beautifully dressed, that she looked like a lovely portrait of the olden time. I
had not spoken a word before she exclaimed,

"'Ah, sir! have you found Lutine and brought her back again? Oh, how
glad Mamselle Adrienne will be! Follow me—come along; she would be
sorry not to have the pleasure of seeing you herself, and thanking you.' And
without giving me time to reply, the young person made me a sign to follow her.
And now, mother dear, to tell you all I saw that was fine and magnificent, as I
crossed a small apartment, only half lighted up, but which smelt deliciously,
would be impossible. The young lady tripped along very quickly, and opened
door. There, then, was a sight! I was so astonished that I can remember
nothing but a sort of dazzle of gold and light, crystal and flowers; and in the
midst of all this glitter was a young lady—oh! so beautiful! Such a beauty as
one only sees in dreams. She had red hair, or, rather, bright gold colour. It
was charming. I never in my life saw such hair. And then, too, she had black
eyes, red lips, and was as fair as a lily. That's all I remember, for I tell you I
was so surprised, so astounded, that I seemed as though I was looking through
a veil.

"'Mademoiselle,' said the young girl, whom I never could have taken for a
waiting maid, she was so elegantly dressed, 'here is Lutine. This gentleman
has found her and brought her back.'"
"'Ah, sir!" said the young lady with the golden locks, in a voice which sounded like a silver bell, 'how can I ever thank you sufficiently? I am so foolishly fond of Lutine.' Then, judging, no doubt, by my dress that she might, and perhaps ought to thank me otherwise than by words, she took a small silk purse, which was beside her, and said to me, with some hesitation, certainly, 'Sir, I am afraid you have had a great deal of trouble in bringing Lutine here, and you have, perhaps, lost much precious time; pray allow me—' and she offered me the purse."

"Ah, Agricola," said La Mayeux, sadly, "how people mistake!"

"Wait for the end, and you will forgive the young lady. Seeing, no doubt, by a glance at my face, that she had wounded me by such an offer, she took from a magnificent vase of porcelain which was near her this superb flower; and, addressing me in a voice full of sweetness and kindness, which showed how much she regretted having misconceived me, she said,"

"'Then, at least, sir, you will accept this flower?'"

"You are right, Agricola," said La Mayeux, with a melancholy smile; "it is impossible to make a more gracious amends for an involuntary offence."

"Worthy young lady!" said Françoise, wiping her eyes; "how well she understood my Agricola!"

"Didn't she, mother? Well, at the moment when I was taking the flower, without venturing to raise my eyes, for, although I am not timid, there was something in this young lady so commanding, although she was so amiable, a door opened, and another very handsome young girl, tall and dark, attired in a very peculiar but becoming costume, said to the young lady with the red hair, 'Made- moiselle, he is there.' She rose directly, and saying to me, 'A thousand pardons, sir; I shall never forget that I have owed to you a moment of deep gratification; pray do not forget my address, and the name of Adrienne de Cardoville,' she withdrew.

"I could not say one word in reply. The young girl conducted me back, and, making me a very pretty courtesy at the door, I found myself again in the Rue de Babylone, as much overcome and astonished, I tell you again, as if I had come out of an enchanted palace."

"Really, my dear boy, it is quite like a fairy tale; isn't it, little Mayeux?"

"Yes, Madame Françoise," said the young girl, with an absent and thoughtful air, which Agricola did not remark.

"What touched me most," he resumed, "was, that this young lady, delighted as she was at having her little pet back again, instead of forgetting me, as so many others would have done in her place, did not bestow any attention upon it, which shows consideration and feeling; doesn't it, Mayeux? I really think her so good and kind-hearted, that in any important case I should not hesitate to address her."

"Yes, you are right," replied La Mayeux, still more pensively.

The poor girl was suffering acutely; she did not experience any hatred or jealousy against the young unknown lady, who by her beauty and wealth, and the delicacy of her conduct, seemed to belong to a sphere so high and grand, that La Mayeux's imagination could not reach it; but, involuntarily reflecting on her own forlorn position, the poor lone creature had never before so keenly felt the pangs of deformity and misery. Still, such was the humble and calm resignation of her noble mind, that the only feeling which arose within her against Adrienne de Cardoville was the offer of her purse to Agricola. But the delicate way in which the young lady had repaired her error deeply affected poor Mayeux. Yet her heart was sorely wounded, and she could not repress her tears when she looked at the splendid flower, so full of beauty and rich in perfume, which, presented by a hand so charming, must be precious to Agricola.

"Now, mother," said the young smith, who did not see La Mayeux's emotion, "you have heard the main cause of my delay—story No. 1. Story No. 2 is, that as I entered I met the dyer on the stairs, whose arms were all of a splendid bright
green colour. He stopped me in a great fright, and told me that he had seen a
well-dressed man walking backward and forward, as though he were a spy
watching the house.

"'Well,' said I, 'what's that to you, Master Loriot? Are you afraid he'll
steal the secret of your beautiful green dye, with which you are gloved to the
elbows?'"

"But who can the man be, Agricola?" said Françoise.

"Upon my word, mother, I have not the slightest idea nor the smallest care.
I told Daddy Loriot, who chatters like a magpie, to go back to his cellar, as, no
doubt, this spy was about of as much consequence to him as to me."

So saying, Agricola went to place the little leather purse, which held his wages
in the drawer of the press.

At the moment when Françoise placed her sauce-pan on the corner of the table,
La Mayeux, rousing herself from her abstraction, filled a basin with water, and
taking it to the young smith, said, in a soft and timid voice,

"For your hands, Agricola."

"Thanks, my little Mayeux! how kind you are!" Then, with the most
natural and unaffected accent in the world, he added,

"There, take my beautiful flower for your pains."

"What! will you give it to me?" exclaimed the little seamstress, in a voice
full of emotion, while a hue of crimson overspread her pale and interesting coun-
tenance; "will you really give it to me? this magnificent flower, which the
handsome, good, kind, rich lady gave you?" And poor Mayeux repeated, with
a bewildered air, "What! will you really give it to me?"

"Why, what the deuce should I do with it? Can I put it on my breast, or
have it mounted as a pin?" said Agricola, laughing. "I am very sensible of
the charming way in which the young lady thanked me, and was delighted at
having found her little dog; but I am also delighted to give you this flower, par-
ticularly as you admire it so much. You see the day's work has been a good one."

And as he said this, the young smith (while La Mayeux took the flower, all
trembling with delight, emotion, and surprise) washed his hands, blackened with
iron filings and smoke, so that in a moment the clear water became as black as
soot.

Agricola, looking at La Mayeux so as to direct her attention to this meta-
morphosis, said, in a low and laughing tone,

"Here's ink of the cheapest for us paper-stainers! I wrote some lines yester-
day, with which I am not at all displeased. I'll read them to you."

As he spoke, Agricola wiped his hands carelessly with the front of his blouse,
while La Mayeux took away the basin, and, having emptied it, returned it to the
shelf, and carefully placed her flower beside it.

"Why did not you ask me for a towel?" said Françoise, looking at her son
and shrugging her shoulders. "Wipe your hands on your blouse!"

"Why, it is burned all day by the forge fire, so it won't be the worse to be a
little moistened at night— eh! Am I a naughty boy again, mother? Oh! scold
me if you dare: I should like to see you—"

Françoise's reply was to take her son's head in her hands—that head so full
of frankness, resolution, and intelligence—look at him for a moment with mater-

"Come, sit down; you stand all day at the forge, and it is getting late."

"Well, then, take your arm-chair. What! is our quarrel to begin all over
again? I'm just as well on this stool."

"No, you are not. You ought to rest as much as possible after such a hard
day's work."

"Oh, you tyrant of a mother! Isn't she, my dear Mayeux?" said Agricola,
merrily, as he took his seat. "Well, I am a very obedient boy, and I am al-
ways so comfortable in your arm-chair; I never was better seated in my life
since the day in July when I had a roll on the throne at the Tuileries."
ADRIENNE DE CARDOVILLE.
Françoise Baudoin stood at one end of the table and cut a slice of bread for her son, while La Mayeux took the bottle and poured some wine into his silver cup. There was something affecting in the assiduous service of these two excellent hearts, who loved him so dearly.

"What! you won't sup with me?" said Agricola to La Mayeux.

"Thank you, Agricola, but I have dined," said the seamstress, casting down her eyes.

"Oh, I only asked you out of politeness, for you have your whims, and nothing in the world will induce you to eat with us. And there's that mother, too—she will dine all alone; and in that way she stints herself, without my knowing it."

"But, my dear boy, no! no! it is better for my health to dine early. Well, is it nice?"

"Nice! why it's excellent! it is cod with turnips! and I do at on cod. I ought to have been a fisherman at Newfoundland."

The worthy fellow, be it said, found the mess anything but satisfactory after a hard day's work, and it had been a little burned, moreover, during his story; but he knew so well how to please his mother by seeming to enjoy a poor meal, that he affected to like his fish exceedingly; and the mother said, with a satisfied air,

"Oh! I can see you relish it, my dear lad: on Friday and Saturday I will make you some more."

"Thank ye, thank ye, mother; only not two days running—that will surfeit me. Well, now let us talk of what we will do to-morrow, for Sunday. Let us amuse ourselves, for, during some days past, mother, you seem very sad, and I can't make it out. I think, perhaps, you are angry with me?"

"Oh! my dear son, you, a model for—"

"Well then, prove it to me, and show me that you are happy by taking some amusement; perhaps, too, our little neighbour here will do us the honour to accompany us, as she did last time," said Agricola, making a low bow to La Mayeux.

The poor girl blushed, looked down, and her countenance took an expression of deep pain, but she made no answer.

"My dear child, I have my religious duties to attend to all day: you know that," said François to her son.

"Well, then, in the evening! I will not ask you to go to the play, but they tell me there is a fellow who does conjuring tricks very cleverly."

"But that is a sort of play!"

"Oh, really, mother, you are too particular."

"My dear boy, I do not wish to hinder others from doing as they please."

"That's true enough—forgive me, mother! Well, if it is fine we will go and walk on the Boulevards, and poor little Mayeux will go with us; it is three months since she went out, for, unless she goes with us, she never goes."

"No! go out alone, my dear, and enjoy your Sunday, which is little holyday enough for you."

"Come, my good Mayeux, help me to persuade my mother."

"You know, Agricola," said the needlewoman, blushing and casting down her eyes; "you know I ought not to go out with you and your mother."

"Why not, mademoiselle? may I, without impertinence, ask the reason of your refusal?" said Agricola, gayly. The young girl sighed deeply, and replied;

"Because I will not again expose you to the chance of a quarrel on my account, Agricola."

"Ah! your pardon," said the smith, with an air of regret, and he struck his brow impatiently. This is what La Mayeux alluded to:

Sometimes, but very seldom, for she was careful even about that, the poor girl had walked out with Agricola and his mother, and for the humble seamstress those days had been unexampled fêtes. She had worked many nights and fasted many days to buy a tidy cap and little shawl, that she might not disgrace Agricola and his mother, and her five or six walks on the arm of him whom she secretly idolized had been the only days of happiness she had ever known.
During their last walk, a brutal, vulgar fellow, had pushed his elbow against her so violently, that the poor girl could not repress a cry of pain, to which the coarse wretch replied, "So much the worse for you, humpback!"

Agricola, like his father, was endowed with that patient endurance which real strength and courage give to noble hearts; but when there was a gross insult to chastise, his violence was irrepressible. "Irritated at the brutality and coarseness of the fellow, Agricola had dropped his mother's arm and hit this man, who was about his own age and make, two as fearful blows as the powerful and hard hand of a smith could apply to the "human face divine." The scoundrel showed fight, but Agricola gave him so sound a drubbing in the presence of the approving spectators, that he ran away, amid the shouts of the multitude.

It was to this adventure poor La Mayeux adverted when she declined going out with Agricola, in order that he might not get into a quarrel on her account.

We may imagine the smith's regret for having involuntarily renewed the recollection of this painful circumstance: alas! the more painful for La Mayeux than Agricola could suppose, for she loved him devotedly, and had been the cause of his quarrel through her infirmity exciting ridicule.

Agricola, in spite of his strength and resolution, had the sensibility of a child, and when he reflected that this remembrance must be very painful to the poor girl, a big tear started in his eye, and, stretching out his arms to her like an affectionate brother, he said,

"Forgive my stupidity, and come and kiss me."

And so saying, he imprinted two hearty kisses on the pale and thin cheek of La Mayeux.

At this warm salute, the lips of the young girl turned pale, and her poor heart beat so violently that she was compelled to lean against the table.

"Come, come, you forgive me, don't you?" inquired Agricola.

"Yes, yes," she said, vainly contending with her emotion; "and pray, in turn, forgive my silly weakness; but the recollection of that quarrel always distresses me—I was so frightened for you. Suppose the people had taken the part of that rude fellow?"

"Oh! I never in all my life was so frightened!" said Françoise, coming to La Mayeux's aid without knowing it.

"Oh! as for that, mother," replied Agricola, to give a turn to the conversation, which was alike disagreeable to him and the seamstress; "you a soldier's wife, and he an old horse-grenadier of the imperial guard, to be frightened! oh, that was inexcusable. Oh, my brave father! Really, now, I hardly dare think of his arrival; it turns my senses topsy-turvy."

"His arrival!" said Françoise, sighing. "Heaven grant it."

"What, mother! do you doubt? Parbleu! he must come—you have had enough masses said to bring him."

"Agricola, my child!" said Françoise, interrupting her son, and shaking her head mournfully; "do not talk in that way, especially about your father."

"No, no; I really do all sort of odd things to-night. I am either a fool or drunk. Forgive me, mother, dear! I have done nothing all night but beg pardon. You know, when I talk my nonsense, it escapes me in spite of myself, and I never mean to offend you."

"It is not me you offend, my child."

"It's all the same, for I know nothing worse than to offend one's mother. But what I was saying as to my father's return, that will and must soon occur."

"But we have not had a letter from him these four months."

"Remember, mother, in the letter which he dictated—for he told us, with a soldier's frankness, that, although he could read tolerably well, he was no great penman—in that letter he told us not to be uneasy about him, as he should be in Paris the end of January, and that three or four days before his arrival he would let us know by what Barrier he should arrive, that I might go and meet him."
"True, my child! and yet, though we are in the month of February, we have no tidings."

"Oh! that's a reason why we may expect to see him soon; I go even farther, and say I should not be surprised if our good Gabriel was to arrive at nearly the same time. His last letter from America left a hope for it. What happiness, my dear mother, if all the family were reunited?"

"May Providence hear you, my child! It would, indeed, be a day of joy to me!"

"And that day will soon arrive, mother, be assured. With my father, I say 'no news is good news.'"

"Do you remember your father, Agricola?" inquired La Mayeux.

"Why, to tell the truth, what I most remember was his great hairy cap, and his mustache, which frightened me confoundedly. It was only the red riband of his cross, and the white stripes of his uniform, and the bright hilt of his sabre that reconciled me to him; wasn't it, mother? But what ails you, mother? why do you weep?"

"Alas, poor Baudoin! he must have suffered so much since he left us; at his age—sixty. Oh, my dear child! my heart is ready to burst when I think that, perhaps, his misery is only going to change its aspect."

"What do you mean?"

"Alas! I gain next to nothing."

"Well, and I, then! Is there not a chamber for him and you, and a table for him and you? My dear, good mother, as we are talking of household affairs," added the smith, giving to his voice a deeper expression of tenderness, that he might not vex his mother, "let me say one word. When my father returns, and Gabriel, too, there will be no occasion to have any masses said for them, or to burn any more candles. Well, thanks to such economy, the dear old papa will have his bottle of wine every day, and tobacco for his pipe. Then, on Sundays we will get him a nice little dinner from the cook's shop."

Several taps at the door interrupted Agricola.

"Enter," said he.

But, instead of entering, the person who knocked but half opened the door, and a hand and arm of splendid green were seen making signs to the smith.

"Oh, its Daddy Loriot, the prince of dyers," said Agricola. "Enter without any ceremony, friend Loriot."

"Impossible, my lad; I am reeking from head to foot with dye. I shall stain Madame Franchise's floor all green."

"So much the better; it will then look like a green field, and I adore the country."

"Joking apart, Agricola, I want to speak to you directly!"

"What, about the man who is playing spy? Oh! don't annoy yourself. What can he have to do with you or me?"

"No; I think he's gone, or the fog is so thick that I cannot see him. But that's not it; come to me, I want you; it is, really now, a very important matter," added the dyer, with a mysterious air; "a matter, too, which concerns you only."

"Me only!" said Agricola, rising with great surprise. "What can it be?"
"Go and see, my dear boy," said Françoise.  
"I will, mother; but hang me if I can guess what it all means."

The smith then left the room, leaving his mother and La Mayeux together.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RETURN.

Five minutes after he had left, Agricola returned. His face was pale and agitated, his eyes filled with tears, his hand tremulous, but his countenance expressed extraordinary joy and tenderness. He stopped for a moment at the entrance, as if his emotion prevented him from approaching his mother.

Françoise's sight was so much enfeebled that she did not at first remark the change in her son's physiognomy.

"What is the matter, my dear?" she inquired.

Before the smith could reply, La Mayeux, more quicksighted, exclaimed, "Agricola, what ails you? how pale you are!"

"Mother," said the artisan, in an agitated voice, going to Françoise, without replying to La Mayeux; "mother, I have something to say which will very much surprise you; promise me that you will contain yourself."

"What do you mean? How you tremble! Look at me; dear! Yes, indeed, La Mayeux was right; how very pale you are!"

"My dearest mother!" and Agricola, going on his knees before Françoise, took her two hands in his; "I must—you do not know—but—"

The smith could not finish, tears of joy stifled his voice.

"You weep, my dear boy! Oh! what causes this? You alarm me!"
"It is not alarm I would cause you—quite the contrary," said Agricola, wiping his eyes; "you will be delighted. But, once again, do not excite yourself, for too great joy is as trying as too great grief."
"What do you mean?"
"Didn't I tell you that he would soon come?"
"Your father!" exclaimed Françoise, as she rose from the chair. Her surprise and emotion were so excessive that she placed one hand on her heart to still its throbings, and then felt as though she would faint.

Her son rose and supported her. La Mayeux had considerately kept out of the way during this scene, which so completely absorbed Agricola and his mother; but she then timidly drew near, thinking she might be useful, for Françoise's features altered more and more.

"Come, mother, courage!" said the smith; "now the truth is told, you have only to rejoice over my father's return."
"My poor Baudoin! after eighteen years' absence! I cannot believe it!" said Françoise, bursting into tears. "Is it true? Oh! can it be true?"
"It is so true, that, if you will promise not to be too much excited, I will tell you when you will see him."
"Soon! oh! soon! shan't I?"
"Yes, very soon."
"But when will he come?"
"He may be here from one moment to another—to-morrow—perhaps tonight."
"Tonight?"
"Yea, mother. I must tell you—he is close at hand—he is here!"
"He is—he is—"
Françoise could not finish.

Just now he was below; but, before he came up, he begged the dyer to tell me, that I might prepare you to see him; for the dear father was afraid that so sudden a surprise might make you ill.

"Oh, goodness!"
"And now," exclaimed the smith, with an outburst of happiness, "he is here—he is waiting! Ah! dearest mother, for the last ten minutes I have hardly been able to contain myself; my heart beats as though it would come through my side."

And going to the door, he opened it. Dagobert, holding Rose and Blanche by the hand, appeared on the threshold. Instead of throwing her arms round her husband's neck, Françoise fell on her knees and prayed.

Lifting up her soul to God, she thanked Him with the profoundest gratitude for having heard her vows, her prayers, and thus responded to her offerings. For a second the actors in this scene remained silent and motionless.

Agricola, through a feeling of respect and delicacy, which struggled violently against the impetuous ardor of his tenderness, did not throw himself on Dagobert's neck, but waited, with ill-restrained impatience, until his mother had concluded her prayer.

The soldier had the same feeling as the smith, but both restrained themselves, and they exchanged looks expressive of their love, their veneration for the worthy woman who, in the excess of her pious zeal, quite forgot the creature for the Creator.

Rose and Blanche, overcome and deeply moved, looked with interest on the kneeling woman; while La Mayeux, silently shedding tears of joy at the thought of Agricola's happiness, retired into a dark corner of the room, feeling that she was an intruder, and must be overlooked in the midst of this family reunion.

Françoise rose, and made a step toward her husband, who caught her in his arms.

For a moment there was deep silence.

Dagobert and Françoise did not utter a word, only broken sighs, sobs, and
deep breathings of joy. When the old couple lifted up their heads, their countenances were calm, joyous, and serene, for the indulgence of simple and pure feelings never leaves behind it marks of excitement and violent agitation.

"My children," said the soldier, in a voice full of emotion, pointing out Françoise to the girls, who, when her first emotion was over, had looked at them with astonishment; "this is my good and excellent wife, and she will be to General Simon's daughters what I myself have been."

"Then, madam, you will treat us as if we were your own children," said Rose, going with her sister to Françoise.

"General Simon's daughters!" exclaimed Dagobert's wife, more and more surprised.

"Yes, my good Françoise, they are. I have brought them from afar, not without trouble; but I will tell you all that another time."

"Poor little dears! Two angels just alike," said Françoise, regarding the orphans with equal interest and admiration.

"And now for us two," said Dagobert, turning to his son.

"At last," said Agricola.

It is impossible to paint the excessive delight of Dagobert and his son, the tenderness and energy of their embraces, which the soldier broke in upon now and then to look Agricola in the face, leaning his hands on the broad shoulders of the youthful smith, that he might with more ease gaze on his frank and manly countenance, and his well-formed, powerful frame; after which he again strained him to his breast, saying, "What a fine lad! what a well-grown, good-looking fellow it is!"

La Mayeux, still remaining in the corner, participated in the happiness of Agricola, but feared that her presence, though not yet observed, might be considered intrusive. She wished to retire without being noticed, but that was impossible; Dagobert and his son concealed nearly the whole of the door, and she therefore remained perforce, unable to turn her eyes from the lovely faces of Rose and Blanche. She had never seen anything more lovely, and the extraordinary resemblance between the two sisters increased her surprise, while their mourning attire seemed to announce that they were poor; and, involuntarily, La Mayeux felt more sympathy for them.

"Dear girls! they are cold; their little hands must be frozen; and, unfortunately, the fire in the stove has gone out," said Françoise.

She then tried to warm in her own hands the hands of the orphans, while Dagobert and his son were abandoning themselves to the outpouring of tenderness so long restrained.

The moment Françoise said that the fire in the stove was extinct, La Mayeux, anxious to make herself useful as an excuse for her presence, which might be thought ill-timed, ran to the little cupboard in which the charcoal and wood were kept, took out some small bits, knelt before the stove, and, by the aid of some sparks still retained in the ashes, lighted up the fire, which soon began to crackle, and then filling a coffee-pot with water, she placed it over the fire, to make some warm drink for the young girls.

La Mayeux employed herself in this with so little noise and so quickly, and there was so little attention paid to her amid the excitement of the occasion, that Françoise, fully occupied with Rose and Blanche, did not remark the kindling of the fire until she felt its warmth, and soon after heard the bubbling of the water in the coffee-pot.

This phenomenon of a fire which lighted of itself did not, at the moment, strike Dagobert's wife, who was completely absorbed in thinking how she should lodge the two young girls, for, as we know, the soldier had not announced their intended arrival.

All at once three or four loud barks were heard outside the door.

"Ah! it is my old Killjoy," exclaimed Dagobert, opening the door for his dog; "he wishes, of course, to be introduced to the family."
THE WANDERING JEW.

Killjoy bounded joyfully into the room, and very speedily made himself at home. After having rubbed his long muzzle in Dagobert's hand, he went round to Rose, Blanche, Françoise, and Agricola; then, finding that but little attention was paid to him, he sniffed out La Mayeux, who kept herself still in a corner of the room, and acting on the popular axiom of "My friend's friends are my friends," Killjoy licked the hands of the young seamstress, whom all else had forgotten.

By a curious feeling, this caress moved La Mayeux even to tears, and she several times passed her long, thin, white hand over the intelligent head of the dog; then, thinking that she could no longer be useful, as she had done all the small service it was in her power to render, she took the beautiful flower which Agricola had given her, opened the door softly, and went out so stealthily that no one observed her departure.

After their outbursts of mutual affection, Dagobert, his wife, and son be-thought them of the realities of life.

"Poor Françoise!" said the soldier, looking toward Rose and Blanche, "you did not expect such an agreeable surprise?"

"I only regret, my dear husband," replied Françoise, "that the daughters of General Simon will have no better apartment than this humble chamber; for, with Agricola's garret—"

"This makes up our hotel, and there are certainly some more splendid; but comfort yourself, the poor children are accustomed not to be very particular. To-morrow I will go arm in arm with my son, and I'll venture to say that it will not be he who will walk most upright and proudly of the two. We will go and find the father of General Simon at M. Hardy's factory, to talk matters over."

"To-morrow, father!" said Agricola to Dagobert; "you will not find M. Hardy or Marshal Simon's father at the manufactory."

"What do you say, my boy?" said Dagobert; "the marshal?"

"Certainly; since 1830, the friends of General Simon have obtained the recognition of the title and rank which the emperor conferred on him after the battle of Ligny."

"Really?" cried Dagobert, with emotion, "though that ought not to surprise me, for, after all, it is but justice; and when the emperor said a thing, the least that could be done was to say it after him. But it is well. It goes to my heart—it moves me." Then addressing the young maidens, "My loves, you hear! on your arrival at Paris you are daughters of a duke and marshal; although, to see you in this humble crib, one would hardly believe it, my poor little duchesses: but patience, all will be well yet. Old Simon must have been delighted, my boy, to learn that his son was restored to his rank."

"Oh! he said he would sacrifice all ranks and all titles to see his son again; for it was during the general's absence that his friends solicited and obtained this justice for him. Moreover, the marshal is looked for every hour, for his last letters from India lead us to expect his immediate arrival."

At this Rose and Blanche looked at each other, their eyes filling with glad tears.

"Thank Heaven! I and the dear girls look anxiously for his return. But why should we not find M. Hardy or old M. Simon at the factory to-morrow?"

"They left, ten days ago to see and examine an English manufactory established in the south, but they will return in a day or two."

"Diablo! that annoys me. I relied on seeing the general's father, to talk over some very important matters. But I suppose you know where to write to him, so let him know to-morrow, my boy, that his granddaughters have arrived. In the mean time, my dears," he added, turning to Rose and Blanche, "my good wife will give her bed to you; and as in war times we must put up with war fare, why, my darling pets, you will be no worse off here than you were on your journey."
"You know we shall always think ourselves well off near you and madame," said Rose.

"And then we can think of nothing but the delight of being at last in Paris, since it is here that we shall soon find our dear father," added Blanche.

"In that hope we will all take patience," said Dagobert; "but, after what you expected to see in Paris, you must be much astonished, my children. Faith! up to this time you have not found it the golden city you dreamed of. But that can't be helped; patience, patience! You will find that Paris is not such a bad place as it may seem to be."

"And then," added Agricola, gayly, "I am sure the young ladies will find, when General Simon does arrive, that Paris will be a real golden city."

"You are right, M. Agricola," said Rose, smiling; "you have guessed exactly."

"What, mamselle, do you know my name?"

"To be sure we do, M. Agricola. We often spoke of you to Dagobert, and since with Gabriel," answered Blanche.

"Gabriel!" exclaimed both mother and son, with surprise. "Yes, Gabriel!" replied Dagobert, making a significant sign to the orphans. "Bless you! we have as much to tell you as would require a fortnight at least; and, among other wonderful things, you will hear how we met Gabriel. All that I shall now say about him is, that, in his way, he deserves to be the brother of my boy (I cannot weary of saying 'my boy'), and that they are worthy to love each other like brothers. Good, excellent wife!" continued Dagobert, with emotion, "it is and was a noble, a brave act, to take this deserted child, and, spite of your poverty, to bring it up as tenderly as your own."

"Husband, don't talk so—it was very natural."

"You are right, wife; but I'll say what I think about that another time. I shan't forget it. Meantime you will be sure to see him in the morning."

"Good brother—also returned?" cried the young smith. "Who will say, after all this, that there are not certain days marked out for happiness? And where did you fall in with him, father?"

"You, you? Tell me, boy, is it because you make verses that you think yourself too grand to thou me?"

"Father—"

"I tell you you must always thee and thou me, to make up for the thees and thoues I ought to have had these eighteen years. As for Gabriel, I will tell you presently where and how we found him, for if you think to sleep you are very much out in your reckoning. You shall give me half of your bed, and, oh! how we will talk. Killjoy will stay at the door of this room: it is an old habit of his to remain near these children."

"Dear husband," interrupted Françoise, "I am sadly forgetful. Surely these young ladies and yourself will take some supper; Agricola will fetch something for you from the cook-shop directly."

"What say you, my children?" inquired Dagobert.

"Oh, no, thank you, Dagobert; we are too happy to be hungry."

"At least," said Françoise, "have a little warm wine and water, just to warm you, my dear young ladies. It is, I am sorry to say, all I have to offer you."

"To be sure, wife," answered Dagobert; "the poor things must be tired, and had better go to bed. Meantime I will go up with my boy to his chamber, and to-morrow morning, before Rose and Blanche are awake, I will come and have a talk with you, by way of giving Agricola a little respite."

At this moment a knock was heard at the door.

"It is that good little Mayeux come to see if we want anything," said Agricola.

"I thought she was here when your father came," said Françoise.

* It may be necessary to inform the reader that in France, to say thee and thou (tuoyer), in speaking with a friend, is a mark of familiarity and affection. You is addressed to superiors.
"And so she was, mother. She must have slipped out for fear of being in the way; she is so thoughtful. But that knock was too loud to be hers."

"See, then, who it is, my dear," rejoined Françoise.

Before the smith had time to reach the door, it opened, and a well-dressed man, of respectable appearance, advanced several steps into the chamber, casting a rapid glance around, and gazing earnestly for a moment on Rose and Blanche.

"Excuse me, sir," said Agricola, hastily, to him, "if I remind you that it is usual for persons knocking at doors to wait until they are told to enter. What is your pleasure?"

"I beg your pardon, sir," answered the stranger, with extreme politeness, and speaking very deliberately, perhaps with a view to prolong his stay. "I really beg a thousand pardons! I am quite vexed at my inadvertence. I feel so confused, that really—"

"Well, well, sir!" interrupted Agricola, impatiently, "that is sufficient. What is your business here?"

"May I take the liberty of asking whether a deformed seamstress, Mademoiselle Soliveau, does not live here?"

"No, sir! Up stairs," said Agricola.

"Oh, sir," exclaimed the man of politeness, commencing a series of profound bows, "I am ashamed of having committed so great a mistake. I believed myself at the door of the young person, whom I wished to see respecting some work required by a lady of high respectability."

"It is late," returned Agricola, much surprised, "to come upon such an errand. However, Mademoiselle Soliveau is well known to us, and you can see her to-morrow; she has now retired to rest."

"Then there is nothing left but to reiterate my excuses—"

"That will do, sir!" cried Agricola, advancing to the door.

"May I venture to hope that madame here, and these young ladies, with the gentleman I see opposite, will also accept my apologies?"
"Really, sir," interrupted Agricola, "if you go on thus, you will have to apologize for the length of your excuses, and the business will never come to an end."

Agricola's rebuke, which made the sisters smile, pleased Dagobert excessively. He stroked down his mustache, and whispered to his wife, "That is a clever boy of ours. He does not astonish you, I see; you know him of old."

Meantime, the ceremonious stranger, after casting a searching glance at the orphans, Dagobert, and Agricola, quitted the room.

Soon after, Françoise, having laid a mattress on the ground for herself, began arranging her own bed for the sisters, giving them clean sheets, and superintending their preparations for the night with maternal solicitude.

Dagobert and Agricola, meanwhile, went up to the garret occupied by the latter.

At the instant when the smith, who, bearing a light in his hand, was preceding his father up the stairs, passed the chamber of La Mayeux, the young girl spoke hastily from the dark corner in which she had ensconced herself, and said, "Agricola, a serious danger threatens you! I must speak to you."

These words had been uttered so rapidly, and in so low a tone, that Dagobert heard them not; but observing Agricola start suddenly, and pause, the old soldier called out,

"What now, my boy! What is the matter with you?"

"Nothing, father," answered the smith, turning quickly toward him. "I feared you could not see your way up."

"See!" exclaimed the old man. "Why, bless you, my boy; I have the eyes and legs of fifteen to-night;" and the veteran, not remarking the astonishment of Agricola, entered the small attic in which they were to pass the night.

Some minutes after the man of polished manners had returned from his visit to Dagobert's house he was hastening to the extremity of the Rue Brise-Miche.

He approached a hackney-coach, drawn up in the little square of the cloister Saint-Merry.

Seated in this coach, his person enveloped in a large cloak, was M. Rodin.

"Well?" he said.

The other replied, "The two young girls and the man with the gray mustaches have gone into Françoise Baudoin's house. Before I knocked at the door, I listened for several minutes to what they were saying. The two girls are to share the bed of Françoise Baudoin, while the old fellow with the grizzled beard is to sleep in the chamber of the young smith."

"Very well," said Rodin.

"I did not dare," continued the polite man, "to insist upon seeing the hump-backed seamstress about the Queen Bacchanal to-night; I will go again to-morrow, to ascertain what effect has been produced by the letter she would receive by the evening's post respecting the young smith."

"Do not fail. Now go at once (late as it may be) to the confessor of Françoise Baudoin; desire him to come to me without delay. Say he will find me in the street Mileu-des-Ursins, and do you accompany him. If I have not returned, bid him wait me: tell him business of vital importance is in hand."

"All shall be faithfully performed," replied the polished man, bowing low to Rodin, whose coach drove rapidly away.
CHAPTER V.
AGRICOLA AND LA MAYEUX.

BRKEN silence reigned, an hour afterward, in the house in the Rue Brise-Miche—a flickering light, visible through two squares of a glass door, showed that La Mayeux was still watching; for this dark hole, without air, only admitted the daylight by this door, which opened on a narrow and obscure passage under the rafters.

A miserable bed, a table, an old trunk, and a chair so filled this chilly abode that two persons could not sit down in it unless one were seated on the bed.

The magnificent flower which Agricola had given La Mayeux had been carefully placed in a glass of water on a table loaded with linen, and shed its sweet perfume, and expanded its purple chalice in the centre of this squalid closet, with its damp and gray plaster walls, which a miserable candle feebly lighted.

La Mayeux, sitting dressed on her bed, her expression anxious and sorrowful, her eyes overflowing with tears, was leaning with one hand on the head of the bedstead, inclining her head toward the door, listening with intense anxiety, and hoping every instant to hear the step of Agricola.

The young creature's heart beat violently; her face, usually so wan, was now slightly coloured, so deep was her emotion. Sometimes she cast her eyes with affright on a letter which she held in her hand—a letter which had arrived by post this evening, and had been placed on her table by the dyer (who was also porter to the house) while La Mayeux had been present at the interview between Dagobert and his family.

After some time the young girl heard a door close to her own open very gently.

"Here he is, at last!" she exclaimed; and Agricola entered the room.

"I waited until my father was asleep," said the young smith, in a low voice, his countenance betraying curiosity rather than uneasiness; "but what is the matter, my good little Mayeux? How distressed you seem! What makes you weep? What is the danger about which you have to speak to me?"

"Here, read," replied La Mayeux, in a trembling voice, and handing to him hastily an open letter.

Agricola held it to the light and read as follows:

"A person who cannot disclose his name, but is fully aware of the fraternal interest which you take in Agricola Baudoin, warns you that this young and worthy artisan will in all probability be arrested to-morrow."

"Me!" cried Agricola, looking at the girl with an air of extreme astonishment; "what can this mean?"

"Read on!" said the seamstress, hastily, clasping her hands.

Agricola resumed, hardly able to believe his eyes:

"His song of the 'Freed Workmen' has been made a matter of criminal accusation. Several copies of it were found among the papers of a secret society, whose leaders have been put in prison since the detection of the conspiracy in the Rue des Prouvaires."
“Alas!” said the little workwoman, bursting into tears, “now I understand it all. That man who was prying about this evening, as the dyer said, was no doubt watching for your arrival.”

“Oh, nonsense! the accusation is absurd,” said Agricola; “do not vex yourself about it, my good Mayeux. I never bother myself about politics; my verses breathe only love of my fellow-creatures, and if copies of them were found among the papers of a secret society, it is no fault of mine.”

And he threw the letter on the table disdainfully.

“Read on, I pray you read on,” said La Mayeux to him.

“Certainly, if you request it.”

And Agricola continued:

“A warrant to arrest him is issued; his innocence, no doubt, will be made evident sooner or later, but he will do well immediately to get out of the way, that he may avoid an imprisonment which may last for two or three months, and which would be a dreadful blow to his mother, of whom he is the sole support.

“A sincere Friend, who must remain unknown.”

After a moment’s silence the smith shrugged his shoulders, his countenance resumed its cheerful expression, and he said, with a laugh, to the seamstress.

“Courage, my good little Mayeux, the hoaxers have missed their mark; this is an April-fool trick in advance.”

“Agricola, for the love of heaven,” said the seamstress in a beseeching tone, “do not treat this so lightly. Believe in my presentiments—attend to this warning.”

“Again, my poor girl, I tell you it is more than two months since my song of
the ‘Workmen’ was printed, and it is not in the least political; besides, they would not have waited until now if they meant to prosecute me."

"But consider that circumstances have changed. It is but two days since the plot in the Rue des Prouvaires was discovered; and if your verses, unknown until then, have now been seized with persons arrested for this conspiracy, nothing more is requisite to implicate you."

"Implicate me! verses in which I exalt the love of labour and charity! Then Justice must be blind, indeed. We must give her dog and stick both, to enable her to grope along."

"Agricola," said the young girl, in despair at seeing the smith jocose at such a moment, "I beseech you, hear me. No doubt, in your verses you uphold the sacred duty of labour, but you lament in painful lines the unjust lot of the poor artisans who are hopelessly sentenced to the miseries of life; you maintain the holy brotherhood of men, but your good and noble heart is indignant at the selfish and the wicked. You advocate with all your power the enfranchisement of workpeople less fortunate than yourself, who have not such employers as the generous M. Hardy. Well, tell me, Agricola, in these troublous times is more wanting to implicate you, if several copies of your song have been seized in the possession of the individuals arrested?"

At these sensible and earnest words of this worthy creature, who drew her reasoning from her heart, Agricola was moved, and began to contemplate the warning more seriously.

Seeing him thoughtful, La Mayeux continued:

"And then remember Remi, your fellow-workman!"

"Remi?"

"Yes, a letter of his, although of no importance, was found on a person arrested last year on a charge of conspiracy, and he was in prison a month."

"True, Mayeux; but the injustice of the charge was speedily recognised, and he was liberated."

"After having passed a month in prison; and that is what you are prudently advised to avoid. Agricola, think of this—a month in prison, and your mother."

These words of La Mayeux made a deep impression on Agricola, who took up the letter and read it again attentively.

"And the man who was watching all the evening about the house," continued the young girl; "I cannot help associating the two circumstances. Alas! what a blow for your father and your poor mother, who can no longer earn anything. Are not you now their only support? Only think what would become of them if they were deprived of your labour!"

"Yes, that would be a heavy blow," said Agricola, throwing the letter on the table. "What you say about Remi is perfectly just; he was as innocent as I am—an error of justice, no doubt involuntary, but not the less cruel. But then they do not arrest a man without hearing him."

"But they arrest first and hear afterward," said La Mayeux, with bitterness; "then, after a month or two, they restore him to liberty, and if he have a wife and children who have no dependence but his daily toil, what are they to do while their provider is in jail? They hunger, they thirst, and they weep."

At these simple and touching words of La Mayeux, Agricola was deeply moved.

"A month without labour!" he said, with a sad and thoughtful air, "and my mother and father, and the two young girls who now form part of our family until Marshal Simon or his father arrives in Paris. Yes, you are right! in spite of myself, this thought frightens me."

"Agricola!" said La Mayeux, suddenly, "suppose you consult M. Hardy—he is so kind, and his character stands so high, that, if he should offer his word for you, perhaps they would not molest you."

"Unfortunately, M. Hardy is not in Paris; he is travelling with Marshal Simon's father."
Then, after a brief silence, Agricola added, as if desirous to overcome his apprehensions,

"But no, I cannot believe this letter; after all, it is best to await the result. I shall, at least, have a chance of proving my innocence at a first examination; for you know, Mayeux, whether I was in prison or obliged to conceal myself, my labour would be wanting to my family."

"Alas! that is true," said the poor girl; "what can we do? Oh, Heaven! what can we do?"

"Ah, my brave old father," said Agricola, "if this misfortune were to happen to-morrow, what a waking for him who went to sleep so full of happiness!"

And the smith concealed his forehead in his hands.

Unfortunately, the fears of La Mayeux were by no means exaggerated, for it will be remembered that, in the year 1832, before and after the conspiracy of the Rue des Prouvaires, many arrests took place among the working classes, in consequence of a violent reaction against Democratic principles.

Suddenly La Mayeux broke the silence, which had lasted for some minutes; a deep colour suffused her features, on which was an expression of mingled constraint, pain, and hope.

"Agricola, you are saved!" she said.

"How?"

"The young lady, so handsome and so kind, who, when she gave you this flower (and she pointed to it), atoned so delicately for a mistake which gave you pain, she must have a generous heart; go and see her."

At these words, which she seemed to pronounce with painful effort, two large tears rolled down the cheeks of La Mayeux.

For the first time in her life she experienced a feeling of acute jealousy: another woman was so happy as to be able to aid him she idolized—she, a poor, helpless, powerless, wretched creature!

"Do you think so?" said Agricola, with surprise; "what could the young lady do in such a matter?"

"Did she not say, 'Remember my name; and, under any circumstance, address yourself to me.'"

"She did."

"This young lady, in her high condition, must have powerful friends who could protect and defend you; go and see her to-morrow morning; tell her all without any reserve, and ask her assistance."

"But, my dear Mayeux, what do you suppose she can do?"

"Listen. I remember hearing my father say once that he had saved one of his friends from going to prison by giving security for him: it will be easy to convince this young lady of your innocence; she will be your security, and then I should think you would have nothing more to fear."

"Ah, my poor girl, to ask such a service of one whom we do not know! It is hard—"

"Believe me, Agricola," replied La Mayeux, sorrowfully, "I would not advise you to ask anything which could lower you in the eyes of any person, and particularly in the eyes of this lady. You do not ask her for money, but only to become security in order that you may continue your labour, and that your family may not be deprived of its support. Believe me, Agricola, such a request is no more than noble and worthy on your part; the heart of this lady is generous, she will understand you, and the security will be nothing for her, while it will be everything for you. The lives of all your family depend upon it."

"You are right, good Mayeux," said Agricola, with deep sorrow; "and perhaps my best step will be to do as you advise. If the young lady consents to render me this service, and a security will really keep me out of prison, I shall be prepared for whatever turns up. But, no, no," added the smith, rising, "I shall never dare to address this young lady. What right have I to do so? What
THE SLAVE OF DJALMA.
is the small service I have rendered to her in comparison with that which I ask of her!"

"Do you think, then, Agricola, that a generous heart measures the services it can render by those which it has received? Believe me when I speak of what concerns the heart. I am but a poor creature, who cannot be compared with any body—I am nothing—I can only be nothing. Well! I am still sure—yes, Agricola, I am sure that this young lady, so far above me, will feel as I do under these circumstances. Yes, like me, she will comprehend your cruel position, and will do with joy, pleasure, with gratitude, what I should do, if, alas! I could do anything but wish without the power."

In spite of herself, La Mayeux uttered these last words with so deep and touching an expression—there was something so affecting in the comparison which this unfortunate, obscure, despised, and decrepit creature made between herself and Adrienne de Cardoville, the resplendent type of youth, riches, and beauty, that Agricola was moved to tears, and, taking one of La Mayeux's hands, he said, in a voice of deep emotion, "How good you are! how full of noble sentiment, good sense, and real delicacy!"

"Unfortunately, I can only advise you—"

"And your advice shall be followed, my excellent Mayeux; it comes from the most exalted mind I know; and you persuade me to this attempt by making me believe that the heart of Mademoiselle de Cardoville is noble as your own."

At this sincere and simple comparison, La Mayeux forgot nearly all that she had just suffered, so delightful, so consolatory were her feelings. If, indeed, for certain human beings destined to suffering, there are griefs unknown to the world beside, there are also for them humble and gentle joys unknown to others: the least word of affection which elevates them in their own eyes is so grateful, so delightful to poor souls accustomed to disdain, hardships, and, above all, to the deep desolation of their own distrust.

"Well, then, that is settled; you will go to-morrow morning to the young lady—won't you?" inquired La Mayeux, while fresh hope sprang up within her breast. "At daybreak I will go down and watch at the street door to see if anything suspicious appears, so that I may warn you."

"Good and excellent girl!" said Agricola, more and more moved.

"You must try and go before your father awakes; the young lady lives in a lonely quarter, and going there will be almost to conceal yourself."

"I think I hear my father's voice," said Agricola, suddenly.

The room of La Mayeux was so near the attic of the smith, that he and the seamstress, listening, heard Dagobert, who was in the dark, say, "Agricola, are you asleep, my boy? I have had my first nap, and my tongue wants to be wagging."

"Go quickly, Agricola," said La Mayeux; "your absence will make him uneasy; and be sure you do not go out in the morning before I have seen you, to let you know of anything out of the way."

"Agricola! what, ain't you there?" said Dagobert, in a louder tone.

"Here I am, father," said the smith, leaving the closet of La Mayeux, and going into his father's garret. "I went to close the shutters of the loft, which were slamming in the wind; I thought the noise might awaken you."

"Thanks, my brave boy; but it was not the noise that roused me," said Dagobert, gayly; "it was a devil of a hunger for talking with you. Ah, my dear lad, it is a raging hunger that devours an old fool of a father, who has not seen his son for eighteen years."

"Will you have a light, father?"

"No, no, that would be luxury; we can talk in the dark, and then I shall have a new pleasure in seeing you to-morrow morning at daybreak; it will be as though I saw you again for the first time."
The door of Agricola's chamber closed, and La Mayeux heard no more.

The poor girl threw herself, dressed as she was, upon her bed, and did not close her eyes all night, waiting with anguish for daylight, that she might watch for Agricola's safety.

Yet, notwithstanding her anxieties for the morrow, she sometimes fell into melancholy reveries, comparing the conversation she had held in the silence of the night with the man she loved in secret with what might have been that conversation if she were beautifully attractive—if she were loved as she did love, with chaste and deep devotion. But then reflecting that she could never know the heavenly delights of reciprocal love, she found her consolation in the hope of having rendered service to Agricola.

At daybreak, La Mayeux rose gently, and, descending the staircase noiselessly, went to watch that no harm threatened Agricola.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MORNING.

The night, which had been damp and foggy, gave place to a clear and frosty morning; and looking upward through the small skylight which opened from Agricola's garret, and afforded the only means of ventilating the apartment, a little patch of blue sky could be discerned.

The chamber occupied by the young smith was scarcely superior to that of La Mayeux. Over the small deal table, on which he wrote his poetical inspirations, hung a small portrait of Béranger, the people's idol and favourite poet, in whose hearts he will ever live, as the immortal writer whose rare and wonderful genius celebrated their glories and bewailed their misfortunes, while he informed their minds and enlightened their understanding.

Although the day had hardly dawned, Dagobert and his son were already risen; the latter had sufficient self-command to conceal his uneasiness from his parent, for his had been a restless pillow, and the more he reflected the more serious grew his fears.

The recent discovery of the rash enterprise in the Rue des Prouvaires had led to a considerable number of arrests, and the finding several copies of his song of the "Freed Workmen" in the house of one of the principals in the conspiracy might, indeed, temporarily compromise his safety. But, as we before said, these reflections were carefully hidden from his father.

Seated on the edge of their small bed, the soldier, who at the first glimmer of light had shaved and dressed himself with military precision, affectionately held both hands of Agricola on whose fine, manly figure he gazed with delight and pride.

"You will laugh at me, my boy!" he said; "but I wished the night over, that I might have another look at you. What an old fool I am! Do you know I like to see you with those mustaches? What a capital dragoon you would make! Tell me, did you never wish to be a soldier?"

"What would my mother do!"

"Right, quite right; and, besides, I cannot help thinking that soldiering days
are over, and the only use now for such old fellows as I is to be placed in the chimney-corner like an old rusty carbine. Our work is done."

"Yes," answered Agricola, "but if your days have gone by, they were days of heroism and glory; and," he added, proudly, "for me, 'tis glory enough to be your son!"

"About the glory," answered the old man, "I can't say; but if you think it good to be loved, I love you as a miser loves money. And when I think how long it is I have been without you, by thunder, Agricola, I feel like a hungry man who has had nothing to eat for a week. When they get it at last, they go at it again and again—a cut here and a cut there; so you may make up your mind to be nibbled at morning and night, and every day in the week. Saint Denis! I hardly know how to make it out—every day in the week! That almost goes beyond me. I can hardly believe it possible."

These words pierced the heart of Agricola with a painful emotion. He received them as a presage of the separation from his father, with which he was threatened.

"And you are quite happy," continued the old man; "is M. Hardy still a good master to you?"

"He is!" answered the son; "a more just, generous, or upright man does not exist. Ah, did you but know the wonders he has effected in his manufactory! Compared with other establishments it is a perfect heaven upon earth!"

"Really!"

"You shall see; the very countenances of his workpeople exhibit joy and affection. It is a pleasure to work for such a man."

"Why, your M. Hardy must be a sort of magician!"

"Yes, father, a magician powerful enough to make labour attractive. Besides liberal wages, he gives us a share in the profits, so as to create an interest in its success; then he has erected large and commodious buildings, in which, at less cost than anywhere else, the workpeople have airy, cheerful apartments, and where they have the advantages of the associated system; but you will see—you will see!"

"Paris may well be called the city of wonders! Well, thank my stars, I have once more returned to it, never to leave you or your good mother again!"

"I hope, father," answered Agricola, suppressing a sigh, "that we shall not be called upon to part! My mother and myself will try to make you forget all you have suffered."

"Suffered! Not I—not a bit. Look me in the face, and tell me if you can see any token of suffering. I tell you that, from the instant when I put my foot in this house, I felt myself a young man again. Ah! you shall see me walk by-and-by. I will wager a trifle, now, I shall tire you out. Mind you dress yourself in your best, and when we go out together—eh, my boy! won't the people stare at us? I'll be bound when they look at your black mustache, and then see my gray one, they will say, 'There go father and son!' Now I think of it, let us plan out our day. First, you will write to the father of General Simon, telling him of the arrival of his grandchildren in Paris, and that he must hasten hither, his presence being required upon business very important for them. While you are writing, I will step down stairs and say good-morning to my old woman and the children. We will have a bit of something to eat, and then your mother will go to mass, for I see she has all her old fancy for that sort of thing. Well, if it amuses her, so much the better. And while she is at church, we will take a walk together."

"Father," said Agricola, with some embarrassment, "this morning, unfortunately, I cannot go out with you!"

"Not go out with me! why, it is Sunday!"

"Yes, father," said Agricola, hesitating; "but I promised to be all the morning at the manufactory, to complete a piece of work which is wanted in a hurry, and were I to fail, it would be a loss to M. Hardy. I shall soon be at liberty again."
"Ah! that's another thing," said the veteran, with a sigh of regret. "I expected to have my first taste of Paris with you this morning; but it must come another time, for work must be done, since it is that which finds bread for the mother. It's vexing, though, confoundedly vexing, and I—but no, I am unjust. See, now, how one gets accustomed to happiness. Here am I, grumbling like an old Turk, because my walk is put off an hour or two—I, who for eighteen years have been hoping to see you without much expecting it. I am an old blockhead! so hurrah for pleasure and my Agricola!" and, by way of consolation, Dagobert hugged his son in his arms.

This caress went to the heart of the young smith, for he dreaded that the fears of La Mayeux might be realized at any moment.

"I am better now," said Dagobert, cheerily; "come, let us talk a little about business. Do you know where I shall be able to find the addresses of all the notaries in Paris?"

"No, I do not; but nothing is more easy."

"I want to know, because, by order of the mother of the two children I brought with me, I sent by post from Russia some important papers, directed to a notary in Paris. As I was to call upon him immediately after my arrival, I wrote his name and address in my pocket-book, but it was stolen from me on the road; and having forgotten the confounded name, I fancy if I see it in any printed list, I shall know it again."

Two taps at the garret-door made Agricola start; involuntarily he thought of the warrant for his apprehension.

Dagobert, who had turned his head toward the door, did not observe his son's emotion, but exclaimed, in a loud voice,

"Come in!"

The door opened, and Gabriel, in black cassock and round hat, appeared. To recognise his adopted brother, to throw himself into his arms, was, for Agricola, the work of an instant.

"My dear brother!"
"Agricola!"
"Gabriel!"
"After so long an absence!"
"You have come at last!"

Were the only words exchanged between the missionary and the young smith, and they held each other in a close embrace.

Dagobert, affected, delighted with this display of brotherly affection, felt his eyes brimming. There was, indeed, something indescribably touching in the tenderness of these two young men, whose hearts so closely resembled each other, while their outward forms were so different: the fine, manly countenance of Agricola offering a powerful contrast to the delicacy and sweetness of Gabriel's physiognomy.

"I learned of your approaching arrival by my father," said the smith, at length, to his adopted brother, "and expected to see you from one minute to the other; yet my happiness is increased a hundred fold!"

"And my dear mother!" said Gabriel, affectionately pressing the hands of Dagobert, "did you find her quite well?"

"Yes, my dear boy! and she will be a hun-
dread times better, now we are all once more united around her. There is nothing like joy for improving the health."

Then, addressing Agricola, who, forgetting his fears of arrest, was regarding the missionary with ineffable affection, he said,

"Who would think now, that, with this girl's face, Gabriel has the courage of a lion? for I told you with what intrepidity he saved the lives of General Simon's daughters, and then tried to save mine."

"But, Gabriel!" cried the young smith, who for several moments had been attentively surveying the missionary, "what is the matter with your forehead?"

Gabriel, who had thrown aside his hat, was so placed that the light of the small window fell directly on his pale and gentle countenance, so as to display the scar which crossed his forehead from one temple to the other.

In the midst of the various emotions and rapid events which had followed the shipwreck, Dagobert had not, during his short conference with Gabriel in the Chateau de Cardoville, observed the cicatrice which encircled the brows of the young missionary; but now, sharing the surprise of Agricola, he exclaimed,

"Sure enough! what is that mark on your forehead? How came that scar there?"

"And look, father, he has scars on his hands also!" exclaimed the smith, seizing one of the hands which the missionary had extended toward him, as though to calm his uneasiness.

"Gabriel, my excellent boy! what does all this signify? who has given you these wounds?" said Dagobert. Then, taking the missionary's hand, he, in his turn, examined it with the air of a connoisseur, saying,

"When I was in Spain, one of my comrades was taken down from a cross by the roadside, where the monks had put him up to perish of hunger and thirst. Ever after he bore on his hands marks similar to these."

"My father is right!" said Agricola, deeply affected. "Yes, it is easy now to see that your hands have been pierced. My poor brother!"

"Do not think of them," said Gabriel, modestly blushing. "I was sent upon a mission to the savages in the Rocky Mountains, who crucified me; they then commenced scalping me, but Providence saved me from their hands."

"Poor boy!" exclaimed Dagobert; "were you unarmed, or was your escort insufficient to protect you?"

"We are not allowed to carry arms," said Gabriel, with a gentle smile, "and we never have any escort."

"Well, then, your comrades—the party who were sent along with you—did they make no effort to defend you?" cried Agricola, impetuously.

"I was alone, brother."

"Alone?"

"Yes, with merely a guide."

"What?" cried Dagobert, unable to comprehend or believe what he heard; "do you really mean to say that, alone and unarmed, you ventured into the midst of that land of savages?"

"It was sublime!" murmured Agricola.

"True religion," replied Gabriel, with simple earnestness, "cannot be imposed by force: persuasion alone can disseminate heavenly truth and charity among those poor savages."

"But when persuasion fails—" said Agricola.

"Then, my brother, it is our duty to die, if need be, for our faith, pitying those who reject it; for ours is a religion of love and peace."

A momentary silence prevailed after this simple and touching reply. Dagobert was too courageous himself not to comprehend this calm, yet devoted heroism, and, with Agricola, he gazed on the missionary in admiration, mingled with respect.

Gabriel, without affecting a false modesty, seemed unfeignedly unconscious of the impression he had made; and, addressing himself to the soldier, he said,
"What is the matter with you, my father?"

"The matter!" cried the old man; "why, it is just this, that after fighting for thirty years, and fancying myself as brave as any, I have found my master, and that master is yourself!"

"But what have I done, then?"

"Done!" exclaimed Dagobert, enthusiastically seizing the hands of Gabriel, "those scars are more glorious than ours, who are fighters by profession."

"My father is right," added Agricola, with animation: "ah! such are the priests I love to see, as I love courage, charity, and resignation."

"Nay," said Gabriel, in confusion, "let me beseech you not to praise me thus."

"Praise you!" returned Dagobert; "why, just look here: when I was sent to face the enemy, did I go alone? was not my captain there, to see my doings? were not my comrades there? If courage failed me, had I not pride to spur me on? without mentioning the inspiring battle-cry—the smell of the powder—the sound of the trumpets—the roar of the cannon—with my horse neighing and prancing under me, as though the devil stung him. And, did I not know the emperor himself was there? who, in return for having my skin well riddled with bullets, would give me a bit of riband or a strip of gold lace, to make a plaster! With all this, I got the credit of being a brave sort of fellow. But you are a thousand times braver than I; you, who go alone, unarmed, to encounter enemies a hundred times more ferocious than any we ever meet with bombshells and grape shot."

"Excellent father!" said the young smith, "how worthy of you to do him this justice!"

"Ah, dear Agricola!" cried Gabriel, "his goodness makes him exaggerate what is very natural."

"Natural!" responded the old soldier: "yes, for gallant fellows such as you; but, let me tell you, the breed is a rare one."

"Rare, indeed!" added Agricola; "for courage such as this is the most admirable of all. What! To meet almost certain death, you departed alone, with naught in your hand but a crucifix, to preach charity and brotherly love to savages; they seize you, torture you; without one angry or resentful feeling, you patiently await your end with a smile and blessing for your murderers on your lips! and all this in the heart of their pathless woods—alone, unknown, unseen—with no other hope, should you escape from the hands of your tormenters, than to hide your scars beneath the humble robe of a priest. My father is right. And will you pretend to say that you are not as brave as he?"

"And besides," resumed Dagobert, "the poor boy is all the while working for 'Jack Nobody,' as one may say; for, as you observe, my son, his courage and his wounds will never change his black gown into a bishop's robe."

"Nay," said Gabriel, with a sweet smile, "I am not so disinterested as I appear: should I prove worthy of it, a mighty recompense awaits me on high."

"Oh, as to that, my boy, I will not dispute with you; but what I will say is, that my old cross would be as well placed on your cossack as on my uniform."

"But such recompenses are never bestowed on humble priests like Gabriel," said the smith; "and if you only knew, my dear father, what brave and virtuous spirits may be found among the portion of the priesthood called insultingly the 'lower clergy,' what hidden merit and devoted zeal among the obscure and worthy curés of the villages of France, treated so harshly by their bishops, who impose on them a pitiless yoke. These poor priests are workmen like ourselves, whose emancipation all generous hearts should unite in demanding. Sons of the people as we are, they require the same redress, the same justice. Am I not right, Gabriel? You will not contradict me, my dear brother; you, whose highest ambition, as you told me, was to be appointed curé to a little village flock, because you know how much good a man so placed might do."

"My desire is still the same," replied Gabriel, sorrowfully; "but, unhappily—" Then, as though seeking to escape from painful thoughts, and to
change the conversation, he said to Dagobert, "Do yourself more justice than to depreciate your own courage by exalting that of another. Your courage is great, very great; for, after the conflict is over, to behold the carnage must be terrible for a generous heart. At least, if we are slain, we do not slay."

As the missionary uttered these words, the soldier gazed at him with surprise.

"That is singular!" he exclaimed.

"What is singular, my father?"

"Gabriel's words reminded me of what I used to feel after an action as I got older."

Then, after a short silence, Dagobert added, in a grave and sorrowful tone, by no means habitual to him,

"Yes, what Gabriel has just remarked reminds me of what I thought during active service, as age crept on. Ah, my children! many a time, when I have been on duty at the outposts the night after a hard day's fight—alone, all still, and the moon shining full on the field, of which we were left masters, but which was now strewed with the corpses of five or six thousand men, some of them old friends and comrades—then the horrid scene and the terrible stillness around sobered me from the love of fighting (for it is a kind of drunkenness), and I would say to myself, 'Here are a good many men killed; and what for? what for?' Which did not hinder me, though, when the charge was sounded next day, from laying on with my sabre as hard as I could. But still, when my arm was tired, and after the charge I wiped my bloody blade on my horse's mane, still I said to myself, 'I have killed, and killed, and killed! What for?'"

The missionary and the smith regarded each other with astonishment as they heard the old man give utterance to this singular retrospect of his past life.

"Alas!" said Gabriel, "all generous hearts feel thus at those solemn hours when the rage of glory dies away, and man is left to the good instincts which God has put into his soul."

"Which proves, my dear boy, that your nature is superior to mine; for these noble instincts, as you call them, have never abandoned you. But how did you escape from the claws of the enraged barbarians, after they had crucified you?"

At this inquiry from Dagobert, Gabriel started; and so visible an embarrassment came over him, that the soldier continued,

"Nay, my boy, if my question be one you either cannot or ought not to answer, forget that it was asked."

"I have nothing to conceal from you or my brother," replied the missionary, in an agitated tone; "I only hesitated from the fear of being unable to make that intelligible to you which, in fact, I cannot understand myself."

"What do you mean?" inquired Agricola, with surprise.

"Doubtless," answered Gabriel, colouring, "it must have been some delusion of my senses. At the awful moment when I waited death with resignation, my mind, exhausted and weakened, must have been the dupe of appearances which, though inexplicable to this moment, would perhaps have been made clear to me at some other time. I should certainly have discovered who was that mysterious woman."

Dagobert, as he listened to the missionary, was completely amazed; for he also had vainly sought to account for the unexpected succour which had enabled him and the orphans to escape from the prison at Leipsic.

"Of what woman do you speak?" asked the smith of the missionary.

"Of her who saved me."

"Was it a woman who saved you from the hands of the savages?" inquired Dagobert.

"Yes," replied Gabriel, absorbed in his recollections; "a woman, young and handsome."

"And who was she?" asked Agricola.

"I do not know. When I asked her, she answered, 'I am the sister of the afflicted!'"
"Whence did she come? where did she go?" said Dagobert, singularly interested.

"'I go where there is suffering!' was her reply," answered the missionary; "and she went on her way toward the north of America, those desolate regions where are eternal snow and endless night."

"Like Siberia," said Dagobert, pensively.

"But," resumed Agricola, addressing Gabriel, who seemed to become more and more thoughtful, "in what way did this woman come to your succour?"

The missionary was about to reply, when a blow, cautiously struck on the door, renewed the alarm which Agricola had forgotten since the arrival of his adopted brother.

"Agricola," said a gentle voice outside the door, "I wish to speak to you this moment."

The smith recognised the voice of La Mayeux, and opened the door. The young girl, instead of entering, retired into the dark passage, and said, in an anxious voice,

"Oh, Agricola! it has been broad daylight for the last hour, and you are still here; what imprudence! I have been watching below in the street, and up to this time have seen nothing to excite alarm; but they may come and arrest you at any moment, and I entreat you make haste and go to Mademoiselle de Cardoville; you have not a moment to lose."

"If Gabriel had not come I should have gone; but how could I resist the happiness of staying a few minutes with him?"

"Gabriel here?" said La Mayeux, with agreeable surprise, for we have said that she had been brought up with him and Agricola.

"Yes," replied Agricola; "for the last half hour he has been here with me and my father."

"How delighted I shall be to see him again!" said La Mayeux. "He must have come in while I went to your mother for a moment, to ask if I could be of any use to her in attending upon the young ladies; but they were so tired that they are still asleep. Madame Françoise begged me to give you this letter for your father, which she has just received."

"Thanks, good Mayeux."

"Now you have seen Gabriel, do not delay any longer: think what your father would suffer if you were arrested in his presence."

"You are right, and I must go. I had forgotten my alarms with him and Gabriel."

"Go quickly, and perhaps in a couple of hours, if Mademoiselle de Cardoville does you this great service, you may be able to return quite safely for yourself and your friends.""True; in a minute or two I will go."

"I will return and watch at the door; if I see anything I will come up stairs quickly to tell you. But pray do not delay."

"Make yourself easy."

La Mayeux descended the staircase rapidly to go and watch at the street door, and Agricola went back to the attic.

"Father," he said to Dagobert, "here is a letter which my mother has just received and begs you to read."

"Well, read it for me, my boy." Agricola read as follows:

"Madame—I learn that your husband is intrusted by M. General Simon with an affair of great importance. Will you be so kind, as soon as your husband arrives in Paris, as to beg him to come to my office at Chartres without the least delay? I am desired to hand to himself, and no one else, some papers indispensable to the interest of M. General Simon. Durand, Notary at Chartres."

Dagobert looked at his son with astonishment, and said to him, "Who can have told this gentleman that I was expected in Paris?"
"Perhaps the notary whose address you have lost, and to whom you sent the papers, father," said Agricola.

"But his name was not Durand, and I well remember he was a notary at Paris, and not at Chartres. But then," added the soldier, after a moment's reflection, "if he has papers of great importance which he must only hand to me—"

"Why you cannot, I think, do otherwise than go as soon as possible," said Agricola, almost rejoiced at a circumstance which would take his father away two days, during which his (Agricola's) fate would be decided one way or the other.

"Your advice is good," said Dagobert.

"Does it interfere with your plans?" inquired Gabriel.

"A little, my dear boy, for I relied on passing the day with you; but duty first, pleasure afterward. I have come safely from Siberia to Paris, so I need not have much fear in going from Paris to Chartres when it concerns a matter so important. In twice twenty-four hours I shall be back again. However, it is very singular; devil fetch me if I thought of leaving you to-day to go to Chartres! Fortunately, I leave Rose and Blanche with my good wife, and their angel Gabriel, as they call him, will come and keep them company."

"Unfortunately, that will be impossible," said the missionary, in a sad tone; "this returning visit to my good mother and Agricola is also a visit of farewell."

"What! of farewell!" said Dagobert and Agricola, at the same time.

"Alas, yes!"

"Going already on another mission?" said Dagobert. "That is impossible!"

"I cannot answer you on that point," said Gabriel, stifling a sigh; "but for some time to come I cannot, ought not to visit this house."

"My dear fellow," replied the old soldier, with emotion, "there is in your conduct something that bespeaks constraint, oppression. I know men, and he whom you call your superior, and whom I saw for a few moments after the shipwreck at the Chateau de Cardoville, has a bad countenance; and, faith! I am sorry to see you enlisted under the banner of such a captain."

"At the Chateau de Cardoville!" said the smith, struck with the resemblance of the name; "was it at the Chateau de Cardoville that you were received after your shipwreck?"

"Yes, my boy; does that surprise you?"

"Not at all, father! And do the owners of the chateau reside there?"

"No; for the steward, whom I asked, that I might thank them for the kind hospitality which we had received, told me that the person to whom it belonged lived in Paris."

"What a singular coincidence," said Agricola to himself, "if this young lady should be the owner of the chateau which bears her name!"

This reflection reminding him of his promise to La Mayeux, he said to Dagobert,

"Father, excuse me, but it is getting late, and I must be at the workshop at eight o'clock."

"Well, then, my son, go. Our party is delayed until my return from Chartres. Embrace me once more, and then be off."

From the moment when Dagobert had spoken to Gabriel of "constraint and oppression," he had remained lost in thought; and when Agricola came to take his hand and say adieu, the missionary said to him, in a grave, solemn tone, and with an air of resolution, which surprised the smith and the soldier,

"My good brother, one other word: I came also to say that some days hence I shall have need of you; and you, also, my father, if I may call you so," added Gabriel, in an affectionate voice, turning to Dagobert.

"What do you mean? what is it, then?" exclaimed the smith.

"Yes," replied Gabriel. "I shall have need of the counsel and the aid of two
men of honour, two men of resolution; I may rely on you two, may I not? At any hour, at any day, at any time, on a word from me, you will come?"

Dagobert and his son looked at Gabriel in silence, so greatly had his manner surprised them. Agricola felt his heart throb; if he were a prisoner at the moment when his brother required him, what could he do?

"At any and every hour of the day or night, my brave boy, you may rely on us," said Dagobert, as much surprised as interested. "You have a father and a brother—make use of them!"

"Thanks, thanks," said Gabriel; "you make me very happy."

"Do you know one thing?" added the soldier: "if it were not for the robe you wear, I should think there was a duel in the wind, by the way you ask us."

"A duel!" said the missionary, starting. "Yes! there may be, perhaps, a strange, a terrible duel, at which I shall require two such seconds as you—a father and a brother."

A few moments afterward, Agricola, who had become very uneasy, went hastily to the abode of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, whither we will also conduct the reader.
The Hôtel de Saint-Dizier was one of the most extensive and elegant mansions in the Rue de Babylone, at Paris.

Nothing could be more formal, more striking, and more dull than the aspect of this ancient abode. Immense window-frames, with small panes of glass, and painted a grayish white, made the large blocks of hewn stone of which it was built, blackened as they were by time, appear more gloomy still.

This hotel was similar to all those built in the same quarter about the middle of the last century. It was a large, full-fronted building, with a triangular pediment and a sloping roof, raised from a first floor, and a ground floor, to which you ascended by a flight of steps. One of the façades fronted a large courtyard, bounded on each side by arcades communicating with extensive outbuildings; another façade looked upon the garden, which was actually a park of twelve or fifteen acres, and on this side two semicircular wings, one on each side of the main centre, formed two galleries.

As in nearly all the large houses in this quarter, at the extremity of the garden was what was called the little hotel, or small house.

It was a pavilion à la Pompadour, circular, in the charming bad taste of the period, presenting in every part, where the stone could be wrought, an immense profusion of leaves, love-knots, wreaths of flowers, flying Cupids, &c., &c. This pavilion, in which Adrienne de Cardoville lived, consisted of a ground floor, to which access was given by a peristyle, elevated by several steps; a small vestibule leading to a circular drawing-room, lighted from above. Four other apartments adjoined this; and several rooms above, which were concealed in the higher story, were reached by a private staircase.

These outbuildings to large mansions are in our days unoccupied, or converted into green-houses; but, by a rare exception, the pavilion of the Hôtel de Saint-Dizier had been restored; its white stone shone like Parian marble, and its lively, fresh appearance contrasted strangely with the sombre building which was seen from the extremity of an extensive lawn, planted in various patches with large clumps of trees.

The following scene passed here the morning after that on which Dagobert had arrived at the Rue Brise-Miche with General Simon's daughters.

The clock of the neighbouring church struck eight, and a bright sun of winter
rose brilliantly in the pure blue sky behind the large and full-leaved trees, which formed a dome of verdure above the little pavilion of Louis XV.

The door of the vestibule opened, and the sun's rays fell on a charming creature, or, rather, two charming creatures, for one of them, although occupying a lower step in the ladder of creation, was not the less remarkable for her extreme beauty.

In other words, a young girl, and an exquisite little dog of King Charles's breed, appeared under the peristyle of the little hotel.

The girl's name was Georgette, that of the little dog, Lutine. Georgette was eighteen years of age, and never did Florine or Marton, never did a soubrette of Marivaux present a more arch countenance, an eye more sparkling, a smile more bewitching, teeth more white, cheeks more rosy, a form more graceful, foot better formed, or figure more attractive.

Although it was yet early, Georgette was dressed with care and nicety. A small cap of Valenciennes lace, with side-pieces coming over the ears, something after the fashion of the peasant girls, trimmed with pink ribands, and placed coquetishly at the back of her head, displayed beautiful bandeaux of light chestnut hair, which encircled her fresh and pretty face. A gown of gray levantine, with a small lawn handkerchief fastened round her waist by a large bow of pink satin, set off to advantage her round but slender form, while an apron of snow-white holland, trimmed round the bottom with three large hems, between which was open work, added another attraction to her graceful shape. Her sleeves, short and broad, were edged with a quilling of lace, displaying to advantage her plump, firm, and white arms, which her long gloves, reaching to her elbows, defended from the severity of the weather. When Georgette lifted up her gown, to descend the steps more quickly, she displayed to the regardless eyes of Lutine the lower part of a well-formed leg in a white silk stocking, and a beautiful little foot in a slipper of black Denmark satin.

When a blonde, like Georgette, has also a piquant expression; when her blue eyes sparkle with gayety and playfulness; when a joyous liveliness brightens her transparent skin, she has even more freshness, more attraction than a brunette.

This sprightly and pleasant-mannered soubrette, who had on the previous evening introduced Agricola into the pavilion, was first femme de chambre of Mademoiselle Adrienne de Cardoville, niece of Madame the Princess de Saint-Dizier.

Lutine, so luckily found by the smith, barked joyfully, and bounded, ran, and sported on the turf. She was little larger than the fist; her glossy skin, of bright black, shone like polished ebony under the large red satin riband which was round her neck; her paws, with long silky fringe, were of a deep red, as was
her muzzle, which was singularly flat; her large eyes sparkled with intelligence, while her curled ears were so long that they touched the ground.

Georgette seemed as lively and full of glee as Lutine, whose sport she encouraged by running after her, and then from her, on the greensward.

At the sight of a second person, who advanced sedately toward them, Lutine and Georgette stopped suddenly in the midst of their mirth. The little King Charles, which was in advance a few steps, as bold as a lion, and faithful to her name, stood firmly on her strong little paws and boldly awaited the enemy, showing two rows of small, sharp teeth, white as ivory.

The enemy was a woman of mature age, accompanied by a fat dog of the pug breed, of a yellowish-brown colour, his tail curling like a corkscrew, and with a large paunch, bright skin, and his neck rather on one side; he walked with his legs very wide apart, and an air of great seriousness and importance. His black muzzle, his morose and suspicious look, and two tusks sticking out at one side of his mouth, which kept his lips from closing, gave to the animal an expression of singular repugnance and crabbedness. This disagreeable brute, the perfect type of what might be called a "devotee's dog," answered to the name of Monsieur.

Monsieur's mistress was a female about fifty years of age, of middling height, and stout, attired in a dress as demure and sombre as that of Georgette was becoming and gay. It consisted of a brown gown, of a mantelet of black silk, and a bonnet of the same colour; her features must have been agreeable in youth, and her full-coloured cheeks, marked eyebrows, and coal-black eyes full of fire, were little in unison with the formal and austere look which she endeavoured to assume.

This demure matron with the slow and measured step was Madame Augustine Grivois, first femme of Madame the Princess de Saint-Dizier.
Not only did the ages, countenances, and dress of these two females offer so complete a contrast, but the difference extended equally to the animals that accompanied them. There was as much variety between Lutine and Monsieur as between Georgette and Madame Grivois. When the latter saw the little King Charles, she could not restrain a movement of surprise and vexation, which was not lost on Georgette.

Lutine, who had not retreated an inch since Monsieur had appeared, looked at him courageously with an air of defiance, and then advanced toward him with an air so decidedly hostile, that the pug, though three times as big as the small King Charles's breed, uttered a cry of distress, and took hasty refuge behind Madame Grivois, who said to Georgette, in a sharp voice,

"It seems to me, mamselle, that you need not set your dog to fight with mine."

"No doubt it was to shelter your respectable and ugly animal from these encounters that you yesterday endeavoured to lose Lutine, by driving her into the street through the little garden gate. Fortunately, however, a worthy and honest young man found Lutine in the Rue de Babylone, and brought her back to my mistress. But to what, madame, do I owe the pleasure of seeing you out so early this morning?"

"I am desired by the princess," replied Madame Grivois, unable to conceal a smile of triumphant satisfaction, "to see Mademoiselle Adrienne this very moment, as I have a most important matter to communicate to her."

At these words Georgette turned exceedingly red, and could not repress a slight appearance of uneasiness, which, however, fortunately escaped Madame Grivois, who was watching over Monsieur's safety, as Lutine was drawing nigher, with a very threatening aspect. Georgette, having subdued this momentary emotion, replied, boldly,

"Mademoiselle went to bed very late, and desired that I would not disturb her before noon."

"That may be; but, as I am obeying the orders of the princess, her aunt, I must trouble you, if you please, mamselle, to waken your lady this instant."

"My lady takes orders from no one; she is here in her own house, and I shall not waken her until twelve o'clock."

"Then I will go myself."

"Hebe will not open the door to you. I have the key of the salon, and it is only through the salon that you can obtain access to mademoiselle."

"What ! will you dare to prevent me from executing the orders of the princess?"

"Yes, I dare commit the heinous crime of not allowing my lady to be disturbed."

"Yes, truly, this is what comes of the blind goodness of the princess to her niece!" said the matron, with an air of pious regret. "Mademoiselle Adrienne no longer respects her aunt's commands, but surrounds herself with young wantons, who, from the moment they rise, are dressed up like court ladies."

"Ah, madame! how can you find fault with costume, you who formerly were so remarkable for your style—the most coquettish of all the princess's ladies! And that system goes on from generation to generation until the present day."

"What do you mean by 'from generation to generation'? One would think I had lived a century. You become impertinent, mamselle."

"I was alluding to the generation of femmes de chambre; for, except yourself, no one stays more than two or three years with the princess; she has too many odd ways for the poor girls—"

"I request, mamselle, that you will not speak thus of the princess. Her name ought only to be mentioned on bended knees."

"Yet, if one would utter a little bit of scandal—"

"Dare you?"

"Not later than last evening, at half past eleven o'clock—"
THE BARON TRIPEAUD.
"Last evening!"

"A hackney-coach stopped a few yards from the hotel, a mysterious personage, wrapped in a cloak, alighted, and tapped very carefully, not at the door, but on the glass of the porter's window; at one o'clock this morning the hackney-coach was still there, in the street, awaiting the mysterious personage in the cloak, who, during this time, was no doubt pronouncing the name of the princess, as you say, on his bended knees."

Whether Madame Grivois was really not aware of the visit made to Madame Saint-Dizier by Rodin (for it was he) on the previous night, after he had ascertained the arrival of General Simon's daughters in Paris, or ignorance was her cue, she replied, with a disdainful shrug of the shoulders,

"I really do not know what you mean, mamselle, and I did not come here to listen to your impertinences. But again I ask, will you or will you not conduct me to Mademoiselle Adrienne?"

"I repeat that my lady is asleep, and has given me orders not to disturb her before noon."

This conversation had taken place at some distance from the pavilion, the persistency of which was visible at the end of a long avenue ending in a quincunx.

Suddenly Madame Grivois exclaimed, stretching out her hand in that direction,

"Ah! is it possible? What have I seen?"

"Well, what did you see?" said Georgette, turning toward her.

"What have I seen?" repeated Madame Grivois, in amazement.

"Yes, what?"

"Mademoiselle Adrienne!"

"And where?"

"Why, going rapidly up the steps. I know her directly by her figure, her bonnet, her cloak—Come in at eight o'clock in the morning!" exclaimed Madame Grivois. "I can scarcely believe my eyes!"

"Mademoiselle! You saw mademoiselle?" and Georgette began to laugh violently. "Ah, I understand; you want to match my true story about the hackney-coach of last night. Well, that's clever of you."

"I repeat that at this very moment I saw her."

"Madame Grivois, you have come out without your spectacles."

"Thank God! my eyes are very good. The little door which opens from the street leads into the quincunx near the pavilion, and no doubt it is by that mademoiselle has entered. Oh, how it will shock the princess when I tell her! But her presentiments did not deceive her. Only see to what her weakness for the caprices of her niece has led! It is monstrous! really monstrous! and although I saw it with my eyes, I can hardly believe it."

"If that is the case, madame, I will now conduct you to my lady, that you may be assured that you have been deceived by your vision."

"Oh, you are very cunning, my dear, but not too deep for me. You offer to let me in now—of course you will, because now you know that I shall find Mademoiselle Adrienne within."

"But, madame, I assure you—"

"All I can say, mamselle, is, that neither you, nor Florine, nor Hebe shall remain here twenty-four hours longer; the princess will put a stop to such scandalous behaviour, and I will go this moment and tell her all about it. Go out at night! return at eight o'clock in the morning! I am really quite upset; and if I had not seen it with my own eyes I could not have believed it. After all, this might have been expected to happen, and no one need be astonished. I am sure that everybody to whom I shall tell this horrid story will say, 'Oh, I'm not surprised at all! Oh, what pain this will give the worthy princess! what a blow it will be for her!'" And Madame Grivois returned with great haste to the hotel, followed by Monsieur, who appeared as indignant as his mistress.
Georgette ran lightly and nimbly to the pavilion, to warn Mademoiselle Adrienne de Cardoville that Madame Grivois had seen her, or thought she had seen her, enter secretly by the little garden gate.

CHAPTER II.

ADRIENNE'S TOILET.

EARLY as it was, about an hour had passed since Madame Grivois saw, or thought she saw, Mademoiselle Adrienne de Cardoville enter the pavilion of the Chateau de Saint-Dizier.

To explain, not apologize for, the eccentricity of the following descriptions, we must throw light on some peculiar features in the original and marked character of Mademoiselle de Cardoville.

This originality consisted in an extreme independence of spirit, joined to an innate aversion from everything that was ugly or repulsive, and a surpassing desire to surround herself with all that was beautiful and attractive.

The painter most devoted to colour, the sculptor most studious of form, does not feel more deeply than Adrienne the enthusiasm which the sight of perfect beauty always inspires in fine minds.

And it was not only the pleasures of sight that this young lady delighted to indulge in, the harmonious modulations of song, the melody of instruments, the cadence of poetry, gave her extreme pleasure; while a harsh voice, a discordant noise, made on her the same painful and almost grievous impression which she involuntarily experienced at the sight of a hideous spectacle. Loving flowers and perfumes even to passion, she enjoyed sweet odours as she did music, as she did beautiful forms. Must we also confess an enormity? Adrienne was dainty, and keenly appreciated the pulpy freshness of fine fruit, the delicate flavour of a pheasant cooked to a turn, and the delicious bouquet of generous wine.

But Adrienne enjoyed all this with an exquisite reserve; it was part of her faith to cultivate, to the utmost refinement, the senses with which the Creator had endowed her; and she would have considered it the height of ingratitude to blunt these tastes by excess, or to debase them by unworthy application of their enjoyment, from which abuse she was also preserved by the strict and perfect delicacy of her taste.

Handsome and Ugly with her were but other words for Good and Ill.

Her worship of grace, elegance, and physical beauty had led her to the worship of moral beauty; for if the expression of a base and low passion makes the loveliest countenance ugly, so the plainest faces are ennobled by the expression of generous feelings. In a word, Adrienne was the most complete personification, the beau idéal of Sensuality; not that vulgar sensuality so uninformed, unintelligent, ill-directed, and always false, corrupted by habit or the necessity of indulging in gross delights, but that exquisite sensuality which is to the senses what poignancy is to the mind.

The independence of this young lady's character was excessive: certain humiliations imposed on her sex by its social position had revolted her past description, and she had boldly resolved to cast off the oppression of their yoke.

Yet there was nothing masculine in Adrienne; she was a woman in her graces, her whims, her charms, her dazzling and womanly beauty; a woman in her
timidity as by her audacity; a woman in her hate of the brutal despotism of
men, as well as by her willingness to link herself blindly, utterly to one who
should deserve such devotion; a woman, too, in her sparkling and somewhat
paradoxical spirit; a superior woman, in fact, because of her contempt, so just
and full of mockery, for certain men greatly elevated in society or grossly flat-
ttered, whom she had met in the salons of her aunt, the Princess de Saint-Dizier,
when she lived with her.

These necessary explanations given, we will introduce the reader to Adrienne
de Cardoville, who had just left her bath.

We lack the brilliant colours of the Venetian school to display this charming
scene, which seemed to belong rather to the sixteenth century, in some palace
of Bologna or Florence, than to Paris, in the heart of the Faubourg Saint-Ger-
main, and in the month of February, 1832.

The dressing-closet of Adrienne was a sort of small temple, which might have
been erected to the worship of Beauty, through gratitude for having bestowed
so many charms on the softer sex, not that they should neglect them, not that
they should cover them with ashes, not that they should be debased by contact
with coarse and sordid sackcloth, but to surround them with all the attractions
of grace and all the splendour of decoration, that the handiwork of the Divinity
may be admired by all.

The light was admitted into this semicircular apartment by one of those
double windows, making the apartment air-tight, for whose origin we are in-
debted to Germany. The walls of the pavilion, formed of thick blocks of stone,
made the embrasure of the window very deep, and it was closed from without
by a frame made of a single pane of glass, and within by a large square of
ground glass; in the space of about three feet between these two windows was
a box filled with peat earth, in which were planted climbing plants, and these,
wandering about the ground glass, formed a thick garland of leaves and blossoms.

Hangings of Granada damask, shaded with arabesques of a lighter hue, cover-
ed the walls, while a thick carpet, of the same tint, was spread over the floor.
This sombre ground, almost a neutral tint, set off the other hues of the apartment
admirably.

Under the window, which looked to the south, was Adrienne's toilet-table, a
masterpiece of elaborate goldsmith's work.

On a large slab of lapis lazuli were seen numerous vases of brilliant red, the
tops of which were splendidly enamelled; essence bottles of rock crystal, and
other toilet requisites, in mother-of-pearl, tortoise-shell, and ivory, encrusted with
ornaments in gold of the most exquisite workmanship; two large silver figures,
modelled with classic purity, supported a large oval swing-glass, which, instead
of being enclosed in a curiously carved and twisted frame, was bordered with a
wreath of natural flowers, daily renewed and arranged with all the care and
taste of a bouquet for a ball.

Two enormous blue china vases, beautifully covered with a rich purple and
gold design, and at least three feet in diameter, were placed at each side of the
toilet-table, filled with camellias, hibiscus, and gardenias, in full bloom, forming
a mass of the most delicious odours as well as hues.

At the end of the chamber opposite the window, and also surrounded by an-
other clustering assemblage of the rarest flowers, was a small marble model of
the enchanting group of Daphnis and Chloe, the most chaste personation of
graceful modesty and youthful beauty; while two golden lamps, burning and
diffusing the richest odours, were placed on the slab of malachite which support-
ed this charming group.

A large coffer of frosted silver, standing upon claws of gilt bronze, with raised
ornaments of gold and vermeil, and glittering with precious stones of every col-
our, served to contain the different articles required for the toilet; two Psyche
glasses, furnished with girandoles, some admirable copies of Raphael and Titian,
painted by Adrienne herself, representing only persons of exquisite beauty;
consoles of Oriental jasper, supporting ewers of silver and vermeil, covered with
an alto-relievo of the rarest kind, and containing the most delicate essences and
scented waters; a divan of downy softness, some chairs, and a table of gilded
wood, completed the furnishing of an apartment redolent of the choicest sweets.

Adrienne, who had just taken her bath, was sitting before her toilet, surround-
ed by her three attendants.

From whim, or perhaps from that predominant love of beauty and harmony
in all things which formed so striking a part of her character, Adrienne insisted
that the young girls by whom she was waited upon should possess a natural
loveliness, farther increased by the most tasteful and becoming costume.

Georgette, in her bewitching attire as the soubrette of Marivaux, has been al-
ready described, and it is sufficient to say that her two companions were every
way equal to her in graceful prettiness.

One of them, named Florine, was a tall, elegant girl, whose whole aspect re-
minded the spectator of the hunting Diana. She was a clear, pale brunette,
with rich, glossy hair, black as the raven's wing, twisted in a thick coil around
her head, and fastened at the back by a golden bodkin; like the other attend-
ants, she wore her arms uncovered, for the greater facility of employing them at
the toilet of her mistress. She was dressed in a robe of that peculiar green so
frequently met with in Venetian paintings, the skirt of her robe was ample, and
the corsage, accurately fitting over the bosom, displayed a snowy cambric tucker,
finely plaited, and fastened down the front with golden buttons.

The third of Adrienne's serving-maidens had so sweet, so open, and so bloom-
ing a countenance, a shape so perfect, yet so delicate, that her mistress had be-
stowed on her the appellation of Hebe: her dress of pale pink was so fashioned
as to reveal her fair round throat and arms naked to the shoulder.

The physiognomies of these three young persons were smiling and happy;
their features exhibited none of that sour suspicion, envious obedience, offensive
familiarity, or abject deference so commonly resulting from a state of servitude.

In the assiduity which they lavished upon Adrienne, they appeared actuated
as much by affection and choice as by respect, and seemed to delight in bestow-
ing fresh lustre upon the brilliant beauty of their young mistress; in their zeal
to adorn her, they seemed to be engaged in a favourite work of art, and evinced
joy and pride in the success of their labours.

The sun shone brightly on the toilet-table placed opposite the window. Adri-
ienne was seated in a low chair with a high back; she was dressed only in a
wrapping-gown of pale blue silk, figured with a device of the same colour; a
silk cord and tassels confined it round her waist, graceful and slender as that of
a child of twelve years old; her beautiful and bird-like throat was uncovered, as
were her hands and arms of incomparable beauty. Spite of the common-place
comparison, we can liken the dazzling whiteness of this smooth, polished skin
to nothing but the finest ivory; and so firm, so healthy was its texture, that a
few drops of water, which had remained in her hair on quitting the bath, trickled
down her shoulders like pearls rolling over white marble.

What heightened still more the vivid carnation peculiar to persons so fair,
were the deep red of her dewy lips, the transparent pink of her little ear, her
expanded nostrils, and her exquisitely shaped and glossy nails; wherever, in
fact, the pure life-blood could rise to the surface, it betokened health, vigour,
and youth.

The eyes of Adrienne were large and black, sometimes sparkling with play-
ful malice, at others, languishing and half-hidden beneath their long upturned
fringes, as dark as the finely arched brows which surmounted them; for, by a
charming freak of nature, her eyelashes and eyebrows were jet black, while her
hair was a lovely auburn. Her forehead, small as those of Grecian statues, com-
pleted the perfect oval of her face; her delicately shaped nose was slightly aqui-
line; her teeth were of dazzling whiteness, while her ripe, rosy mouth seemed
formed but for kisses, smiles, and happiness.
It was impossible to imagine a more easy, yet dignified carriage of the head; and this graceful, yet queen-like air, was materially owing to the great distance from her ear and throat to the tip of her dimpled shoulders.

We have already spoken of the hair of Adrienne as being of a reddish hue, but it was that peculiar colour seen in many of the most admirable female portraits painted by Titian or Leonardo da Vinci. Nothing could be more bright, more glossy, than those masses of fine hair, waving in natural beauty as though liquid gold were circulating in silky thread; and so long was this luxuriant ornament that, when she stood, it nearly touched the ground, or its fair owner could almost enfold herself in it, like the Venus rising from the sea.

At this instant it was doubly charming, for Georgette, standing behind her mistress, had just collected the thick mass, almost too much for her little hand to grasp, while the bright sun shone with reflected splendour on the rich tresses, and redoubled their lustre.

As the fair waiting-maid plunged the ivory comb in the midst of the large silken tresses, it almost seemed as though bright sparks issued forth, while the morning's light and sun, as they played among the thick, long ringlets which parted off the forehead and fell down the fair cheeks of Adrienne, glittered and flickered over the golden threads, and playfully wantoned with the curls which hung over her snowy bosom.

While Georgette, standing behind her mistress, thus arranged her beautiful hair, Hebe, kneeling on one knee, and having on the other the fairy foot of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, was occupied in placing on it a slipper of black satin, and sandalling it over an open-worked silk stocking, which disclosed the delicate pinky whiteness of the skin, and displayed an ankle of most exquisite delicacy and proportions. Florine, a little farther off, presented to her mistress a vermeil box, containing a paste of fragrant perfumes, with which Adrienne
lightly touched her dazzlingly white hands and taper fingers, the extremity of which seemed tinged with carmine.

We must not forget Lutine, who, reposing on the lap of her mistress, opened her large eyes as wide as possible, and seemed to follow the different phases of Adrienne's toilet with profound attention.

A silver bell having sounded without, Florine, at a sign from her mistress went out, and soon returned with a letter on a small porcelain salver.

While her attendants completed her toilet, Adrienne opened the letter, which was from the land-steward of Cardoville, and as follows:

"Mademoiselle,—Knowing your goodness of heart and generosity, I take leave to address myself to you with confidence. For twenty years I served the late Count-duke of Cardoville, your father, with zeal and probity: I think I may say so much. The chateau is sold, so that my wife and myself are on the eve of being turned away, and shall be without any resource, which, at our age, mademoiselle, is very hard—"

"Poor creatures!" said Adrienne, breaking off; "my father did always say how devoted and honest they were."

She continued:

"We have one means left of keeping our place, but that is dependent on a degree of baseness which we could never submit to; my wife and I would rather starve first—"

"Good! excellent! always the same!" said Adrienne; "dignity in poverty is the perfume of the wild flower."

"To explain, mademoiselle, the unworthy task which is required of us, I ought first to tell you that, two days ago, M. Rodin arrived from Paris—"

"Ah! M. Rodin!" said Mademoiselle de Cardoville, again interrupting herself; "the secretary of the Abbé d'Aigrigny! I am not now astonished if some baseness or dark intrigue is in agitation. Let us see.

"M. Rodin came from Paris to tell us that the estate was sold, and that we might still retain our situations, if we would assist him in making the new proprietress take for her confessor a certain noted priest; and, the better to effect this, we must agree to calumniate another curate, a most excellent man, much respected and beloved in the district. This was not all: I was to write secretly, twice a week, all that occurred in the chateau. I must own, mademoiselle, that these disgraceful propositions were disguised as much as possible, and concealed under very specious pretexts; but, in spite of the form in which they were more or less skilfully put, the real meaning was just as I have the honour to inform you, mademoiselle—"

"Corruption, calumny, and treachery!" said Adrienne, in an accent of deep disgust. "I cannot think of these people without involuntary thoughts of darkness, venom, and black, hideous reptiles; they are, indeed, detestable in their aspect. I prefer to think of the mild and benignant faces of poor Dupont and his wife."

Adrienne continued:

"Do not suppose, mademoiselle, that we hesitated for one moment. We may quit Cardoville, where we have resided for twenty years, but we will leave it with honour. Now, mademoiselle, if, among your great acquaintances, you, who are so good, could procure us a situation by your recommendation, we might perhaps, mademoiselle, be relieved from our cruel embarrassment—"

"Certainly, they shall not address me in vain. To snatch worthy people from M. Rodin's claws is a duty and a pleasure: it is both just and dangerous; but I like to brave those who are powerful and oppressive."

Adrienne continued:

"After having spoken to you of ourselves, mademoiselle, allow us to implore
your protection for others, for it would be wrong to think of ourselves only. Two vessels were wrecked on our coast three days ago; a few passengers only were saved, and brought here, where my wife and myself have given them all the care their immediate necessities demanded. Some of them have gone to Paris, but one still remains here. His injuries have prevented him, to the present time, from leaving the chateau, and will detain him here yet some days longer. He is a young Indian prince, about twenty years of age, and he appears to be as amiable as he is handsome, which is not saying a little, although he has the dark complexion which all his countrymen have also—'

"An Indian prince! Twenty years of age! Young, good, and handsome!" exclaimed Adrienne, gayly. "That is charming, and decidedly out of the common way: this shipwrecked prince has already my utmost sympathy. But what can I do for this Adonis from the banks of the Ganges, who has been thrown on the coast of Picardy?"

Adrienne's three women looked at her with but little surprise, accustomed as they were to the singularities of her character. Georgette, and Hebe even, smiled discreetly; Florine, the tall, handsome, pale brunette, smiled also, but a moment after, and it would seem, upon reflection, as if she had been first and particularly employed in attending to and recollecting every word that fell from her mistress, who, being deeply interested in her Adonis from the banks of the Ganges, as she termed him, continued the perusal of the steward's letter:

"One of the Indian prince's countrymen, who stayed with him to take care of him, has given me to understand that the young prince lost everything he possessed in the world, and was actually at a loss for the means to reach Paris, where his immediate presence was requisite on very important matters. It is not from the prince himself that I had these details—he appears too noble and proud to make any complaint—but his countryman, more communicative, told me all this, adding, that the young prince had already undergone great troubles, and that his father, the king of a territory in India, had been recently killed and dispossessed by the English—'

"That is very strange," said Adrienne, reflecting. "These particulars remind me that my father often talked to me of a relative who married an Indian king, with whom General Simon, recently made marshal, took service." Then interrupting herself, she added, with a smile, "Oh! how strange it would be! it is only to me that such strange things happen, and they call me an original: it is not I, as I think, but in reality Providence, who sometimes works in extraordinary ways. But let me see if poor Dupont has given me the name of this handsome prince.

"I am sure, mademoiselle, that you will excuse us; but we should have felt that we were very selfish in mentioning our own troubles only, when we have with us a brave and worthy young prince so much to be pitied. Pray, mademoiselle, believe me, for I am old, and have had great experience of mankind, and I assure you that you have only to see the noble air and sweet countenance of this young Indian to feel the interest which I entreat you to show for him. It would be quite sufficient to send him a small sum of money to buy him some European clothing, for he has lost his Indian attire in the shipwreck—'

"What! European clothing!" exclaimed Adrienne, gayly. "Poor young prince! Heaven preserve him from such, and me also! Chance sends me, from the remotest parts of India, a mortal so favoured as never yet to have worn that odious European costume, those hideous coats, those frightful hats, which make men so ridiculous, so ugly, that, in fact, there is no virtue in not finding them at all seducing. Well, here comes a handsome young prince from that Eastern clime where the men are attired in silk, muslin, and Cashmere; certainly, I will not lose so favourable an occasion to be tempted, whatever poor old Dupont may say. But the name! the name of this dear prince! Again, I say, how singular,
THE WANDERING JEW.

if it should prove to be my cousin from beyond the Ganges! I have heard, in my childhood, so much to the advantage of his royal father, that I should be delighted to offer the son a worthy reception. But the name! the name!

Adrienne continued:

"If, in addition to this small sum, mademoiselle, you would afford him and his countryman the means of reaching Paris, you would do a great service to this poor young prince, already so unfortunate. I know, mademoiselle, that it may please your sense of delicacy to send this succour to the young prince without your name being revealed; and, should this be the case, I beg you will make use of me, and rely on my discretion; if, on the contrary, you would wish to send to him direct, I add his name, as it was written for me by his countryman: Prince Djalma, son of Kadja-Sing, king of Mundi.'

"Djalma!" said Adrienne, endeavouring to recall her recollections. "Kadja-Sing! Yes, 'tis he! those are the names my father so often repeated, when he told me that nothing in the world could be more chivalrous, more heroic than that old Indian king, our relative by marriage; and it does not appear that the son has deteriorated from the sire. Yes, Djalma! Kadja-Sing! yes, these are the names; they are not such common ones," she said, with a smile, "that one could forget or confound them with others. So, Djalma is my cousin! He is brave and good, young and charming, has never yet worn that frightful European coat, and is destitute. Delightful! it is too great happiness at once! Quick, quick! let us get up some pretty fairy tale, of which this handsome Prince Darlings shall be the hero. Poor bird of gold and silver plumage, wandering in our sad climate: may he find here something to remind him of his own land of light and perfumes!" Then addressing one of her women,

"Georgette, take paper and write, my child!"

The young girl went to the gilded table, where were writing materials, and said (after she had seated herself) to her mistress,

"I await mademoiselle's instructions."

Adrienne de Cardoville, whose lovely face was radiant with joy, happiness, and gayety, dictated the following note, addressed to a worthy old artist who had long taught her drawing and painting; for she excelled in these arts, as in all others:

"My dear Titian, my good Veronese, my worthy Raphael—You can do me an immense service, and I know you will do it, with that kindness I have always found in you. You will go and see directly the skilful artist who designed my last costumes of the fifteenth century. I want now some modern Indian costumes for a young man—yes, a young man, sir! and, as far as I believe, you may take his measure by the Antinous—or, rather, the Indian Bacchus will be more apropos.

"These costumes must be perfectly correct, very rich, and particularly elegant. You will select the richest materials possible that resemble the tissues of India; and add, for cummerbands and turbans, six splendid long Cashmere shawls—two white, two red, and two orange colour: nothing suits brown skins like those hues.

"Having done this (and I can only allow you two or three days) you will set off in my travelling-carriage for the Château de Cardoville, which you know well. There the steward, the worthy Dupont, an old acquaintance of yours, will introduce you to a young Indian prince, whose name is Djalma; and you will say to this high and mighty signor of another world that you have come from an unknown friend, who, acting as a brother, sends him what is requisite to avoid the odious fashions of Europe. You will add, that this friend awaits him with so much impatience, that he prays him to come to Paris without delay. If my protégé objects that he is in pain, you must say that my carriage is an excellent bed; and you will arrange the couch in the berln as conveniently as possible. You must be careful to apologize, on the part of the unknown friend,
for not sending to the prince either rich palanquins or even a small elephant; for, alas! we have no palanquins but at the opera, and no elephants but in the menagerie, which, no doubt, will make us seem very uncouth savages in the eyes of my protége.

"As soon as you have decided on setting out, you must travel with all speed, and bring here into my pavilion in the Rue de Babylone (how singular for him to live in the Rue de Babylone! that is, at least, an Eastern name for him) the dear prince so fortunate as to be born in the land of flowers, diamonds, and sunshine.

"You will, moreover, be so obliging, my dear old friend, as not to be surprised at this new whim of mine, and especially not to indulge in any extravagant conjecture. Seriously, the choice I make of you in this affair—of you, whom I love and honour sincerely—will convince you that at the bottom of all this there is more than a mere frolic."

While she dictated these last words, Adrienne's tone was as serious and elevated as it had before been playful.

But she speedily reassumed her gay tone.

"Adieu, my old friend! I am a little like the captain of the ancient times, whose heroic nose and conquering chin you so often placed before me as models: I jest most freely always at the moment when the fight begins—yes, the fight—for in another hour I shall fight a battle, a serious battle, with that dear devotee, my aunt. Fortunately, courage and daring do not fail me, and I burn for action with the austere princess.

"Adieu! a thousand kind and hearty souvenirs to your good wife! If I speak of her—mind, of her so justly respected—it is to assure you as to the consequences of this carrying off of a charming young prince on my behalf, for I must conclude where I ought to have begun, and tell you that he is charming.

"Again, adieu!"

Then, addressing Georgette,

"Have you done, little maiden?"
"Yes, mademoiselle."

"Ah! the postscript!"

"I send you a letter of credit on my banker for all expenses. Spare nothing: you know I am really a grand signior. I am compelled to use this masculine phrase, which you men—tyrants as you are—have exclusively appropriated as expressive of noble generosity."

"Now, Georgette," said Adrienne, "bring me a sheet of paper and the letter, that I may sign it."

Mademoiselle de Cardoville took the pen which Georgette presented to her, and signed the letter, enclosing an order on her banker, as follows:

"Pay to M. Norval, on demand, the sum he may require for expenses on my behalf. ADRIENNE DE CARDOVILLE."

During the whole of this scene, and while Georgette was writing, Florine and Hebe had continued to occupy themselves in completing the toilet of their mistress, who had taken off her dressing-gown and dressed herself, in order to go to her aunt.

By the close, undivided, but concealed attention which Florine paid to the dictation of Adrienne's letter to M. Norval, it was easy to see that, according to her custom, she was endeavouring to retain every word that fell from Mademoiselle de Cardoville.

"My little one," said Adrienne to Hebe, "go and send off this letter to M. Norval."

Again the silver bell was heard without.

Hebe was going to the door to inquire who it was and execute her mistress's orders, when Florine ran before her, saying to Adrienne,

"Will mademoiselle allow me to carry this letter? I want to go to the large house."

"Yes, you can go. Hebe, see who is at the door; and Georgette, seal the letter."

At the end of a minute, while Georgette was sealing the letter, Hebe returned.

"Mademoiselle," she said, as she entered, "the workman who found Lutine yesterday begs to see you for an instant: he seems very pale and sorrowful."

"What, does he want me already? That is fortunate," said Adrienne, in a mirthful tone. "Show the good, honest fellow into the little parlour; and, Florine, do you go and send this letter without delay."

Florine went out.

Mademoiselle de Cardoville, followed by Lutine, went into the room where Agricola awaited her.
CHAPTER III.

THE INTERVIEW.

LIGHTLY stepping, Adrienne de Cardoville entered the apartment in which Agricola awaited her, attired in the most extreme yet elegant simplicity. A robe of dark-blue kerseymere, fitting tightly to the shape, and embroidered down the front with black lacings, according to the prevailing mode of the day, admirably displayed her nymph-like figure and finely-proportioned bust; a small square cambric collar was turned back over a broad-checked riband, tied with a bow in front, like a cravat. Her magnificent golden hair hung down on each side of her lovely countenance in a profusion of bright ringlets, reaching almost to her waist.

Agricola, the better to elude his father's suspicions, and to confirm him in the idea of his being really obliged to go to the manufactory of M. Hardy, had not dared to dress himself in any but his working clothes, only he had put on a new blouse, and a black-silk handkerchief round his throat, the collar of a shirt turned back over it, which, if coarse, was white as hands could make it; his loose gray trousers displayed boots brightly polished, while his muscular hands held a smart, new cloth cap: in a word, this blue blouse, embroidered with red, which allowed such easy play to the broad, manly chest of the young smith, and developed his robust shoulders, falling in graceful folds around his athletic form, became him far more than the most elaborate labours of the tailor could have done.

While waiting the appearance of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, Agricola mechanically examined a magnificent silver vase of exquisite workmanship. A small plate of the same metal, attached to the marble pedestal, bore these words: "Sculptured by Jean Marie, a working sculptor, 1831."

Adrienne had stepped so lightly over the carpet of the room, only separated from that adjoining by folding doors, that Agricola perceived not her approach; he started, and turned quickly as a sweet, silvery voice just behind him said,

"That is a handsome vase, is it not?"

"It is, indeed, mademoiselle," answered Agricola, much embarrassed.

"You see I am a lover of justice," continued Mademoiselle de Cardoville, pointing to the small silver plate; "a painter affixes his name to his picture; an author to the book he writes: why, then, should not a workman in any art put his name to his own work?"

"And this name, mademoiselle—"

"Is that of a poor sculptor who executed the work for a rich goldsmith, who, when he sold me the vase, seemed utterly at a loss to comprehend my whim; he almost hinted my injustice, when, having made him tell me the name of the person who really produced this gem, I insisted that the name of the workman, and not the mere seller, should be affixed to the pedestal. If this artisan be denied riches, he should, at least, be permitted to enjoy the fame he earns; do you not agree with me?"

Had Adrienne tried ever so hard, she could not better have secured the interest of the smith, who, recovering from his confusion, replied,
“Since you are a workman, I congratulate myself more than ever on the course I took. But, pray, be seated;" and with an affable wave of the hand she pointed to an arm-chair of purple silk, embroidered with gold, seating herself upon an ottoman of the same material.

Perceiving the hesitation of Agricola, who cast down his eyes as though fearful of presuming too far, Adrienne said gayly, pointing to Lutine,

"This poor little creature will always be a living souvenir of your kindness, and I accept your visit to-day as a happy omen that my wishes are about to be realized—that you have found some means by which I can be serviceable to you."

"Madame," replied Agricola, boldly, "my name is Baudoin; I am a smith, in the employ of M. Hardy, at Plessy, near Paris. Yesterday you offered me your purse, which I refused; but I now come to ask you for perhaps ten, twenty times the sum you then proffered me. I say this at once—it is the most difficult: the words seemed to scorch my lips; but they are spoken now, and I feel relieved."

"I appreciate the delicacy of your scruples," said Adrienne; "but had you known me better, you would have felt no apprehension in applying to me. What sum do you require?"

"I do not know, mademoiselle."

"You do not know?"

"No, mademoiselle, I have not only come to request that you will aid me with the sum I need, but tell me what amount I do require!"

"But," said Adrienne, smiling, "you must explain yourself more clearly; for, spite of my readiness to serve you, you must be aware that I cannot guess how it is to be done."
"Well, then, mademoiselle, in a few words, this is the case: I have a good old mother who, in her youth, ruined her health by excessive labour to support not only myself, but a poor deserted child she took charge of. It is now my turn to support her, and, thanks to Providence, I have been happy enough to do so. But I have only my daily work to depend upon, and if I am prevented from attending to that, my poor mother will be left destitute."

"Be under no fears for your mother; she can never want while I take an interest in her."

"And do you interest yourself for her, mademoiselle?"

"Assuredly!"

"You know her, then?"

"Yes, now I do!"

"Ah, mademoiselle," said Agricola, with emotion, and after a brief silence, "I understand you! Ah, you have a noble heart! La Mayeux was right!"

"La Mayeux!" exclaimed Adrienne, regarding Agricola with surprise, for these words were quite an enigma to her.

The young artisan, who never blushed for his friends, replied stoutly

"Mademoiselle, I will explain that La Mayeux is the name of a poor, industrious young needlewoman, with whom I have been brought up; the poor girl is called La Mayeux because she is deformed, so that you may easily imagine her place in this world is as low as yours is elevated; but for noble and delicate feelings, for generosity of heart, ah, mademoiselle, there I am sure you are her equal. That was her thought when I told her how you gave me that beautiful flower."

"I assure you, monsieur," said Adrienne, touched by these simple phrases, "that I feel more flattered and honoured by the comparison than by the highest eulogium you could pronounce. The heart which remains good and delicate after long endurance of heavy troubles is a treasure indeed! It is so easy, with youth and beauty to aid us, to be good and amiable; to be generous and delicate when we have riches at our command, I accept your comparison, but upon condition that you quickly enable me to prove my right to it. Pray continue your history."

Notwithstanding the gracious affability of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, there was in her so much of that natural dignity which arises from independence of character, elevation of mind, and nobleness of sentiment, that Agricola, forgetting the extreme loveliness of his protectress, soon felt for her a species of affectionate and profound respect, singularly opposed to the age and vivacity of the young creature who excited it.

"Were it only on my mother's account," continued Agricola, "I should not care so much for being obliged to leave my work, because poor folks always help each other. My mother is much beloved throughout the house, and our kind neighbours would do their utmost to assist her; but, poor things! they have nothing to spare, and if they should pinch themselves to help her, their aid would be more distressing to her than misery itself; and it is not solely for her that I have need to work, but for my father also, whom we have not seen until now for eighteen years: he has just returned from Siberia, where he stayed through devotion to his old general, now Marshal Simon."

"Marshal Simon!" exclaimed Adrienne, eagerly, and with great surprise.

"Do you know him, mademoiselle?"

"Not personally; but he married one of our family."

"Oh, how glad I am to hear that!" cried the smith. "Then the two young ladies my father brought from Russia are related to you."

"Has the marshal two daughters?" demanded Adrienne, still more astonished, as well as interested.

"Yes, mademoiselle, two little angels of about fifteen or sixteen years: they are twins; so gentle and pretty, and so exactly alike, it is difficult to distinguish one from the other. Their mother died in exile, and the little she possessed having been confiscated, they have journeyed from Siberia in the most humble
manner with my father, who tried to make up by zeal and devotion for the many privations they were compelled to endure. Noble father! You would scarcely believe, mademoiselle, that, with the courage of a lion, he is kind and good as a mother."

"And where are these dear children?" said Adrienne.

"At our house, mademoiselle; and that was one of the reasons which rendered my situation so perplexing, and gave me courage to lay my case before you. It is not that I fear being unable by my daily labour to provide for our little household, even thus enlarged; but what will become of them all if I am arrested?"

"Arrested! you! and for what?"

"Here, mademoiselle, have the goodness to read this letter, which was sent to La Mayeux, that poor deformed girl I was telling you about; but she is like a sister to me."

So saying, Agricola placed in the hands of Mademoiselle de Cardoville the anonymous letter received by the young seamstress.

After having read it, Adrienne said to the smith, with surprise, "So you are a poet!"

"Indeed, mademoiselle," answered the smith, "I have neither the ambition nor presumption to aspire to that title; but when I go home to my mother, after my day's toil is over, or, indeed, sometimes while busy at the forge, to amuse or recreate myself, I indulge in making a few rhymes, an ode or two, or may be a song—"

"And this 'Song of the Working Men' (Chant des Travailleurs), which is alluded to in the letter, is, I suppose, of a dangerous and seditious description?"

"Oh, no, mademoiselle! very far from it; for I have the good fortune to be employed by M. Hardy, who makes his workpeople as happy as others are the reverse; and I merely ventured to make a warm, candid, and just appeal in favour of the less fortunate class of my fellow-workmen—nothing more, I assure you. But you are aware, mademoiselle, in such troubled times as the present, the innocent are frequently involved, and even imprisoned for a time. Now, were such a misfortune to befall me, what would become of my mother, my father, and the two orphans, whom we consider as part of the family until the return of General Simon? So, mademoiselle, to escape such a disaster, I have come to ask you to give security for me, so that I should not be compelled to quit the workshop for a prison, but might earn all that would be requisite for our family's support."

"Heaven be praised!" replied Adrienne, gayly; "yours is an affair very easily arranged. Henceforward, my poetical friend, you shall draw your inspirations from happiness, not sorrow, which forms but an ungenial muse. In the first place, the security shall be given."

"Oh, mademoiselle, you save us!"

"Ithappens that our family doctor is upon intimate terms with a very important minister (understand me as you will, you will not be much out); now the doctor has much influence with this great statesman, for he had the good luck of recommending him, for the good of his health, to retire to the delights of private life the very evening preceding the day in which he was dismissed; be, therefore, quite easy on the subject, and if the security be not sufficient we will think of some better means."

"Mademoiselle!" exclaimed Agricola, with deep emotion, "I shall probably owe my mother's life to your goodness. Believe me, you will never find me ungrateful."

"Nay, it is no more than my duty. But now for something else; those who have too much are entitled to assist those who have not enough; the daughters of Marshal Simon are of my kindred; they must come and live with me; it will be more proper. Tell this to your good mother; and to-night, when I come to thank her for the hospitality she has extended to my young relatives, I will bring them away with me."
Suddenly the door leading to the adjoining apartment was opened, and Georgette came in quickly, as if in alarm.

"Oh, mademoiselle," she exclaimed, "something very extraordinary is going on in the street!"

"What do you mean! Explain yourself!"

I had just let my dressmaker out by the little side-gate when I fancied I saw some very ill-looking men attentively observing the walls and casements of the little building adjoining the pavilion, as though they were watching some one."

"Madame," said Agricola, dejectedly, "you see I was not wrong; 'tis me they seek!"

"What do you say?"

"I thought I was watched from the Rue Saint-Merry here; there is now no doubt on the subject. They saw me enter your doors, and wish to arrest me; and now that your kind sympathy is awakened for my mother, and that I have nothing to fear for the daughters of General Simon, rather than be the cause of the slightest annoyance to you, I will hasten to give myself up."

"Have a care!" said Adrienne, quickly; "liberty is too valuable to be abandoned voluntarily; besides, Georgette may be deceived. However it may be, let me entreat you not to surrender yourself; take my advice and avoid an arrest. You will by so doing materially aid the steps I propose to take, for it has always appeared to me that Justice seems to have a particular attachment for those who have once fallen into her hands."

"Mademoiselle," said Hebe, also entering the apartment with an alarmed manner, "a man has just knocked at the little gate; he wants to know whether a young man in a blue blouse did not enter a little while ago. He says that
the person he is in search of is named Agricola Baudoin, and that he has something of great importance to communicate to him."

"That is my name," said Agricola; "but the rest is a subterfuge to induce me to go out."

"Evidently," said Adrienne; "and we must oppose cunning to cunning. What answer did you make, child?" she added, addressing Hebe.

"Mademoiselle, I replied that I knew nothing of the person inquired for."

"Perfectly right. And what said the man?"

"He went away, mademoiselle."

"No doubt to return quickly," said Agricola.

"That is very probable," resumed Adrienne; therefore you must make up your mind to stay here a few hours. I am, unfortunately, obliged to go this instant to my aunt, the Princess de Saint-Dizier, upon some very important business, which already admitted of no delay, and which the intelligence you have given me respecting the daughters of General Simon makes still more pressing. Remain here, then, since any attempt to quit the place would certainly be followed by your arrest."

"Mademoiselle, I pray you to pardon my refusal, but, I repeat, I ought not to accept your generous offer."

"And wherefore?"

"The men who feigned having a message for me had recourse to that expedient, doubtless, to avoid the necessity of making a legal search for me on your premises; but now, unless I go forth, they will enter, and not for worlds would I expose you to such an inconvenience; besides, since I have nothing to fear for my mother, why should I care for a prison?"

"Have you forgotten the pain, the uneasiness, the terror your imprisonment would give your mother? Is this nothing? And your father, and the poor seamstress, who loves you as a brother, and to whom you equal me for goodness of heart, will you forget them? Be patient, and spare all these torments to those you love. Stay quietly here, and before evening, I feel quite assured, either by giving the necessary guaranty, or by other means, I shall be able to free you from all inquietude."

"But, mademoiselle, should I even accept your generous offer, it will avail me little—I shall be found here."

"No, you will not! There is in this pavilion, which was formerly occupied as a madhouse, a hiding-place, so marvellously contrived as to elude the most diligent search. Georgette will conduct you to it. You will find it very comfortable: you may even write some verses for me, should the situation inspire you."

"Ah, mademoiselle, what kindness!" exclaimed Agricola. "How can I have merited—"

"How have you merited it?" interrupted Adrienne; "I will tell you. Admit that neither your character nor your position had power to interest me—admit, also, that I have not contracted a sacred debt to your father for the tender cares bestowed on the children of General Simon, my relatives—but think, at least, of Lutine," said Adrienne, pointing, smilingly, to the little animal, "whom you restored to my affection. But, seriously, if I seem to treat the matter lightly," continued this strange, wild being, "it is because I know that there exists not the least danger for you, and because my spirits are unusually high to-day. Now, then, monsieur, write your address, with that of your mother, in this pocket-book; then follow Georgette, and write me some very pretty verses, if, indeed, you do not feel too weary in your prison, where you go to escape a prison."

While Georgette conducted the smith to his hiding-place, Hebe brought to her mistress a small gray beaver hat and feathers, for Adrienne had to cross the park to reach the grand hotel occupied by the Princess de Saint-Dizier.
A quarter of an hour after this scene, Florine entered mysteriously into the chamber of Madame Grivoise, principal attendant on the Princess de Saint-Dizier.

"Well?" inquired Madame Grivoise of the young girl.

"Here are the notes I have taken this morning," said Florine, giving a paper to the duenna; "fortunately, I have a good memory."

"At what hour, precisely, did she come in this morning?" said the duenna, quickly.

"Who, madame?"

"Mademoiselle Adrienne."

"She has not been out, madame; we attended upon her at nine o'clock, when she took her bath."

"But she returned before nine o'clock, after being out all night."

Florine regarded Madame Grivoise with the utmost astonishment.

"I do not understand you, madame!"

"Will you assert that Mademoiselle Adrienne did not enter the park this morning, about eight o'clock, by the little gate? Will you dare to utter such a falsehood?"

"I was unwell yesterday, and did not come down till nine o'clock, when I assisted Georgette and Hebe to attend upon mademoiselle at her bath. I assure you, most solemnly, madame, that I am ignorant of what occurred previously."

"That alters the case. Well, then, ascertain the particulars of what I have just mentioned from your two companions, who, having no mistrust of you, will tell you everything."

"I will, madame!"

"What has mademoiselle been doing this morning since you have been in attendance on her?"

"Mademoiselle dictated a letter to M. Norval, which Georgette wrote, and I asked leave to take charge of it, in order to obtain a pretext for leaving the room and noting down what I had heard."

"Good! and where is this letter?"

"Jerome has just gone out with it. I gave it to him to put into the post."

"You stupid girl!" exclaimed Madame Grivoise; "why could not you bring it to me?"
"As mademoiselle dictated her letter aloud, according to custom, I knew the contents of it, and have written them in my paper here."

"That is not the same thing; it might be desirable to keep back that letter altogether. The princess will be vexed."

"I thought I was acting rightly!"

"I know well enough you don't want for good-will; for the last six months you have given entire satisfaction, but you have committed an act of great indiscretion this time!"

"Pray, excuse it, madame; what I do is painful enough." And the young girl stifled a sob.

Madame Grivoise surveyed her with a fixed gaze, and added, in a cool, sarcastic tone,

"Well, then, my dear, if your scruples stand in the way, you can quit your post; you are free to go whenever you please."

"You know, madame, perfectly well that I am not free," said Florine, blushing. Tears rose to her eyes as she added, "I am under the control of M. Rodin, who placed me here."

"Then what is the use of all these sighs?"

"Spite of myself, it is impossible not to feel remorse. Mademoiselle is so good, so confiding."

"Oh, she is perfection, no doubt! but you have something else to do than to ring her praises in my ears! What did she after concluding her letter?"

"The young artisan who found Lutine, and brought her back yesterday, came to speak with mademoiselle."

"Is he still with her?"

"I do not know; he went just as I was coming out with the letter."

"You must contrive to find out what this person wanted with mademoiselle, and find a pretext to come and tell me in the course of the day."

"I will, madame!"

"Has Mademoiselle de Cardoville seemed thoughtful, uneasy, or alarmed at her approaching interview with the princess? She takes so little trouble to conceal her thoughts that you cannot help knowing."

"Mademoiselle appeared as gay as usual, and even jested on the subject."

"Ah! she has jested, has she?" said the duenna; adding, between her teeth, in a tone so low that Florine could not catch it, "those laugh best who laugh last! Yes, spite of her hardihood and her diabolical disposition, she would tremble and implore mercy did she but know what this day awaits her."

Then addressing herself to Florine, she said,

"Return to the pavilion, and avoid these fine scruples with which you are troubled, or they may one day play you an ugly trick. Now go, and remember what I say."

"I can never forget, madame, that I belong to M. Rodin!"

"That will do. Now depart for the present."

Florine quitted the grand hotel, and, crossing the park, regained the pavilion. Madame Grivoise immediately repaired to the Princess de Saint-Dizier.
CHAPTER IV.

A JESUITESS.

While the preceding scenes were passing in the Pompadour Temple, occupied by Mademoiselle de Cardoville, other events occurred in the large hotel occupied by the Princess de Saint-Dizier.

The elegance and magnificence of the pavilion in the garden contrasted strangely with the sombre interior of the hotel, the second story of which was inhabited by the princess, for the arrangements of the ground floor were such that it was only suited for fêtes, and for a long time Madame de Saint-Dizier had renounced all worldly splendours, and the gravity of her domestics, all aged and dressed in black, the deep silence that reigned in the house, where every body seemed to talk in a whisper, and the almost monastic regularity of this immense mansion, gave to the whole establishment of the princess a dull and severe character.

A man of the world, who united to high courage a remarkable independence of character, speaking of the Princess de Saint-Dizier (with whom Adrienne de Cardoville was going, as she wrote, to fight a great battle), said,

"That I might not have Madame de Saint-Dizier for my enemy, I, who am neither a fool nor a coward, have, for the first time in my life, committed an act of folly and cowardice."

And this man spoke sincerely.

But Madame de Saint-Dizier had not all at once reached this high degree of importance.

A few words are necessary, in order that we may clearly exhibit some phases of the life of this dangerous, implacable woman, who, by her affiliation to the order, had acquired a secret and formidable power, for there is something still more to be dreaded than a Jesuit, and that is a Jesuitess; and when a certain class are scrutinized, we learn that, unhappily, there exist many of these "affiliated" of the gown more or less short.

Madame de Saint-Dizier, who in her youth was very beautiful, had been, during the latter years of the Empire and the early years of the Restoration, one of the most fashionable women of Paris, with a stirring, energetic, dashing, domineering spirit—a cold heart with a warm imagination; she had been much devoted to gallantry, not through tenderness of feeling, but from love of intrigue, loving it as men love play—for the excitement it produces.

* The lay members of the order are termed Jesuits of the Short Gown (Robe Courte)
Unfortunately, such had been the blindness or carelessness of her husband, the Prince de Saint-Dizier (eldest brother of the Comte de Rennepont, duke de Cardoville, Adrienne's father), that during his life he never said a word which could be interpreted into a suspicion of his wife's irregularities.

Thus, doubtless not finding difficulties enough in her amours, which were, besides, so little thought of during the Empire, the princess, without renouncing her course of life, and fancying that it would throw a little more relish and freshness into her cup of pleasure, resolved to ally with it the zest of political intrigue.

To attack Napoleon, to dig a mine under the feet of the Colossus, at least gave promise of sensations capable of satisfying the most exacting soul.

For some time all went on marvellously well: handsome and witty, skilful and treacherous, seductive and perfidious, surrounded by adorers whom she excited to fanaticism, enjoying a kind of ferocious coquetry in leading men on to risk their heads in serious conspiracies, the princess hoped to revive the Fronde, and carried on an active secret correspondence with several personages of great foreign influence, well known for their hatred to the emperor and France. It was at this time that she entered into her first epistolary relations with the Marquis d'Aigrigny, then a colonel in the Russian service, and aide-de-camp of Moreau.

But one day all these fine plots were discovered, several of Madame de Saint-Dizier's cavaliers were sent to Vincennes, and the emperor, who might have taken a terrible revenge, contented himself with exiling the princess to one of her estates near Dunkirk.

At the Restoration, the persecutions which Madame de Saint-Dizier had suffered for the good cause were of service to her, and she even acquired considerable influence, notwithstanding the levity of her conduct.

The Marquis d'Aigrigny having taken service in France, had established himself there. He was fascinating, and a man of fashion; he had corresponded and conspired with the princess without knowing her, and these circumstances necessarily led to a liaison between them.

Unbridled selfishness, excessive love of pleasure, intense hatred, pride and despotism, and that base sympathy whose treacherous attraction brings together the most perverse dispositions without blending them, had made of the princess and the marquis rather two accomplices than two lovers.

This union, founded on egotistical and exaggerated feelings, on the fearful
support which two characters of this dangerous stamp could lend each other against a world in which their spirit of intrigue, gallantry, and slander had made them many enemies—this liaison had lasted to the time when, after his duel with General Simon, the marquis had entered the Seminary, although the motive of his sudden resolution was disclosed to no one.

The princess, not having heard the hour of conversion yet strike for her, continued her worldly course with a fierce, jealous, hateful ardour, for she found her best years rapidly passing away. A fact will show this woman's character:

Still agreeable, she resolved to conclude her worldly career by a great and final triumph, as a celebrated actress retires from the stage while she still charms, to cause regrets for her departure. Desirous of giving this last consolation to her vanity, the princess selected her victims skilfully. She threw her eyes on a young couple who idolized each other, and, by dint of cunning and management, she carried off the lover from his mistress, a lovely creature of eighteen, who adored him.

Having achieved this success, Madame de Saint-Dizier quitted the world with all the éclat of her triumph. After many lengthened conferences with the Abbé Marquis d'Aigrigny, then a famous preacher, she left Paris abruptly, and went to pass two years on her estate near Dunkirk, taking with her only one of her attendants, Madame Grivois.

When the princess returned no one could recognize the woman once so voluble, gay, and dissipated. The metamorphosis was complete, extraordinary, almost fearful. The Hôtel Saint-Dizier, formerly open to mirth, fetes, pleasures, became silent and austere. Instead of what is called the elegant world, the princess only received at her abode women celebrated for their piety, and men of importance, noted for the extreme severity of their religious and monarchical principles. She surrounded herself particularly with certain distinguished members of the upper clergy; a congregation of females was placed under her patronage, and she had her confessor, chapel, almoner, and even director, but this latter was only nominal. The Marquis Abbé d'Aigrigny remained her real spiritual guide. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to say that, for a long time, all other liaisons had ceased between them.

This sudden conversion, so complete and so very much talked about, struck vast numbers with admiration and respect; a few, more penetrating, smiled.

One example among a thousand will show the frightful power which the princess had acquired since her affiliation, and it will also prove the undermining, revengeful, and pitiless character of the woman whom Adrienne de Cardoville was so rashly desirous to brave.

Among the persons who smiled, more or less, at the conversion of Madame de Saint-Dizier were the young and charming couple whom she had so cruelly severed before she proudly quitted the scene of her worldly gallantries. More in love than ever, they had again come together, after the passing storm that had separated them for a time, confining their vengeance to some stinging gallantries on the conversion of the woman who had worked them so much ill.

Some time afterward a terrible fatality burst upon the two lovers.

A husband, until then blind, was suddenly enlightened by anonymous revelations. A fearful discovery followed. The young lady was lost. [See cut, on next page.]

As to the lover, vague reports, full of reservations, perfidiously managed, and a thousand times more odious than a distinct accusation, which can at once be established or destroyed, were spread abroad concerning him with so much pertinacity, such deep cunning, and through so many different channels, that his best friends left him, one after the other, submitting, almost unconsciously, to the slow and irresistible influence of that incessant and confused whispering which resolves itself into something like this:

"Well, you know ***?"
"No."

L L
"They say very unpleasant things about him."
"Really! and what sort of things?"
"I can't precisely say, but there are ugly stories afloat—rumours which sadly affect his honour."
"The devil there are! that's bad indeed! That explains why he has been received so coolly everywhere lately."
"For my part, I intend, in future, to cut him."
"And so shall I," &c., &c.

This world is so formed that it often requires no more than this to destroy a man whose great success has created envy. And so it was with the man of whom we speak. The unfortunate gentleman, seeing the gap that was forming around him, and feeling the ground giving way beneath his feet, did not know which way to seek, or how to lay hands on the invisible enemy whose blows he felt, for he never suspected the princess, whom he had not seen since his adventure with her. Desirous, at any sacrifice, to know the source of this neglect and contempt, he addressed himself to an old friend, who answered him in a manner which was scornfully evasive; the other took fire, and demanded satisfaction. His adversary said to him,

"Find two seconds, acquaintances of yours and mine, and I will go out with you."

The unhappy man could not find one.

At last, forsaken by all, and unable to obtain any clew to this conduct, suffering immensely from the fate of the woman whose love for him had been her ruin, he went mad with rage, anguish, and despair, and killed himself.

On the day of his death, Madame de Saint-Dizier said that a life so shameless ought to have such an end; that he who had so long sported with all laws, human and divine, could only terminate his miserable existence by the last crime—
suicide! And Madame de Saint-Dizier's friends repeated and carried about these terrible words with an air contrite, pious, and full of conviction. This was not all: hand in hand with the chastisement came the recompense.

Persons who remarked could not help seeing that the favourites of the religious coterie of Madame de Saint-Dizier reached high positions with singular rapidity. Virtuous young men, religiously attentive at mass, were wedded to young, rich orphans of the "Sacred Heart," who were reserved as such rewards; poor young girls, who, too late, learned what a devotee husband really is, when selected and imposed upon them, and expiating in bitter tears the deceitful favour of being admitted into a false and hypocritical world, in which they were alone and helpless, and which would crush them if they dared to complain of the union to which they had been sentenced.

In the saloons of Madame de Saint-Dizier were made prefects, colonels, receivers-general, deputies, academicians, bishops, poers of France, from whom, in return for the vast influence used in their behalf, was only required to communicate sometimes in public; to swear an unrelenting war with everything impious or revolutionary; and, above all, to correspond confidentially on different subjects of his choice with the Abbé de Aigrigny; which was a very agreeable amusement, for the abbé was the most amiable, most witty, and, above all, the most accommodating man in the world.

By the way, we will give a historical fact, which should have been known to the bitter and vengeful irony of Molière or Pascal. It occurred during the last year of the Restoration. One of the high dignitaries of the court, a firm and independent man, did not practise, as the good father term it—that is to say, did not take the holy communion. This neglect, in one of his high position, might cause injury by its bad example; and the Abbé Marquis d'Aigrigny was sent to him. He, knowing the lofty and honourable mind of the recusant, felt that, if by any means he could induce him to practise, the effect would be most profitable; he went to work like a man of worldly wisdom, and, knowing whom he was addressing, made but very light of the dogma, the religious act itself, but insisted strongly on compliance with custom and the salutary effect which such a step must produce on the public mind.

"Monsieur l'Abbé," said the individual applied to, "I have a higher respect for religion than yourself, and I should think it an infamous jugglery to communicate without conviction."

"Oh, come, come, unbending man, frowning Alcestis!" said the marquis abbé, with a crafty smile, "we will reconcile your scruples and the profit you will derive, be assured, from complying with my advice. We will arrange for you a blank communion (une communion blanche); for, after all, what is it we ask but the appearance of the thing?"

Now a communion blanche is when the host has not been consecrated.

The abbé marquis was repulsed with indignation; but the dignitary was dismissed from his post.

And this is by no means a solitary case. Wo to those who opposed the principles and interests of Madame de Saint-Dizier and her friends! sooner or later, directly or indirectly, they were hit in the most cruel way—some in their credit, some in their dearest relations; others in their honour, others in the official situations by which they lived, and that by some silent, concealed, perpetual action—by some terrible and mysterious dissolvent, which, unseen; undermined reputation, fortune, position the most solidly based, up to the very moment when they were suddenly and forever destroyed, in the midst of general surprise and alarm.

We may now understand how, under the Restoration, the Princess de Saint-Dizier became singularly powerful and dreaded. At the revolution of July she formed a fresh system of alliance, and, strange to say, still preserving connexions of family and association with several persons faithful to the worship of the fallen monarchy, much influence and power were still ascribed to her. Let us add, that the Prince de Saint-Dizier dying childless several years before, his personal
fortune, which was very considerable, returned to his younger brother, the father
of Adrienne de Cardoville, who had been dead eighteen months, leaving his young
daughter the last and only representative of this branch of the Rennepons family.
The Princess de Saint-Dizier awaited her niece in a large saloon hung with
dark-green damask; and the furniture, covered with the same, was of carved
ebony, as was also a bookcase piled with pious productions.
Some sacred paintings and a large crucifix of ivory, on a black velvet ground,
completed the dull and conventual aspect of this apartment.

Madame de Saint-Dizier, seated before a large desk, was sealing several let-
ters, for she had a very extensive and varied correspondence. Though about
forty-five years of age, she was still handsome; years had enlarged her figure,
which had been remarkably elegant, and was yet advantageously displayed un-
der her high black gown. Her cap was very simple, and, ornamented with gray
ribands, displayed her light-brown hair plaited in thick bandeaux.
The first impression of her simple and dignified air was very striking; and
vain was it to seek in this countenance, then full of sedateness and composure,
any trace of the agitation of her past life. To see her so grave and reserved, no
one could believe her to be the heroine of so many intrigues, so many gallant
adventures; and if by chance she heard any remark that trenched on levity, this
woman's face (who had persuaded herself that she had become a mother of the
Church) expressed a real and painful astonishment, which soon became an air of
offended chastity and scornful pity.
Yet, when it was necessary, the smile of the princess was still full of grace,
and even of seducing and irresistible kindness. Her full blue eye could, on oc-
casion, beam affectionately and encouragingly; but if her pride was offended, or

any one dared to cross her will or injure her interests, and she could without fear
allow her resentment full scope, then her face, habitually placid and serious, be-
trayed a cold and implacable wickedness.
At this moment Madame Grivois entered the cabinet of the princess, holding
in her hand the report which Florine had given her respecting Adrienne's morn-
ing occupation.
Madame Grivois had been for twenty years in the service of Madame de
Saint-Dizier, and she knew all that a femme de chambre can and ought to know
of her mistress, when that mistress has been very gay. Was she voluntarily re-
tained by the princess? she, the well-informed witness of the multiplied errors
of youth? This was not known. It was only evident that Madame Grivois en-
joyed great privileges with the princess, and was considered by her rather as a companion than a waiting-woman.

"Here, madame, are Florine's notes," said Madame Grivois, handing the paper to the princess.

"I will look at it directly," replied Madame de Saint-Dizier. "My niece is coming here: during the conference which I am to have with her, you will conduct into her pavilion a person who will soon be here, and who will inquire for me."

"Very well, madame."

"This person will take a precise inventory of everything in Adrienne's pavilion. You will see that nothing is omitted: this is of the greatest importance."

"Yes, madame; but if Georgette and Hebe refuse?"

"Make yourself easy: the man who is empowered to take this inventory has a power which, when they know, these girls will not dare oppose either the inventory or any other measures he will pursue. You must not fail, when you accompany him, to insist on certain facts which will tend to confirm the reports you have for some time spread about."

"Make yourself easy, madame: those reports have already acquired the consistency of truth."

"Well, then, soon the insolent and haughty Adrienne will be subdued, and compelled to ask pardon, and of me, too—"

An old valet de chambre opened the folding-doors, and announced—

"M. the Abbé d'Aigrigny!"

"If Mademoiselle de Cardoville comes," said the princess to Madame Grivois, "request her to wait an instant."

"Yes, madame," said the duenna, who left the room with the valet de chambre. Madame de Saint-Dizier and M. d'Aigrigny remained alone.
CHAPTER V.

THE PLOT.

The Abbé Marquis d'Aigrigny was, as may be conjectured, the personage whom we have already seen in the Rue Milieu-des-Urines, whence he had set out for Rome about three months before.

The marquis was clothed in deep mourning and with his usual elegance. He did not wear a cassock; but his black frock-coat, which fitted accurately, and his well-cut waistcoat, displayed the elegance of his figure, while his black cashmere trousers exhibited to advantage his foot, encased in patent leather boots. The tonsure was lost in the slight baldness which had commenced at the back of his head. Nothing in his garb revealed the priest, unless it might be the entire want of whiskers, which was remarkable in so many a countenance; his freshly shaved chin rested on a high and full black cravat, tied with a military air, which reminded you that this renowned preacher, now one of the most active and influential chiefs of the Order, had, under the Restoration, commanded a regiment of hussars, after having made war with the Russians against France.

Having only arrived that morning, the marquis had not seen the princess since his mother, the Dowager-marchioness d'Aigrigny, had died near Dunkirk, on an estate belonging to Madame de Saint-Dizier, calling in vain on her son to soothe the anguish of her parting hour; but an order, which had compelled the Marquis d'Aigrigny to sacrifice the most sacred sentiments of nature, had arrived from Rome suddenly, and he had instantly set out for that city, not without a display of hesitation, remarked and denounced by Rodin; for the love of D'Aigrigny for his mother was the only pure feeling which had constantly attended him through life.

When the valet de chambre had discreetly retired with Madame Grivois, the marquis eagerly approached the princess, and, extending his hand, said, in an anxious voice,

"Herminia, have you concealed nothing from me in your letters? Did not my mother curse me in her last moments?"
"No, Frederic! I assure you, no! She was most desirous to see you, but her mind soon wandered, and in her delirium she called for you constantly."

"Yes!" said the marquis, bitterly; "her maternal instinct told her, no doubt, that my presence might, perhaps, have restored her to life."

"I entreat you to forget such saddening recollections. The misfortune is irreparable!"

"Once again, and for the last time, tell me truly, was not my mother cruelly affected by my absence? She could not suspect that a more imperious duty summoned me elsewhere?"

"No, no, I tell you! Before her mind wandered she knew that there had not yet been time for you to reach her. All the sad details which I wrote you on the subject were precisely true; so, pray take comfort."

"Yes, my conscience ought to be tranquil! I obeyed my duty in sacrificing my mother! and yet, in spite of myself, I could never attain that entire detachment of feeling which is commanded in these terrible words, 'He who hateth not his father and his mother, and even his own soul, cannot be my disciple.'"

"Doubtless, Frederic, these sacrifices are most painful; but in exchange what influence! what power!"

"That is true," said the marquis, after a moment's silence. "What would not one sacrifice to reign in the shade over those all-potent of the earth who rule in open day? My recent journey to Rome has given me fresh ideas as to our formidable power; for it is only at Rome—that culminating point which, say what we may, still holds dominion over the largest and fairest portion of the earth, whether by the force of habit and tradition, or by that of religious faith—it is only at Rome that our sway can be appreciated in its full extent. It is curious to watch, from that lofty pinnacle, the regular movements of our ten thousand subordinates, whose personality is continually lost in the immutable personality of our order. What a power we have! In truth, I am often overwhelmed with admiration, almost terrifying, when I reflect that, before he belongs to us, a man thinks, believes, wills, acts under his own control, and that when he becomes ours, at the end of some months he has no longer anything more than the form of man; mind, soul, reason, conscience, free will, all are paralyzed, dried up, annihilated by the habit of a mute and terrible obedience, by the practice of mysterious exercises, breaking and destroying all that there is of free and spontaneous in human thought. Then into these soulless bodies, dumb, passionless, cold as the grave, we infuse the spirit of our Order, and the dead bodies move, will, act, perform, but ever without leaving the circle within which they are eternally bound. Thus they become members of that gigantic being, whose will they execute, but of whose purposes they are ignorant, as the hand performs the most difficult works without knowing or understanding the thought by which it is directed;" and, as he thus spoke, the countenance of D'Aigrigny assumed an intense expression of proud and exultant domination.

"Oh, this power is great! is very great!" said the princess; "and the more formidable, for that it works mysteriously on minds and consciences."

"I tell you, Herminia," said the marquis, "I have have had under my orders a splendid regiment, and I have often experienced the deep and manly delight of command. At my voice the horsemen moved, the trumpets sounded, sabres flashed; my officers, brilliant with golden embroidery, galloped fiercely to repeat my orders; all was noise, glitter, and display; the brave, ardent, battle-scarred soldiers obeyed my word as one man, and I felt myself proud and powerful, holding, as it were, in my hand, the valour which I thus controlled, as I controlled the impetuousity of my war-horse. Well! now, in spite of adverse times, I feel myself a thousand times fuller of action, of authority, strength, and audacity, at the head of this black and silent militia, which thinks, wishes, and obeys me—**

* In reference to this, we find the following commentary in the Constitutions of the Jesuits: "In order that the mode of speech may come in aid of the feelings, it is wise to accustom one's self to say, not I have parents, or I have brothers, but I had parents, I had brothers."—General Examination, p. 29, Constitutions. Paulin, Paris, 1853.
chanically, according to my will; which, at a sign, spreads itself over the surface of the globe, or plants itself in the household, as confessor to the wife, or teacher of the children; in the interests of families, by the confidences of the dying; upon the throne, through the uneasy conscience of a timid and credulous monarch; by the side even of the Holy Father himself, that living manifestation of Divinity, by services rendered to him, or exacted from him. Tell me, then, is not this mysterious power, which reaches from the cradle to the tomb, from the cottage of the artisan to the sovereign's throne, from the throne to the sacred seat of God's vicar upon earth, is it not sufficiently ample to excite and satisfy the most towering ambition? What career would have offered me more splendid joys? With what utter scorn should I not look down upon that brilliant but frivolous life which we once led, and which, nevertheless, drew upon us so much envy, Hermínia! Do you remember it?" added D'Aigrigny, with a bitter smile.

"You reason truly, Frederic," replied the princess, quickly. "With what contempt we think upon the past! Like you, I often compare the present with it, and then what satisfaction do I feel in having followed your counsels! For, after all, without you I should have played but that miserable and ridiculous part which a woman must always go through when she reaches a certain age, after having been handsome and admired. What should I have done? I might in vain have attempted to attract again around me a selfish and ungrateful world—those coarse men, who only think of women as long as they are made subservient to their passions or flatter their vanity: or I might still have had left to me the resource of keeping up what is called an agreeable house—for others—yes, and given fêtes; that is, I might have received a crowd of indifferent persons, and have created a rendezvous for young lovers, who, following each other from room to room, only come to you that they may be together: an agreeable position assuredly, to collect a giddy, laughing, loving set, who consider the luxury and
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éclat with which you surround them as embellishments due to their gay and impertinent amours." There was so much severity in the words of the princess, and her countenance expressed so much hate and envy, that the bitterness of her regret escaped her in spite of herself. "No! no!" she continued; "thanks to you, Frederic, after a final and brilliant triumph, I broke from that world which else would so soon have abandoned me! me, so long its idol and its queen! I have changed my kingdom, and instead of dissipated men, whom I ruled because my frivolity was superior to their own, I see myself now encircled by men of importance, feared and all-powerful, many of whom govern the state itself: I am as much devoted to them as they are devoted to me. It is now only that I enjoy the happiness of which I had always dreamed; I have an active part, a powerful influence in the first interests of the world; I have been initiated into the most important secrets; I have been enabled to strike all who have maligned or hated me; I have been able to raise beyond their hopes those who have served, respected, and obeyed me."

"In few words, Herminia, you have presented the secret of our strength, the means of continually gaining proselytes. To find the way of satisfying hatreds and sympathies, and buy, at the price of passive obedience to the hierarchy of the order, participation in its mysterious sway over all the world beside. And there are madmen, blind creatures, who think we are crushed because we have sometimes to contend against an adverse period!" said M. d'Aigrigny with disdain; "as if we were not especially constituted and organized for struggle—as if, in struggle, we did not gain new power and fresh activity! No doubt the times are adverse, but they will become better. You know it is almost certain that in a few days, the 13th of February, we shall have at our disposal a means of action sufficiently potent to re-establish our influence, which has been momentarily shaken."

"You allude to the affair of the medals?"

"Yes, I should not have made so much haste to return hither, but for my anxiety to be present at what is for us so great an event."

"You have learned, no doubt, the singular fatality which has so nearly destroyed all our plans, so ably conceived and laid?"

"Yes; as soon as I arrived, I saw Rodin."

"Who told you—"

"The inconceivable arrival of the Indian and General Simon's daughters at the Château de Cardoville, after the double shipwreck which cast them on the coast of Picardy, when we believed the young girls at Leipsic and the Indian at Java; our precautions were so carefully taken. Really," added the marquis, with vexation, "it would almost seem that some invisible power protects this family!"

"Fortunately, Rodin is a man of resources and activity," resumed the princess. "He came here last night, and we had a long conference."

"And the result of your conference is excellent. The soldier will be sent away for a couple of days, the confessor of his wife is fully instructed, and the rest will work by itself. To-morrow these young girls will not give us farther cause for alarm. The Indian only is left, and he is at Cardoville, dangerously hurt, so that we shall have time to act."

"But that is not all," replied the princess; "there are besides, without including my niece, two persons who, for the sake of our interests, must not be in Paris on the 13th of February."

"Yes, M. Hardy! But his dearest and most intimate friend betrays him, and by him we have drawn M. Hardy into the south, whence it is almost impossible he can return before a month. As to that vagabond wretch, the workman they call Couche-tout-Nud—"

"Ah!" exclaimed the princess, with an air of offended modesty.

"That fellow will not trouble us. Then Gabriel, on whom rests our vast but certain hope, will not be left alone for one moment until the important day. All, therefore, seems to promise success, and success we must have at any cost; it is
for us a question of life or death, for, on my return, I stopped at Forli, where I
saw the Duke d'Orbano, whose influence over the king, his master, is all-pow-
erful—absolute, so entirely has he got him into his own hands. It is with the
duke alone, therefore, that we must treat."

"Well!"

"D'Orbano declares that he can (and I am sure of his power) assure to us a
legal existence, strongly protected, in his master's states, with the exclusive
privilege of educating the rising generation. By the aid of such advantages we
only require two or three years in that country to be so firmly rooted, that the
Duke d'Orbano must, in his turn, come to us for protection; but at this moment
he is all-potent, and demands one absolute condition for his services."

"And this condition?"

"Five millions, and an annual pension of a hundred thousand francs."

"It is a large sum!"

"Yet it is but little when we reflect that, let us only set foot in that country,
we shall soon recover the money, which, after all, is scarcely the eighth part
of what the affair of the medals, properly managed, will ensure to the Order."

"True; nearly forty millions," said the princess, with a reflective air.

"Then the five millions which D'Orbano asks will be but an advance—it will
be returned by voluntary donations, because, by the increase of influence which
the education of the children will give us, we shall have our hold on the fami-
lies, and, eventually, on the government itself. And they hesitate," added the
marquis, shrugging his shoulders disdainfully. "There are governments so
blind as to proscribe us; they do not see that, in giving education to us, which
we desire above all things, we fashion the people to that mute and uncomplain-
ing obedience, to the submission of the serf and the brute, which secures the
quiet of states by the passiveness of mind. And yet the majority of the rich

and noble fear and hate us! Stupid as they are, they do not see that, from the
moment when we can make the people believe that their misery is an immuta-
able, eternal law of destiny—that they must renounce the criminal hope of any
amelioration in their lot—that, in a word, they must consider it a crime before
God to wish for enjoyment in this life, since all recompenses on high are earned
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by griefs below—from that moment the people, imbruted by this withering conviction, will submit to wallow in their vileness and misery; then all impatient aspirations for better days will be stifled, and those portentous questions solved which make the future so dark and full of dread to governments. These idiots do not perceive that the blind, passive faith which we require of the people is, in our hands, a rein to check and guide them, while from the favoured of mankind we ask only appearances which ought, if they were but as wise as they are corrupt, to give only a keener relish to their pleasures.”

"It matters not, Frederic," replied the princess; "as you say, the important day is at hand, and with nearly forty millions, which the Order may secure by the happy result of the affair of the medals, we may assuredly dare great things. As a lever in our hands, such a means of action would have incalculable effect, at a time when all things are bought and sold."

"But, then," said M. d'Aigrigny, with a thoughtful air, "it is of no use to disguise the fact; here the reaction continues—the example of France is everything. We can hardly maintain ourselves in Austria and Holland—the resources of the Order diminish daily. It is a moment of crisis, but it may be lengthened. Thus, thanks to this enormous resource, the affair of the medals, we may not only contend against chances, but establish ourselves even more firmly. Thanks to the offer of the Duke d'Orbano, which we decide on accepting; from this invincible centre, our radiations will be incalculable. Ah! the thirteenth of February!" added M. d'Aigrigny, shaking his head; "that day may be an epoch as eventful to our power as that of the Council of Trent, which in a manner gave us fresh life."

"And, therefore," pursued the princess, "we must spare nothing to succeed at any price. Of the six persons you have cause to fear, five either now are, or will be, in no condition to oppose you; there only remains my niece, and you well know I merely awaited your arrival to take definite measures. All my plans are arranged, and this very morning we will commence putting them in practice."

"Have your suspicions increased since you last wrote?"

"They have: I am now quite convinced she knows a great deal more than she affects to do; and if so, we cannot have a more dangerous enemy."

"Such has always been my opinion, and, therefore, six months ago, I persuaded you to adopt the measures you have taken, which have rendered it easy for us now to take steps otherwise impossible."

"At length, then," exclaimed the princess, with an expression of bitter and rancorous exultation, "at length this proud spirit shall be broken, and I be avenged for the insolent sarcasms I have been compelled to bear in silence, lest I should excite her suspicions—to endure from that imprudent girl, whose task it seemed to irritate me against her."

"Those who offend you, offend me likewise; you know, Harminia, that my hatred goes with yours."

"And you, my friend! how often have you been the subject of her poignant raillery!"

"My impulses rarely deceive me," said the marquis, in a harsh and abrupt tone; "I feel certain that girl will one day prove a dangerous, ay, most dangerous enemy to us."

"Therefore we are more imperatively called upon to put it out of her power to harm us," replied Madame de Saint-Dizier, fixing her eyes with a steady gaze on the marquis.

"Have you seen Doctor Baleinier and M. Tripeaud?" he inquired.

"They will be here this morning. I have told them all."

"Did you find them disposed freely to enter into your wishes against Adrienne?"

"Perfectly so; Adrienne has not the slightest mistrust of the doctor, who has always, to a certain extent, possessed her confidence. Besides this, a singular, and to me inexplicable, circumstance hast just come to aid us."

"What do you mean?"
"This morning, Madame Grivois went, by my orders, to remind Adrienne that I expected her at noon upon important business; as she approached the pavilion, Madame Grivois saw, or thought she saw, Adrienne go in by the small garden gate."

"Can this be possible!" exclaimed the marquis; "have you absolute proof?"

"At present I have no other proof than the voluntary testimony of Madame Grivois; but, now I think of it," said the princess, taking up a paper which lay beside her, "here is the daily report drawn up by one of Adrienne's waiting-women."

"She whom Rodin contrived to place about your niece?"

"The same; and, as this creature is wholly dependant on Rodin, she has hitherto served us faithfully; perhaps we shall find in this paper some confirmation of what Madame Grivois affirms she beheld."

Scarcely had the princess commenced reading the journal, when she suddenly exclaimed, in a tone of alarm,

"What do I see? This Adrienne must be some fiend in human shape!"

"What is the matter?"

"The steward of Cardoville, writing to my niece to implore her protection, has told her of the Indian prince being at the castle. She is aware of his relationship to her, and writes to her old instructor in drawing, Norval, desiring him to set out post for Cardoville, in order to bring back Prince Djalma, him who, at any cost, must be kept away from Paris."

The marquis turned pale, as he said to Madame de Saint-Dizier, "If this be not some fresh whim of your niece, the eagerness she evinces to bring this relative from Cardoville here proves that she knows more than you have ever dared to suspect. She is acquainted with the affair of the medals—she may ruin everything: beware!"

"Then," returned the princess, resolutely, "there is no farther time for hesitation. We must proceed even to greater extremities than we proposed; and all must be finished this morning."

"Yes; but it is scarcely possible!"

"All things are possible!" returned the princess, impatiently. "The doctor and M. Tripeaud are with us."

"Although confident as yourself of the doctor and M. Tripeaud in this business," said the marquis, "I think we must not touch upon the question of executing our designs, which will startle them at first, until we have had our proposed conference with your niece. Spite of her cunning, you can easily elicit from her what we want to know; and if our suspicions be correct, if she really knows that which it would be so dangerous for her to know, then there must be no temporizing—above all, no delay; all hesitation must be at an end: the thing must be done to-day."

"Have you apprized the man we were speaking of?" said the princess, after a short silence.

"He will be here at twelve o'clock; he is sure not to be later."

"I have been thinking we can perfectly well accomplish our purpose here; this room is separated from the small saloon only by a curtain, which can be let down, and your man can hide behind it."

"Excellent!"

"He is entirely to be depended upon, I suppose?"

"Quite! We have frequently employed him under similar circumstances, and have found him as discreet as clever."

At this instant some one tapped lightly at the door.

"Come in," said the princess.

"Doctor Baleinier wishes to know if Madame la Princesse can see him," inquired a valet de chambre.

"Certainly! tell him to walk in."

"There is also a person M. l'Abbé desired to meet here at twelve o'clock, and whom, according to his orders, I have told to wait in the oratory."
"It is the man we were speaking of," said the marquis to the princess; "we must get him in at once; it would be useless for Doctor Baleinier to see him at present."

"Bring the person you have shown into the oratory here," said the princess; "then, when I ring, you will request Doctor Baleinier to come in; and should Baron Tripeaud call, conduct him to us at once. After that, I am not at home to any person but Mademoiselle Adrienne."
CHAPTER VI.

THE ENEMIES OF ADRIENNE.

The valet de chambre of the Princess de Saint-Dizier soon returned with a little, pale-faced man, dressed in black, and wearing spectacles; he bore under his arm a long case of black morocco.

"M. l'Abbé, I presume, has explained to you what you will have to do?"

"Yes, madame," answered the man, in a small, shrill voice, bowing profoundly.

"Will this apartment be suitable to your purpose?" inquired the princess, as she conducted him to an adjoining chamber, separated from the salon only by the curtain.

"It will do extremely well, madame la princesse," replied the man with the spectacles, with another low bow.

"You may then remain in this apartment. I will come and inform you when you are wanted."

"I shall wait your commands, madame la princesse."

"And be sure to attend carefully to the instructions I have given you," added the marquis, unfastening the curtains which hung before the opening.

The heavy material of which they were composed fell to the ground, and completely concealed the little personage in spectacles.

The princess rang the bell, and almost immediately a servant announced Doctor Baleinier, a most important person in this history.

Doctor Baleinier was about fifty years of age, of middle stature, stout, and with a round, rosy, shining countenance; his smooth gray hair, which he wore somewhat long, was parted down the middle of his forehead, and lay flat on his temples. He continued the old custom of black satin breeches, because, perhaps, he had a good leg; and he had gold buckles at his knees and in his bright morocco shoes. He wore a black waistcoat, coat, and cravat, which gave him somewhat of a clerical air; his white, plump hand was half concealed by a plaited ruffle of fine cambric, and the sedateness of his costume did not preclude a certain degree of foppishness.

His countenance was smiling and crafty, his small gray eye bespoke unusual sagacity and penetration; and Doctor Baleinier, a man of the world and of pleasure, a refined eater, a witty talker, attentive even to obsequiousness, supple, ready, and insinuating, was one of the oldest of the coterie which the Princess de Saint-Dizier had drawn around her.

Thanks to that all-powerful support of which the world did not know the
source, the doctor, who had been long unnoticed in spite of his real skill and indubitable merit, found himself, under the Restoration, pleasantly endowed with two lucrative medical sinecures, and, by degrees, with a large list of patients; but we must add that, once under the patronage of the princess, the doctor began suddenly to be most scrupulous in his religious duties, took the communion once a week, and publicly at the high mass of St. Thomas Aquinas.

At the end of a year, a certain class of invalids, induced by the example and enthusiasm of Madame de Saint-Dizier's coterie, would not hear of any medical man but Doctor Baleinier, and his list of patients soon swelled to a large number.

We may easily judge how useful it was for the Order to have among its outdoor members one of the most celebrated practitioners of Paris.

A physician has also his priesthood.

Admitted at all hours into the most secret intimacy of families, a physician knows, guesses, and can do many things.

Like the priest, he has the ear of the sick and dying.

And when he who is charged with the health of the body and he who is charged with the health of the soul understand each other, and work mutually for one common interest, there is nothing (at least the exceptions are very few) which they cannot obtain from the weakness or the fear of the dying; not for themselves, for the laws deny that, but for third persons, belonging, more or less, to that most convenient class, the men of straw.

Dr. Baleinier was thus one of the most active and valuable external members of the congregation of Paris.

When he entered, he kissed the hand of the princess with perfect gallantry.

"Always punctual, my dear Monsieur Baleinier."

"Always happy, always most desirous to receive your commands, madame."

Then turning to the marquis, whom he shook heartily by the hand, he added.

N n
At last we have you again! Do you know that three months is a very long time for your friends—"

"The time is as long for those who go as for those who remain, my dear doctor. Well, the great day has come at last; Mademoiselle de Cardoville is coming here directly."

"I must say that I feel some uneasiness," said the princess; "if she had any suspicion—"

"That is impossible," said M. Baleinier; "we are the best friends in the world. You know that Mademoiselle Adrienne and I have always been on the best of terms. The day before yesterday we laughed together excessively, and I made, according to my usual habit, some remarks on her eccentric mode of life, and on the singular train of ideas in which I found her occasionally."

"M. Baleinier always dwells on this circumstance, however trifling it may seem," said Madame de Saint Dizier, with a significant glance at the marquis.

"It is, indeed, of great importance," he replied.

"Mademoiselle Adrienne replied to my observations," said the doctor, "by rallying me in the most lively, sprightly manner imaginable, for I must own this young lady possesses the most brilliant wit of any female of my acquaintance."

"Doctor! doctor!" interrupted Madame de Saint-Dizier, "no weakness!"

Instead of any immediate answer to this remark, M. Baleinier took his gold snuffbox from the pocket of his waistcoat, opened it, and, helping himself to a pinch of snuff, continued, while slowly inhaling it, to regard the princess with an air so significant, that it appeared to set her quite at ease.

"Weakness, madame!" said M. Baleinier, at length, while gently shaking off with his white hand a few grains of snuff which had fallen on the folds of his shirt; "have I not done myself the honour to proffer my aid in the difficult position in which you are now placed?"

"And you only can render us this important service," said M. d'Aigrigny.

"You see, then, madame," resumed the doctor, "I am not a weak person, since I perfectly comprehend the part you wish me to play; but you have assured me that such immense interests are at stake—"

"Immense, indeed!" rejoined M. d'Aigrigny; "a first rate interest."

"Therefore I could not hesitate," replied M. Baleinier. "Be not concerned, but allow me, as a man of taste and judgment, to admire and do justice to the brilliant qualities of Mademoiselle Adrienne, and when the moment for acting arrives you will see how I shall conduct myself."

"That moment may be nearer than we suppose," said Madame de Saint-Dizier, exchanging a look with M. d'Aigrigny.

"Well, I am always ready," answered the doctor. "I can answer for the result, so far as I am concerned; I only wish I felt equally sure as regards other matters."

"Is not your madhouse as fashionable as it is possible for a madhouse to be?" said Madame de Saint-Dizier, with a half smile.

"As for that," replied the doctor, "I have almost to complain of having too many patients. No, that is not what I referred to; but, while we are awaiting the arrival of Mademoiselle Adrienne, I will say a few words respecting an affair with which she is but indirectly connected; it refers to the person who has purchased the estate at Cardoville, a certain Madame de la Sainte-Colombe, who, thanks to the skilful management of Rodin, has established me as her medical adviser."

"True!" said d'Aigrigny. "Rodin wrote me on the subject, but without entering into particulars."

"The fact is," continued the doctor, "this Madame de la Sainte-Colombe, who seemed at first so tractable, has evinced a great disposition to retrograde in her conversion; two of her spiritual advisers have already renounced all hopes of saving her. Not knowing how to proceed, Rodin despatched Philippon to her. Now Philippon is clever, determined, and gifted with patience enough to wear anybody out; he was just the man for the business. As Madame de la
Sainte-Colombe was one of my patients. Philippon applied to me for my assistance, which was granted, of course, and we agreed together as to our mode of co-operation. I was to appear entirely a stranger to him, while he was to give me daily accounts of the moral condition of his penitent, so that, by a harmless medicine (for, in reality, the state of my patient was not alarming), I might be able to produce alternations of health, and slight illness, according as her spiritual director was satisfied or otherwise, that he might be able to say to her, 'You see, madame, while you steadfastly pursue the right road, grace produces a salutary effect on your body, and you are well; but do you, on the contrary, relapse into your sins, you experience a return of bodily ills, evidently proving the all-powerful influence of faith, not only on the mind, but the body.'

"It is doubtless painful," said M. d'Aigrigny, with the most perfect composure, "to be obliged to employ such means in saving a fellow-creature from perdition; but we must at all times adapt our modes of action to the understanding and disposition of the individual concerned."

"Besides," resumed the doctor, "madame la princesse may recollect that I often, very successfully, employed this method in the convent of Sainte-Marie, for the souls' health of some of our invalids. These alternations vary, at the utmost, only from being 'quite well' to 'not quite so well'; but, however slight the change, it is frequently sufficient to work very efficaciously on certain minds. And thus had it proved with Madame de la Sainte-Colombe: she appeared to be in so certain a path of physical and mental cure that Rodin thought he might with safety direct Philippon to advise his penitent to retire to the country, fearing a relapse if she continued in Paris. This advice, coupled with her own desire to play the Lady Bountiful of the parish, determined her to purchase the estate of Cardoville (which, by-the-by, was a capital investment for her money); but, behold! yesterday, this unlucky Philippon came to tell me that Madame de la Sainte-Colombe was on the point of experiencing a fearful relapse—a moral relapse, be it understood, for her bodily health is lamentably good. Now this mischief has all arisen from a conversation this lady has had with a certain Jacques Dumoulin, of whom you know something, I am told, my dear abbé, and who has managed, I know not how, to form an acquaintance with her."

"This Jacques Dumoulin," said the marquis, with disgust, "is one of the men we despise while we make use of them. He is a writer full of gall, envy, and hatred, which gives him a sort of sharp, coarse eloquence. We pay him well to attack our enemies, though it is sometimes painful to vindicate, through the medium of such a pen, the principles we revere. He is a miserable scamp, always at a tavern, and generally drunk; but still the fellow has an inexhaustible vein of abuse, and is, besides, well versed in theological controversies, so that, at times, his services are valuable to us."
"Well, though Madame de la Sainte-Colombe is sixty years old, it would appear that Dumoulin has matrimonial designs upon the large fortune of this woman. You will do wisely, I think, to apprise Rodin, in order that he may take steps to preserve her from the sinister designs of this fellow. I must beg a thousand pardons for detaining you so long with these disagreeable particulars. But, _à propos_ of the convent of Sainte-Marie, of which I did myself, just now, the honour of making mention, madame," added the doctor, addressing himself to the princess; "is it long since you were there?"

The princess exchanged a quick glance with M. d'Aigrigny, and replied,

"About eight days ago."

"Then you will find much change; the wall between it and my madhouse has been pulled down, and they are going to build a new mansion and a chapel, as the old one was too small. By-the-way, I must say, to the praise of Mademoiselle Adrienne," added the doctor, with a singular, half smile, "that she had promised me, for the chapel, a copy of the 'Virgin' of Raphael."

"Indeed! that was very _à propos_," said the princess. "But it is nearly twelve o'clock, and M. Tripeau does not come."

"He is the acting guardian of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, and has managed her affairs as he formerly did those of the comte-duc," said the marquis, evidently preoccupied, "and his presence is indispensably requisite to us. He ought to be here before Mademoiselle de Cardoville, who may come at any moment."

"It is a pity that his portrait cannot replace him here," said the doctor, with a satirical smile, and taking a small pamphlet from his pocket.

"What is that, doctor?" inquired the princess.

"One of those anonymous pamphlets which appear from time to time; it is called the _Scourge_, and the picture of Baron Tripeaud is sketched with so much truth that it ceases to be satire—it becomes reality: see, or hear, rather. This etching is entitled ' _Type of the Lynx_.'

_"M. the Baron Tripeaud."_—This man, who shows himself as grossly servile toward certain superiors in the social scale, as coarse and brutal to those who are dependant on him—this man is the living and repulsive incarnation of the worst portion of the commercial and industrial aristocracy, of the _monied man_, the cold-blooded speculator, heartless, soulless, faithless, who would calculate the death of his mother if his mother's death could have any effect on the rise or fall of the funds.

"Such men have all the hateful vices of a newly enfranchised class; not of those whom honourable, patient, and worthy toil has nobly enriched, but of those who have been suddenly favoured by the blind caprice of chance, or by a happy cast of the net in the foul waters of stock-jobbing.

"Once risen, these men hate the people, because the people remind them of their origin, at which they blush. Without pity for the frightful wretchedness of the masses, they ascribe it to idleness and debauchery, because their calumny is an excuse for their brutal selfishness.

"But this is not all.

"From the elevation of his strong box, and his double right as an eligible representative, M. the Baron Tripeaud, like many others, reproaches with their poverty and political incapacity—

"The soldier of fortune, who, after forty years' service and warfare, can hardly exist on his scanty retiring pension;

"The magistrate, who has spent his life in fulfilling sad and painful duties, and is so miserably remunerated at the close of his days;

"The scholar, who has honoured his country by useful labours; or the professor, who has instructed whole generations in every class of human knowledge;

"The modest and virtuous rural priest, the purest representative of the Gospel in its charitable, paternal, and democratic interpretation, &c., &c.

"In this state of things, must not monsieur the Baron of Success have the most perfect contempt for the crowds of honest folk, who, after having given to
their country, their youth, their mature years, their blood, their intelligence, and
their knowledge, see themselves denied the rights which he enjoys? He be-
cause he has gained a million at a game forbidden by law, or by some discredit-
able assiduity!

"It is true that the optimists say to these outcasts of civilization, whose proud
and honest poverty cannot be too much honoured and venerated—

"Buy property; then you will be eligible, and electors.

"We now come to the biography of M. the Baron.

"André Tripeaud, son of an ostler at a country inn—"

At this moment the folding-doors opened, and the valet de chambre announced
"M. the Baron Tripeaud!"

Doctor Baleinier pocketed his pamphlet, saluted the financier most cordially,
and even rose to shake him by the hand.

The baron entered, making respectful salutations from the moment the doors
were opened.

"I have the honour to attend the princess's orders; she knows that she may
always rely on me."

"I rely on you entirely, Monsieur Tripeaud, and especially on the present oc-
casion."

"If the princess's intentions respecting mademoiselle continue as they were—"

"They do, sir, and that is the reason why we have all met here to-day."

"Madame la Princesse may feel assured of my concurrence, as I have prom-
ised. I think, also, that the greatest severity ought now to be employed, and
that it is even requisite—"

"That is our opinion, also," said the marquis, hastily, making a sign to the
princess, and looking toward the spot where the man with the spectacles was
concealed; "we are all agreed," he added, "only let us take care not to leave
anything concerning the interests of this young lady in doubt; for it is her in-
terests which alone guide us; let us, therefore, by all means obtain from her a full exposition of her feelings and opinions."

"Mademoiselle has come from the pavilion, and begs to know if she can see my lady," said the valet de chambre, who again presented himself, after having knocked at the door.

"Tell mademoiselle that I am waiting for her," said the princess; "and now I am not at home to anybody—do you hear? not to anybody." Then lifting the screen behind which the man was hidden, Madame Saint-Dizier gave him a final signal of intelligence, and returned to the salon.

It was strange, but, during the short space which preceded the arrival of Adrienne, the different actors in this scene seemed disturbed and embarrassed, as if they had a vague dread of her appearance.

At the end of a minute, Mademoiselle de Cardoville entered her aunt's apartment.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SKIRMISH.

As she entered, Mademoiselle de Cardoville threw into an arm-chair her gray beaver hat, which she had put on to cross the garden, and displayed her beautiful golden hair, which fell on each side of her face in long and graceful ringlets, and was twisted up in a large knot at the back of her head.

Adrienne presented herself without boldness, but perfectly self-possessed; her countenance was smiling and animated, and her large black eyes seemed more than usually sparkling. When she saw the Abbé d'Aigrigny, she made a movement of surprise, and a slightly derisive smile passed over her ruby lips. Having given a kind nod of the head to the doctor, and passed in front of Baron Tripeaud without looking at him, she saluted the princess with a half-courtesy, elegant but dignified.

Although the appearance and carriage of Mademoiselle de Cardoville were in the best style, and particularly remarkable for their womanly grace, there was in them a something resolute, independent, and haughty, very rare among females, and especially young ladies at her age; her movements, without being abrupt, had nothing of constraint, stiffness, or formality—they were, in fact, free and sustained, like her character: it was easy to see in her the full development of life and youth, and to judge that this organization, so entirely open, loyal, and decided, had never yet submitted to the restraint of an affected reserve.

It was strange that the Marquis d'Aigrigny, although a man of the world, of great abilities, a Churchman remarkable for his eloquence, and especially a man of control and authority, experienced an unaccountable discomfort, an inexpressible and almost painful restraint, in presence of Adrienne de Cardoville. He, always so much under self-control; he, habituated to the exercise of unbounded power; he who had often, in the name of his Order, treated on terms of equality with crowned heads, felt himself embarrassed, and ill at ease with himself in the presence of this young girl, who was as remarkable for her frankness as for her wit and biting satire. Yet as men who are accustomed to exercise authority over others are not far from hating those who, instead of submitting to their influence, jest at and successfully resist them, so it was not precisely a feeling of affection which the marquis experienced for the niece of the Princess de Saint-Dizier.

For a long time, and contrary to his usual practice, he had ceased to try upon Adrienne that seductive power, that fascination of language, to which was mainly owing the irresistibility of his demeanour; with her he was cold, short, and serious, and assumed a frigid and haughty dignity, an austere formality, utterly paralyzing to the amiable qualities with which he was gifted, and which usually served his purpose so well. Adrienne was greatly amused at all this, but imprudently, for the most vulgar causes often generate implacable hatred.
Having thus premised, the different feelings and interests which actuated the several actors in this scene may be appreciated.

Madame de Saint-Dizier was seated in a large arm-chair at the corner of the fireplace.

The Marquis d'Aigrigny was standing before the fire.

Doctor Baleinier, seated near a writing-desk, had resumed his perusal of the Baron Tripeaud's biography.

The baron seemed to be very attentively examining a devotional picture hung against the wall.

"You sent for me, aunt, to talk over some important matters?" said Adrienne, breaking the embarrassing silence which had pervaded the room since her entrance.

"Yes, mademoiselle," replied the princess, with a cold and stern air; "on a most serious matter."

"I am quite at your service, aunt. Shall we go into your library?"

"There is no occasion for that; we can talk here." Then addressing the marquis, the doctor, and the baron, she said, "Gentlemen, will you please to be seated."

They accordingly took their places round the cabinet table of the princess.

"May I inquire, aunt," asked Mademoiselle de Cardoville, with surprise, "in what manner our conversation can concern these gentlemen?"

"These gentlemen are old friends of our family; all that can affect you interests them, and their counsels ought to be listened to, and received by you with respect."

"I have no doubt, aunt, of the very particular friendship of M. d'Aigrigny for our family, still less can I doubt the profound and disinterested devotion of M.
Tripeaud; M. Baleimier is one of my old friends; but before I accept of these gentlemen as spectators, or, if you like better, aunt, as confidants of our conversation, I wish to be instructed as to the subject which is to be discussed before them."

"I thought, mademoiselle, that, among your singular pretensions, you had at least frankness and courage."

"Oh!" replied Adrienne, smiling with mock humility, "I have no greater pretensions to frankness and courage than you have to sincerity and goodness; let us, therefore, agree, once for all, that we are what we are—without pretension."

"Be it so," said Madame de Saint-Dizier, in a dry tone. "For a long time I have been accustomed to the outbreaks of your independent spirit, and I think that, frank and courageous as you are said to be, you ought not to fear speaking out before persons as serious and respectable as these gentlemen, as you would if we two were alone."

"It is, then, an interrogatory which I am to undergo; and on what point?"

"It is not an interrogatory; but, as I have the right to watch over you, and as you abuse my weak compliance with your humours more and more, I am desirous of putting an end to that which has lasted too long already; and I am also desirous, before these friends of our family, to signify to you my irrevocable resolution as to the future. And, in the first place, let me tell you that, up to this time, you have entertained a very false and imperfect idea of my power over you."

"I assure you, aunt, that I have never entertained any idea, false or true; for it is a point on which I have never thought at all."

"That was my fault: I ought, instead of complying with your fancies, to have made you feel more severely my authority. But the moment has come when you must be made to submit: the blame of my friends has opened my eyes before it is too late. Your disposition is self-willed, independent, headstrong, and it must be altered I tell you; and I, moreover, tell you it shall be altered."

At these words, harshly spoken, before persons not allied to her, and the severity of which seemed wholly uncalled for, Adrienne raised her head haughtily; but mastering her emotion, she replied, with a smile,

"You say, aunt, that I shall alter: that will not surprise me. Such strange conversions have been seen!"

The princess bit her lip.

"A sincere conversion is never strange, as you term it, mademoiselle," said the Abbé d'Aligrigny, coldly; "but, on the contrary, very meritorious and full of good example."

"Good!" retorted Adrienne. "That's as it may be; for, if faults are converted into vices—"

"What do you mean, mademoiselle?" exclaimed the princess.

"I speak of myself, aunt: you reproach me with being independent and resolute; suppose by accident I were to become hypocritical and wicked! I would rather preserve my dear little naughtinesses, which I love as spoiled children. I know what I am, but not what I might become."

"Still, Mademoiselle Adrienne," said the Baron Tripeaud, with a sententious and conceited air, "you cannot deny that a conversion—"

"I believe that M. Tripeaud is very skilful in the conversion of every kind of thing, into every sort of profit, by every possible means," said Adrienne, in a marked and disdainful tone; "but the subject before us is not his business."

"But, mademoiselle," replied the financier, taking courage from a look of the princess, "you forget that I have the honour to be your sub-guardian, and that—"

"It is true that M. Tripeaud has that honour, and I never could clearly understand wherefore;" said Adrienne, with increased hauteur, and not even looking at the baron; "but at present we are not guessing riddles. I beg, therefore, aunt, to learn the motive and the end of this meeting."
"You shall be satisfied, mademoiselle; I will explain myself in a way perfectly clear and precise. You shall know the line of conduct which you must henceforward pursue, and if you refuse to submit with the obedience and respect due to my commands, I shall then see what I have to do."

It is impossible to depict the imperious tone, the harsh manner of the princess, as she said these words, which were enough to startle a young girl accustomed, up to that time, to live and do as she pleased. Yet, perhaps contrary to the expectation of Madame Saint-Dizier, instead of replying with temper, Adrienne looked her full in the face, and said, laughingly,

"Really, then, it is a decided declaration of war; this becomes amusing."

"It is no declaration of war," said the abbé, in a severe tone, wounded by Mademoiselle de Cardoville's expressions.

"Ah, Monsieur l'Abbé!" she replied; "you, an old colonel, are very hard on a jest! you, who owe so much to war! you who, thanks to war, have commanded a French regiment, after having so long fought against France—in order, no doubt, that you might know the strength and weakness of her enemies."

At these words, which called up painful remembrances, the marquis turned red, and was about to reply, when the princess exclaimed,

"Really, mademoiselle, this conduct is intolerable!"

"Perhaps it is, aunt. I confess my error. I ought not to say that it is amusing, for really it is not at all so; but, at least, it is curious, and perhaps even," added the young lady, after a moment's silence, "perhaps even rather bold; but I like boldness. Since, then, we are at this point, and are to decide upon a course of conduct which I am to comply with, under penalty of—" then checking herself, and addressing her aunt, "Under what penalty, aunt?"

"You will learn: continue."

"I will, then, before these gentlemen, deliver to you, in a clear and precise manner, my determination. As it required time to prepare for its execution, I have not mentioned it to you before; for, as you know, it is not my custom to say 'I will do this,' but 'I have done so and so.'"

"Certainly; and it is this habit of culpable independence which must be broken."

"It was not my intention to inform you of my resolution just at present, but I cannot resist the pleasure of telling you a portion of it to-day, as you seem so desirous to learn and approve of it. But I beg of you, aunt, first to speak; it might so happen that our views are completely accordant."

"I like better to find you in this mood," said the princess; "I find in you the courage of pride and contempt for all authority. You talk of boldness; your own is excessive."

"I am at least determined to do what others, through weakness, unfortunately, dare not do; I will dare. This, I think, is clear and precise enough."

"Very clear—very precise," said the princess, exchanging a look of intelligence and satisfaction with the other actors in this scene. "Positions thus established very much simplify matters. I ought, though, to warn you, for your own sake, that this is a very serious affair—more so than you think, and that there is but one way in which you can dispose me to be indulgent; and that is, by substituting for the arrogance and habitual irony of your language the modesty and respect which befit a young lady."

Adrienne smiled, but made no reply.

There was a brief silence, and some looks were exchanged again between the princess and her three friends, which implied that a serious battle was about to follow these skirmishings.

Mademoiselle de Cardoville had too much penetration, too much sagacity, not to observe that the Princess de Saint-Dizier attached very serious importance to this decisive interview; but the young lady did not understand how her aunt could hope to enforce on her an absolute will; threats of having recourse to means of coercion seemed to her ridiculous. Nevertheless, knowing the vindic-
tive character of her aunt, the dark power she wielded, the terrible vengeance she had sometimes taken; reflecting, also, that men in the positions of the marquis and the doctor could not be called in to assist at such an interview but from weighty motives, the young lady reflected for a moment before she gave battle.

But soon, for the very reason that she vaguely suspected some danger at hand, she, far from succumbing, resolved to face and brave it, to exalt, if possible, the independence of her own ideas, and maintain to the last, at every hazard, the determination which she, on her side, was on the eve of announcing to the Princess de Saint-Dizier.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REVOLT.

"Madeleine," said the princess to Adrienne de Cardoville, in a cold and severe tone, "I owe it to myself, I owe it to these gentlemen, to recall, in few words, the events which have been passing now for some time. Six months ago, after the expiration of your mourning for your father, and when you were eighteen years of age, you asked my leave to enjoy your fortune and be emancipated from control. I was weak enough to comply. You wished to leave this hotel and establish yourself in the pavilion in the garden, away from all surveillance, and you then began a series of extravagances, each more excessive than the other. Instead of contenting yourself with one or two waiting-maids, taken from the class in which they are usually found, you have selected companions, whom you have dressed in a manner as whimsical as it is costly; yourself, in the solitude of your pavilion it is true, you have attired in every costume of by-gone times by turns. Your caprices, your follies, have been boundless;
not only have you never fulfilled your religious duties, but you have had the audacity to profane one of your apartments by erecting some sort of pagan altar, on which is a marble group representing a young man and a girl (the princess pronounced these words as if they burned her lips); an object of art, perhaps, but the most improper that could be selected for the apartment of a young person of your age. You have passed whole days entirely secluded, without receiving any person; and Dr. Bulemier, the only one of my friends in whom you have retained some confidence, having at length obtained admittance to you, has frequently found you in such a high state of excitement, that he has had the greatest fears for your health. You have always chosen to go out alone, without being accountable to any person for your actions; and, in short, it has pleased you, upon all occasions, to set your own will above my authority. All this is true, is it not?"

"This picture of the past is not much flattered," said Adrienne, with a smile; "but it is not altogether beyond recognition."

"Then, mademoiselle," said the Abbé d'Aigrigny, speaking with much deliberation, "you confess that all the facts which your aunt has adduced are scrupulously true?"

All eyes were turned on Adrienne, as if her reply would be of the utmost importance.

"Certainly, sir; I am accustomed to live so openly that such a question is useless."

"These facts, then, are confessed," said the Abbé d'Aigrigny, turning to the doctor and the baron.

"These facts remain completely substantiated," said M. Tripeaud, with a consequential air.

"May I inquire, aunt," said Adrienne, "the object of this long preamble?"

"This long preamble, mademoiselle," replied the princess, with dignity, "serves to reveal the past so that it may operate upon the future."

"This is somewhat, my dear aunt, in the style of the mysterious utterings of the Cumaean sibyl. Something very terrible must come after."

"Perhaps so, mademoiselle; for nothing can be more terrible for certain dispositions than obedience and duty, and yours is of that class which is inclined to rebellion."

"I confess it frankly, aunt; and so it will be until the time when I can love obedience and respect duty."

"Whether you love or respect my orders or not is of little consequence, mademoiselle," said the princess, in a harsh and brief tone; "but from this day, this moment, you must begin to submit yourself entirely and blindly to my will—in a word, you will do nothing without my permission: it must and shall be so."

Adrienne looked steadfastly at her aunt for a minute, and then burst into a fit of loud and joyous laughter, which echoed through the large apartment.

M. d'Aigrigny and the Baron Tripeaud made gestures of indignation.

The princess looked at her niece with an angry air.

The doctor raised his eyes to heaven, and, clasping his hands together over his stomach, sighed with much compunction.

"Mademoiselle, such bursts of laughter are very ill-timed," said the Abbé d'Aigrigny; "the words of your aunt are most serious, and deserve a very different reception."

"Oh," said Adrienne, repressing her mirth; "whose fault is it if I laugh so loud? How could I remain unmoved when I heard my aunt speak of a blind submission to her orders? Can the swallow, accustomed to fly freely through the air, to enjoy the full sunlight, exist in a mole-hill?"

At this reply, M. d'Aigrigny affected to regard the other parties to this kind of family consultation with profound astonishment.

"A swallow! what does she mean?" asked the abbé of the baron, making him a sign which the other understood.
"I really do not know," replied Tripeaud, looking, in his turn, at the doctor; "she talks of a mole—I never heard of such a thing; it is incomprehensible!"

"This, then, mademoiselle," said the princess, appearing to participate in the surprise of the other persons; "this, then, is the reply you make to me?"

"Certainly," replied Adrienne, astonished, in her turn, that they affected not to understand the figure she had made use of, as she was often in the habit of using fanciful and poetical similes.

"Stay, madame!" said Dr. Baleinier, smiling blandly; "we must be indulgent; my dear Mademoiselle Adrienne has such a high-toned, excitable temperament—she is really the most delightful madcap I ever knew, and I have told her so a hundred times in my capacity of an old friend, who may say what he pleases."

"I know that your regard for mademoiselle makes you very indulgent; but it is not the less true, doctor," said M. d'Aigrigny, seeming to reproach the physician for taking part with Mademoiselle de Cardoville, "that these are wild replies to questions so grave and serious."

"The misfortune is that mademoiselle does not comprehend the gravity of this conference," said the princess, with a severe air. "Perhaps she will comprehend it now, when I shall tell her my commands."

"Let us hear those commands, aunt."

And Adrienne, who was sitting at the side of the table opposite to her aunt, placed her little rosy chin in the hollow of her beautiful hand, with an air of graceful mockery which was charming.

"From to-morrow," replied the princess, "you will leave the pavilion in which you dwell. You will dismiss your women; you will return and occupy two rooms here, which have no approach but through my apartment; you will never go out alone; you will accompany me to religious duties; your control of your property will cease, in consequence of extravagances clearly and distinctly made out. I shall take upon myself the arrangement of all your expenses; I shall order your dresses, that you may be modestly attired, as you ought to be; in short, until you attain your majority, which is now indefinitely deferred, thanks to the intervention of a family consultation, you will have no money at your command. Such is my will."

"And certainly your resolution, madame la princesse, cannot be too much applauded," said the Baron Tripeaud. "You must be supported in displaying the greatest firmness, for such conduct ought to be put a stop to."
"It is more than time to terminate such scandalous behaviour!" added the abbé.

"Caprice, excitement of mind, however, may palliate many things," said the doctor, with a hypocritical air.

"Unquestionably," replied the princess, dryly, to the doctor, who played his part admirably; "but such natures must be dealt with as need requires."

Madame de Saint-Dizier had expressed herself in a firm and precise manner, and seemed convinced of the possibility of exacting all she required from her niece. M. Tripeaud and M. d'Aigrigny had given their full assent to all the princess said. Adrienne then began to perceive that there was really something serious in agitation, and her mirth gave way to bitter irony, and an expression of aroused independence.

She rose suddenly from her seat; her countenance was somewhat suffused, her nostrils expanded, her eye glistened, and, raising her head, she shook her bright and flowing hair with a gesture full of natural dignity, and, after a moment's silence, replied to her aunt in an emphatic tone:

"You, madame, have spoken of the past; I will also speak of it a few words to which you have forced me, and I say them with regret. I left your dwelling because it was impossible that I could any longer live in an atmosphere of dark hypocrisy and base perfidy."

"Mademoiselle," said M. d'Aigrigny, "such language is as violent as it is unreasonable!"

"Sir, since you interrupt me, I will say two words to you," said Adrienne, peremptorily, and looking steadfastly at the abbé. "What examples did I find in my aunt's abode?"

"Excellent examples, mademoiselle."

"Excellent, sir? Was it because I saw there daily her conversion, the accomplice of your own?"

"Mademoiselle, you forget yourself!" said the princess, pale with rage.

"Madame, I do not forget; I remember, as everybody must— That is all. I had no relative from whom to seek an asylum—I wished to live alone—I desired to have my income, because I would rather spend it myself than allow it to be wasted by M. Tripeaud."

"Mademoiselle!" exclaimed the baron, "I cannot understand how you can allow yourself—"

"Enough, sir!" said Adrienne, imposing silence on him by a gesture of the most cutting disdain. "I am speaking of you, and not to you."

Adrienne continued:

"I resolved, therefore, to expend my revenue according to my own tastes; I have embellished the retreat I selected. To waiting-maids ugly and ill-informed I have preferred handsome young girls, well brought up, though poor; their education not allowing me to put them to domestic drudgery, I have made their situations agreeable and easy; they do not serve me, they render me service; I pay them, but I give them gratitude. These are niceties which I know you do not comprehend, madame. Instead of seeing them badly or ungracefully dressed, I have given them attire which suits their handsome faces, because I admire youth and beauty; and if I dress in any peculiar way, that is nothing to anybody but my looking-glass. I go out alone, because I like to go wherever my fancy may lead me. I do not go to mass—true. If my mother were living, I would tell her what my devotions are, and she would embrace me tenderly. I have raised a pagan altar to Youth and Beauty, because I adore God in everything beautiful, good, noble, and great which he has made, and my heart, from morning to night, repeats this fervent and sincere prayer: 'Thanks, Almighty Father! thanks.' M. Balemier, you say, madame, has often found me in my solitude, a prey to strange excitement—that is true, also; because, at such moments, escaping in thought from all that makes the present so hateful, so painful, so repulsive, I have sought refuge in the future, and there I have seen magic
horizons, visions so glorious that I have been carried away in sublime and divine ecstasy, and belonged no more to earth."

As she pronounced these words enthusiastically, the countenance of Adrienne seemed to glow with inspiration, and for the moment she was out of the world which existed around her.

"Then," she continued, with increasing excitement, "I breathed a pure, vivifying, and free air—oh, yes, free! free! and so wholesome, so congenial to the soul! Yes, instead of seeing my sisters painfully submitted to an egotistical, humiliating, and brutal control, to which they owe the seducing vices of slavery, sleek fraud, caressing perfidy, cajoling mendacity, despicable resignation, hateful obedience, I saw them, those noble sisters, worthy and sincere, because they were free; faithful and devoted, because they had a choice; neither despotic nor servile, because they had no master to rule or flatter; cherished and respected, because they could withdraw from a faithless hand a hand faithfully given. Oh, my sisters! my sisters! these are not only comforting visions, they are also sacred hopes!"

Carried away, in spite of herself, by the excitement of her ideas, Adrienne was silent for a moment, that she might alight on earth again, and did not remark that the actors in this scene looked at each other with a delighted air.

"But what she says is really beautiful!" murmured the doctor in the ear of the princess; "if she had arranged it with us, she could not have spoken better."

"It is only by exciting her through a course of extreme severity that she will reach the point to which we must drive her," added M. d'Aigrigny.

But it would appear that the irritation of Adrienne was dissipated when it came in collision with the generous feelings that pervaded her.

Addressing M. Baleinier, she said, with a smile,

"But, doctor, it must be confessed that nothing is so ridiculous as giving way to the enjoyment of certain thoughts in the presence of persons incapable of appreciating them. I have given you a fine opportunity for deriding that exalta-
tion of soul with which you sometimes reproach me; and I, to allow myself to be led away at so serious a moment, for it appears this is a very serious moment! But, then, my good M. Baleinier, when an idea comes into my mind, it is as impossible for me not to follow it up as it was impossible that I should not run after butterflies when I was a good little girl."

"And Heaven only knows whither those brilliant butterflies of every hue, which came across your mind, have led you. Ah, the mad head—the foolish fancy!" said M. Baleinier, smiling with a paternal and indulgent air; "when will you be as reasonable as you are charming?"

"From this instant, doctor," replied Adrienne, "I will at once abandon my reveries for realities, and speak a language perfectly positive, as you shall hear."

Then addressing her aunt, she continued:

"You have communicated to me, madame, your will; I will now communicate mine. In less than a week I shall leave the pavilion I inhabit for a mansion which I have fitted up according to my taste, and I shall live there as I please. I have neither father nor mother, and am accountable for my actions to none but myself."

"Really, mademoiselle," said the princess, shrugging her shoulders, "you are talking nonsense! You forget that society has rights of morality, and that we are empowered to see them enforced; and, rely on it, we will do so."

"Then, madame, it is you, and M. d'Aigrigny, and M. Tripeaud who represent the morality of society. That is an ingenious idea, certainly. Is it because M. Tripeaud has considered—I must say it—my fortune as his own? Is it because—"

"But, mademoiselle!" cried Tripeaud.

"Presently, madame," said Adrienne to her aunt, without deigning a reply to the baron, "since the opportunity serves, I shall take leave to ask of you explanations concerning certain interests which, I believe, have been concealed from me until now—"

At these words of Adrienne, M. d'Aigrigny and the princess were startled. They exchanged looks of pain and uneasiness. Adrienne did not remark it, and continued:

"But, to make an end of your demands, madame, I will be explicit. I will live precisely as I choose. I do not think that, if I were a man, at my age they would inflict upon me the severe and humiliating system of tutelage which you desire to impose for having lived as I have lived hitherto—honourably, freely, and generously in the sight of all."

"The idea is absurd! 'tis madness!" exclaimed the princess. "It is pushing demoralization and the forgetfulness of all modesty to the last degree, to desire to lead such a life!"

"Then, madame," said Adrienne, "what opinion have you of many poor girls of humble origin, orphans like myself, who live free and alone as I mean to do? They have not had, like me, a refined education, which elevates the soul and purifies the heart. They have not, as I have, riches, which defend from all the temptations of misery, and yet they live honest and proud in their poverty."

"Vice and virtue have no existence for such low-lived creatures!" exclaimed the Baron Tripeaud, with an expression of harshness and fierce contempt.

"Madame, you would turn away one of your lackeys who dared to use such language before you," said Adrienne to her aunt, unable to repress her disgust; "and yet you compel me to hear such things!"

The Marquis d'Aigrigny pressed Tripeaud's knee under the table, who had spoken in the princess's saloon as he would at the Exchange, and said quickly, to repair the baron's coarseness,

"Mademoiselle, there is no comparison between such people and a young lady of your station."

"For a Catholic, M. l'Abbé, the distinction is not very Christian-like," replied Adrienne.
"I know the force of my words, mademoiselle," replied the abbé, dryly, "the independent life you would lead, against all reason, must involve sad consequences for the future; for, perhaps, some day or other your family may wish to marry you, and then—"

"I will spare my family that trouble, sir. If I desire to marry, I will marry myself; that, I think, is but fair; though, to tell the truth, I am but little tempted to wear the heavy chain which selfishness and brutality rivet round our necks."

"It is really quite unbecoming, mademoiselle," said the princess, "to speak thus slightly of that institution!"

"Before you, madame, assuredly; and I pray you to forgive me for having shocked you. You fear that my independent way of life may frighten away suitors; that is another reason why I will persist in my independence, for I have a horror of suitors. All I desire is to frighten them away, to give them a bad opinion of me, and to effect that, there is no better way than appearing to live exactly as they live themselves. And so I rely on my whims, my follies, and my cherished defects and faults, to preserve me from the tiresome attentions of being sought after in marriage."

"You shall be perfectly satisfied on that point, mademoiselle," replied Madame de Saint-Dizier, "if, unfortunately (and it is much to be feared), the report should spread abroad of your having so entirely discarded all regard to propriety as to be seen returning home at eight o'clock in the morning (as I am told you have been), though, I confess, I neither can nor dare give credit to such an enormity."

"Nay, madame, you are wrong, for it is—"

"Then you confess it!" exclaimed the princess.

"I never disown my actions, madame; I did return home this morning at eight o'clock!"

"Gentlemen!" cried the princess, "you hear her!"

"Ah!" exclaimed M. d'Aigrigny, in a deep voice.

"Ah!" echoed the baron, in a false and subtle voice.

"Ah!" murmured the doctor, with a deep sigh.

As the mingled lamentations arose, Adrienne was on the point of speaking, perhaps of justifying herself; but, by the slightly contemptuous curl of her lip, it was evident she disdained all explanation.

"And so this report is true!" resumed the princess. "Ah, mademoiselle! although you have taught me to be astonished at nothing, it required your audacious reply to convince me of such conduct."

"I have always imagined, madame, that there was much greater audacity in uttering a falsehood than in speaking the truth."

"And where had you been, mademoiselle? and upon what business?"

"Madame," said Adrienne, interrupting her aunt, "I never lie, but neither do I tell what I do not choose to tell; besides, it is mean to defend one's self against a disgraceful accusation. Let us drop the subject; all your importunities concerning it will be useless; let us rather go back to the point we were discussing. You wish to impose on me a system of rigid tutelage; I intend to leave the pavilion I now occupy, and to dwell where I choose, and after my own liking. One of us must yield; which shall it be? Time will decide. Now, another thing; this hotel is mine. It is indifferent to me your remaining here, now I have left it; but the ground floor is uninhabited, and contains, without reckoning the reception-rooms, two complete suites of apartments, which I have disposed of for some time."

"Really, mademoiselle!" said the princess, casting a look of surprise at M. d'Aigrigny; then adding, ironically, "and to whom have you disposed of them?"

"I require them for the accommodation of three persons belonging to my family."

"What, in Heaven's name, do you mean!" exclaimed Madame de Saint-Dizier, more and more astonished.
"I mean, madame, that I am desirous of offering hospitality to a young Indian prince, my relation by my mother's side: he will arrive in two or three days, and I desire to have the apartments ready for his reception."

"Do you hear this, gentlemen?" inquired M. d'Aigrigny (affecting utter amazement) of the doctor and M. Tripeaud.

"This passes all imagination!" said the baron.

"Alas!" said the doctor, with compunction, "the sentiment is generous in itself; but this wild little head—"

"Wonderful!" cried the princess. "Certainly I cannot prevent you, mademoiselle, from giving utterance to the most extravagant desires; but I suppose you do not mean to stop short in your projects—surely this is not all?"

"Not quite, madame! I have this morning learned that two others of my relations by my mother—two young girls of about fifteen years of age—orphans, the children of Marshal Simon, arrived in Paris yesterday, after a long journey, and are now staying with the wife of the brave soldier who has brought them hither from the most distant part of Siberia."

At these words M. d'Aigrigny and the princess suddenly started, and surveyed each other with undisguised alarm; so little did they suppose that the return of General Simon's daughters was known to Adrienne, that the fact was a perfect thunderbolt to them.

"You are, doubtless, astonished to find me so well informed," said Adrienne; "fortunately, I hope to astonish you still more shortly. But, to return to the daughters of General Simon, you must be aware, madame, that it is impossible for me to leave them a burden on the worthy persons with whom they have found a temporary asylum; although these persons are as honest and good as they are industrious, still it is no fitting residence for my young relatives. I therefore intend placing them in one of the suites of apartments on the ground floor, with the soldier's wife, who will make an excellent housekeeper for them."

As Adrienne concluded, M. d'Aigrigny and the baron exchanged looks, and the latter said,

"Decidedly her head is turned?"

Adrienne, without deigning to notice M. Tripeaud, proceeded:

"General Simon is expected to arrive in Paris every hour. Imagine the delight it will be to me to present to him his two children, and to prove that they have received every attention! To-morrow morning I will send milliners and dressmakers to provide them with a suitable wardrobe. Oh, I will so arrange everything that, on their father's return, they shall shine forth in dazzling loveliness! I am told they are beautiful as angels; but I, profane mortal that I am, will convert them into loves."

"Pray, mademoiselle, have you quite finished your ecstasies?" said the princess, in a sardonic tone and with suppressed rage, while M. d'Aigrigny, apparently calm and collected, could with difficulty suppress his mortal agonies.

"Pray take the trouble of recollecting," continued the princess, addressing herself to Adrienne; "cannot you augment this interesting family colony? Upon my word, no queen could proceed more magnificently than you propose doing!"

"And in good truth, madame, I purpose bestowing on my family a royal reception, such as is due to the son of a king and the daughters of Maréchal the Duc de Ligny. It is so charming to add all other luxuries to that of the heart's hospitality."

"The principle is generous, certainly," returned the princess, more and more agitated; "it is only a pity that, to carry out your vast ideas, you have not the mines of Potosi at command!"

"It is of a mine, and they say an immensely rich one, that I desire to converse with you, madame, and I cannot find a more fitting occasion. However large my fortune may be, it is as nothing compared with the immense wealth which may, from hour to hour, descend to our family; and with this immediate expectancy, perhaps, madame, you will be less severe upon what you are pleased to style my royal prodigality."
The position of M. d'Aigrigny was becoming more and more difficult to endure.

The affair of the medals was so important that he had concealed it from Doctor Baleinier, even when requesting his aid for the preservation of immense interests. Neither was M. Tripeaud better informed, for the princess believed she had destroyed every paper belonging to Adrienne's father which could have given him the knowledge. Not only, therefore, was the abbé confounded at finding Mademoiselle de Cardoville in possession of the secret, but terrified at the thought of her proclaiming it.

The princess shared his alarm, and made haste to interrupt her niece by saying,

"Mademoiselle, there are certain family matters upon which secrecy should be observed; and, although not fully understanding your allusion, I desire you will change the subject."

"What, madame! Are we not a family party, as attested by the not very amiable words we have been exchanging?"

"Mademoiselle, it is useless holding any argument! When family matters, more or less open to dispute, are in question, it is foolish to discuss them without having the documents at hand."

"And what have we been discoursing upon for the last hour, if not matters of interest? Really, I cannot understand your astonishment—your embarrassment—"

"I am neither astonished nor embarrassed, mademoiselle; but, after the wild and extravagant things you have been saying for the last two hours, it is no wonder one becomes bewildered."

"You must pardon me, madame; but you really are very much embarrassed," pursued Adrienne, gazing at her aunt with fixed attention; "and M. d'Aigrigny also, which, joined to certain suspicions I have not yet had time to clear up—"

Then, after a pause, Adrienne continued, "Have I then judged aright? We shall see!"

"Mademoiselle," exclaimed the princess, losing all self-command, "I command you to be silent!"

"Ah, madame!" said Adrienne, "for a person ordinarily so self-possessed, you betray yourself sadly!"

At this moment, so fraught with danger, chance came most opportune to the relief of the princess and the abbé.

A valet de chambre presented himself with so terrified and agitated a countenance, that the princess quickly exclaimed,

"What is the matter, Du-bois?"

"Your pardon, Madame la Princesse," returned the man, "for thus intruding against your positive commands; but the commissary of police desires to speak with you instantly. He is down stairs, and several of his assistants are in the court-yard with a party of soldiers."

Spite of the extreme surprise caused by this novel incident, the princess gladly availed herself of it to consult with M. d'Aigrigny, relative to the threatening disclosures of Adrienne, and, rising, she said,
THE WANDERING JEW.

CHAPTER IX.

TREACHERY.

HAVING Adrienne, M. Tripeaud, and the doctor in her cabinet, the Princess de Saint-Dizier, accompanied by M. d'Aigrigny, and followed by the servant, stopped in the room adjoining.

"Where is the commissary of police?" she inquired of the valet, who had announced to her the arrival of that functionary.

"He is in the blue saloon, madame."

"Then ask him from me to be so kind as to wait for a few minutes."

The valet de chambre bowed and left the apartment.

Then Madame de Saint-Dizier came quickly to M. d'Aigrigny, whose countenance, usually firm and haughty, was pale and downcast.

"You see," she exclaimed, in a hasty voice; "Adrienne knows all now: what are we to do? what is to be done?"

"I do not know," said the abbé, with a fixed and absorbed look: "this discovery is a terrible blow."

"All is lost, then!"

"There is but one means of safety," said M. d'Aigrigny, "and that is—the doctor."

"But how?" exclaimed the princess; "so suddenly! this very day?"

"Two hours hence it will be too late; this imp of a girl will have seen the daughters of Marshal Simon."

"But, Frederic, it is impossible. M. Baleinier will never agree; he will have all his preparations to make, which was to be done after the interrogatory of this morning."

"No matter," replied the abbé, quickly; "the doctor must do it now at any risk."

"But under what pretext?"

"I will try to find one."

"Supposing that you hit upon some pretext, Frederic, if we must act to-day, nothing is prepared—down there."

"Oh, rely upon it; by habitual precaution they are always ready."

"But how are we to forewarn the doctor at this very moment?" replied the princess.

"To send for him would awaken your niece's suspicions," said D'Aigrigny; "and that must be avoided."

"Unquestionably," replied the princess; "her confidence in him is one of our greatest resources."

"There is one way," said the abbé, suddenly; "I will write a few lines to Baleinier; one of your people will take it to him as if it came from somewhere else—from some patient in great haste."

"An excellent idea!" said the princess. "You are right: here upon the table are writing materials—quick, quick! But will the doctor succeed?"

"To say the truth, I can hardly hope it," said the marquis, sitting down to the table with anger almost irrepressible. "Thanks to this interrogatory, which has, indeed, gone beyond our hopes, and which our man, concealed behind the screen, has taken down faithfully in short-hand—thanks to the violent scenes which must
necessarily take place to-morrow and afterward, the doctor, using skilful precautions, will be able to act with the most perfect certainty. But to ask him that to-day—at this moment—really, Herminie, it is a folly to think of it!” and the marquis tossed away the pen he held in his hand, and added, with a deep and bitter expression of irritation, “At the very moment of success, behold all our hopes crushed! Ah! the consequences of all this are incalculable. Your niece has done us immense mischief! immense mischief!”

It is impossible to describe the intense anger, the implacable hate, with which M. d'Aigrigny pronounced these last words.

“Frederic!” exclaimed the princess, with anxiety, and placing her hand quickly on the hand of the abbé, “I entreat you not to despair yet; the doctor's mind is so fertile in resources, and he is so completely devoted to us—let us try once more.”

“Well, there is at least the chance,” said the abbé, resuming the pen.

“Viewing things at the worst,” said the princess, “suppose Adrienne does go this evening to Marshal Simon's daughters, it is just possible that she will not find them.”

“We cannot hope that; it is impossible that Rodin's orders could be so quickly executed; if so, we should have received the information.”

“That is true; write, then, to the doctor: I will send Dubois to you, and he will take your letter. Courage, Frederic, and we shall still conquer this intractable girl.” Then Madame de Saint-Dizier added, with bitter rage, “Oh, Adrienne! Adrienne! you shall pay dearly for your insolent sarcasms and the anguish you have caused us!”

As she was leaving the room, the princess turned and said to M. d'Aigrigny, “Wait for me here; I will let you know what the commissary's visit means, and we will return to the room together.”

The princess then left the apartment. M. d'Aigrigny wrote some hasty words with a tremulous hand.
CHAPTER X.

THE SNAKE.

After Madame de Saint-Dizier and the marquis had left the room, Adrienne had remained in her aunt's cabinet with M. Baleinier and Baron Tripeaud.

When she heard announced the arrival of the commissary, Mademoiselle de Cardoville felt very uneasy, for she had no doubt that, as Agricola had feared, the magistrate had come to demand authority for making a search in the hotel and the pavilion, in order to find the smith, whom they believed to be hidden there. Although she believed Agricola's hiding-place quite secret, Adrienne was not at her ease; so, by way of making sure in case of an unfortunate result, she had before her an excellent opportunity for recommending her protegé to the doctor, the intimate friend, as we have already said, of one of the most influential ministers of the day.

The young lady went to the doctor, who was discoursing in a low tone with the baron, and in her most gentle and insinuating voice said,

"My dear Doctor Baleinier, I wish to say two words to you;" and as she spake she looked toward a deep recess in the window.

"I am at your order, mademoiselle," replied the doctor, rising and following Adrienne to the window.

M. Tripeaud, who, feeling himself no longer supported by the presence of the abbé, was very fearful of the young lady, was delighted at this diversion, and that he might appear to be doing something, placed himself before the devotional picture, which it seemed as though he was never weary of admiring.
When Mademoiselle de Cardoville was far away from the baron that he could not overhear her, she said to the doctor, who, with his habitual bland smile, was waiting until she addressed him:

"My good doctor, you are my friend, as you were my father's. Just now, in spite of the difficulty of your position, you showed yourself most courageously my only partisan."

"Not at all, mademoiselle; pray do not say such a thing," said the doctor, affecting a good-humoured anger. "Peste! you will get me into a terrible mess! Pray not a word of that! not a word! Vade retro Satanas! that is, Pray leave me alone, charming little démon as you are!"

"Fear not," said Adrienne, with a smile; "I will not compromise you; but do allow me to remind you how often you have made me an offer of your services—have spoken to me of your devotion."

"Put me to the test, and see if I will keep my word or not."

"Well, then, give me a proof this moment," said Adrienne, quickly.

"Good! I like to be taken thus at my word! What can I do for you?"

"You are still very intimate with your friend the minister!"

"I am, and attending him for a hoarseness, which always comes on him the day before he is called on to give some ministerial explanations. He rather likes it."

"You must procure from your minister something very important for me."

"For you! in what way?"

The valet de chambre entered, and, handing a letter to M. Baleinier, said to him,

"A strange servant has this moment brought this letter for you, sir; it is in great haste."

The doctor took the letter, and the valet de chambre left the room.

"These are the disagreeables of merit," said Adrienne, smilingly; "they will not leave you a moment's repose, my poor doctor."

"Oh, do not mention it, mademoiselle!" said the doctor, who could not repress a gesture of surprise when he recognised M. d'Aigrigny's writing: "these plagues of sick persons really believe we are made of iron, and can give them all the health they lose; they are really merciless. But you will allow me, mademoiselle!" said M. Baleinier, looking at Adrienne before he unsealed the letter.

Mademoiselle de Cardoville replied by a gracious nod of the head.

The Marquis d'Aigrigny's letter was not long. The doctor read it at a glance, and, in spite of his habitual prudence, shrugged his shoulders, and said, in a quick tone,

"To-day! it is impossible! The man is mad."

"Oh, no doubt it is some poor invalid, who has placed all his hope in you—who is waiting for, calling for you; pray, my dear M. Baleinier, be kind, and do not reject his prayer: it is so delightful to justify the confidence one has in you!"

There was something, at the same time, so remarkably congruous, and so contradictory in the purport of this letter, written at the very moment to the doctor by Adrienne's most implacable enemy, and the language of commiseration which she uttered in a pitying voice, that Doctor Baleinier was struck by it. He looked at mademoiselle with an air almost embarrassed, and replied,

"It is, indeed, one of my patients, who relies much upon me—indeed, too much—for he asks of me an impossibility. But why should you interest yourself in an unknown person?"

"If he is unhappy, he is not unknown. My protégé, for whom I request your interference with the minister, was almost as little known to me; and now I am interested in him to the last degree; for, if I must tell you, my protégé is the son of the worthy veteran who has conducted hither the daughters of Marshal Simon from the depths of Siberia."

"What! Your protégé is—"
LA GERVAISE.
“A worthy artisan, the support of his family; but I must tell you everything. This is the way the whole affair has gone on—”

The confidence which Adrienne was about to repose in the doctor was interrupted by Madame de Saint-Dizier, who, followed by M. d'Aigrigny, opened the door of the cabinet with violence.

On the countenance of the princess was an expression of infernal delight, hardly concealed under the mask of highly wrought indignation.

M. d'Aigrigny, as he entered, gave Doctor Baleinier a rapid look of inquiry and uneasiness.

The doctor replied, by a shake of the head, in the negative.

The abbe bit his lips in mute rage; for, having built his last hopes on the doctor, he now believed his plans ruined for ever, notwithstanding the fresh blow which the princess was about to give Adrienne.

“Gentlemen,” said Madame de Saint-Dizier, in a harsh and hasty tone, for she was nearly choking with her malevolent satisfaction, “gentlemen, pray be seated: I have strange news, curious intelligence to give you with respect to this young lady.”

And she pointed to her niece with an air of hatred and contempt impossible to portray.

“Ah! my poor child, what is it now? What more are they going to inflict upon you?” said M. Baleinier, with a soothing air, before leaving the window where he was with Adrienne: “whatever happens, rely on me.”

And so saying, the doctor went and seated himself between M. d'Aigrigny and M. Tripaud.

At the insolent address of her aunt, Mademoiselle de Cardoville had raised her head disdainfully. Her colour had mounted, and, impatient and irritated at the new attacks which threatened her, she advanced to the table where the princess was seated, and said, in a tone of emotion, to Dr. Baleinier,

“I shall await you at home, as soon as you can come, my dear doctor. You know I must speak with you;” and Adrienne walked toward the arm-chair, in which she had left her bonnet.

The princess rose suddenly, exclaiming,

“What are you doing, mademoiselle?”

“I am going, madame. You have signified to me your will, and I have signified mine to you—that will suffice. As to the affairs of interest, I shall empower some one to make my claims.”

Mademoiselle de Cardoville took up her bonnet.

Madame de Saint-Dizier, seeing her prey about to escape her, ran hastily to her niece, and, throwing off all reserve, seized her arm violently with a convulsed hand, and said,

“Stay!” [See cut, on next page.]

“Oh, madame!” said Adrienne, in an accent of sad disdain, “has it come to this?”

“You wish to escape—you are afraid!” said Madame de Saint-Dizier, measuring her with an air of contempt.

With the words “You are afraid,” it would have been possible to make Adrienne de Cardoville dare a furnace. Disengaging her arm from the grasp of her aunt, with a gesture full of nobleness and pride, she threw her bonnet again on the arm-chair, and, returning to the table, said to the princess haughtily,

“There is something even stronger than the profound disgust with which all this inspires me, and it is the fear of being accused of cowardice. Speak, madame! I hear you.” And with head erect, complexion heightened, the glance half veiled by a tear of indignation, arms crossed over her breast, which, in spite of herself, palpitating with deep emotion, and tapping the carpet with her foot, Adrienne fixed upon her aunt an eye of firm determination.

The princess chose to distil, drop by drop, the venom with which she was gorged, and to make her victim suffer as long as possible, sure that she would not escape her.
"Gentlemen," said Madame de Saint-Dizier, in a restrained voice, "I will tell you what has occurred: I was informed that the commissary of police desired to speak to me, and I went to him. He apologized, with an air of regret, for the necessity of discharging an important duty; a man, against whom a warrant had been issued, had been seen to enter the pavilion in the garden—"

Adrienne started; there was no longer any doubt that it was Agricola's affair, but she remained quiet, relying on the security of the hiding-place in which she had ordered him to be concealed.

"The official," continued the princess, "asked permission to make a search for this man in the hotel and the pavilion. He had a right to do so. I begged him to begin with the pavilion, and I accompanied him. Notwithstanding the unjustifiable conduct of mademoiselle, I did not for a moment think, or believe, that she had mixed herself up in any way with this affair with the police. I was deceived."

"What do you mean, madame?" exclaimed Adrienne.

"You will hear, mademoiselle," said the princess, with an air of triumph. "Every one has his turn. A short time since you were somewhat too full of mockery and disdain. I went with the commissary, I say, in his search. We entered the pavilion, and I will leave you to guess the astonishment of the magistrate at the sight of the three creatures we saw attired like girls of the theatre. The fact has been, at my request, noted down in the depositions, for such preposterous extravagances ought to be made known to everybody."

"Madame la Princesse has done wisely," said M. Tripeaud, with a bow. "It was quite right to instruct justice on this point."

Adrienne, too much interested in the fate of the artisan to think of replying either to Tripeaud or Madame de Saint-Dizier, listened in silence to conceal her disquietude.

"The magistrate," continued Madame de Saint-Dizier, "began by closely interrogating the young girls, and inquiring if any man had been, to their knowledge, introduced into the pavilion occupied by mademoiselle: they replied with singular audacity that they had not seen any person enter."
"Good, honest-hearted girls!" thought Mademoiselle de Cardoville, with satisfaction: "the poor workman is saved, and Dr. Baleinier's protection will effect the rest."

"Fortunately," replied the princess, "one of my women, Madame Grivois, had accompanied me: this worthy person, recollecting that she had seen mademoiselle come in this morning at eight o'clock, said innocently to the magistrate, that the man they were looking for might easily have entered by the small garden door, which, perhaps, mademoiselle had, by mistake, left open when she entered."

"It would have been advisable, Madame la Princesse," said Tripeaud, "to mention, also, in the report, that mademoiselle had come home at eight o'clock in the morning."

"I see no occasion for that," said the doctor, who played his part to admiration; "that could have nothing to do with the object of the commissary's search."

"But, doctor—" said Tripeaud.

"But, baron," replied Dr. Baleinier, in a decided tone, "that is my opinion."

"It is not mine, doctor," said the princess. "I, as well as M. Tripeaud, have thought it was important that the fact should be inserted; and I saw, by the confused and pained appearance of the magistrate, how much he was distressed at having to make an entry of such scandalous conduct in a young person occupying so high a position in society."

"No doubt, madame!" said Adrienne, whose patience was exhausted; "and I can believe your own modesty almost equal to that of this abashed commissary of police. But it seems to me that your mutual innocence was alarmed somewhat too soon; you might both have reflected that there would be nothing extraordinary in the fact of my going out at six o'clock in the morning and returning at eight."

"The excuse is somewhat tardy, but not the less clever," said the princess, spitefully.

"I make no excuse, madame!" replied Adrienne, haughtily; "but, as M. Baleinier has kindly said a word in my behalf through friendship for me, I suggest the possible explanation of a fact, which I do not choose to account for before you."

"Then the fact will remain in the deposition until mademoiselle gives the explanation," said M. Tripeaud.

The Abbé d'Aigrigny, leaning his forehead on his hand, remained almost unconscious of this scene, so entirely was he absorbed with the consequences which might follow the approaching interview between Mademoiselle de Cardoville and the daughters of General Simon, for he could not think of using force to prevent Adrienne from going out that evening.

Madame de Saint-Dizier resumed:

"The circumstance which so greatly shocked the commissary is as nothing to that which remains for me to tell you, gentlemen. We searched the pavilion throughout without finding any one, when, just as we were about quitting the sleeping apartment of Mademoiselle Adrienne—for we had reserved our visit to this chamber till the last—Madame Grivois drew my attention to a portion of the gilt moulding surrounding a false door, which did not appear to join as closely as the rest. We directed the officer to this peculiarity; his people examined it—tried it, when a panel suddenly slipped away and discovered—how shall I bring myself to say what? No! never can my tongue declare the disgraceful, the shameful tale!"

"Then, madame!" said Adrienne, who found, to her great chagrin, that Agricola's hiding-place had been discovered, "I dare take upon myself to spare you the recital which so much offends your delicacy; but what I am about to say must not be understood as a justification."

"Yet, methinks, mademoiselle," replied Madame de Saint-Dizier, with a smile of contempt, "the circumstance of a man being found in your bedchamber may be deemed worthy of explanation."
THE WANDERING JEW.

"A man hid in her bedchamber!" exclaimed the Marquis d'Aigrigny, raising his head with an air of indignation, which barely covered a cruel joy.

"Is it possible?" added Baron Tripeaud; "a man in the sleeping apartment of mademoiselle! I trust that fact was also entered in the report."

"It was! it was!" replied the princess, with a triumphant air.

"But this man," said the doctor, with a hypocritical air, "was doubtless a thief: the thing explains itself; any other suspicion were— No, no, the thing is not credible!"

"Your indulgence for mademoiselle leads you astray, M. Baleinier," observed the princess, dryly.

"Yes," interposed Tripeaud; "the sort of thieves found in young ladies' bedrooms are well known; young, handsome, and rich!"

"You are wrong," replied Madame de Saint-Dizier, "Mademoiselle does not look so high, but proves that a fault may not only be criminal, but ignoble. I am no longer astonished at the sympathy mademoiselle expresses for the lower orders of people; and it adds considerably to the touching and pathetic part of this affair, that the man caught in her private apartment was dressed in a blouse."

"A blouse!" exclaimed the baron, with supreme disgust. "Why, he must have been a low fellow! Really it makes one's hair stand on end!"

"The man is a working smith," said the princess; "he confesses it; but to do him justice, he really is a very handsome fellow, and, doubtless, following out her singular adoration for beauty—"
"Most assuredly! and taken to prison under a strong escort. That grieves you to the heart, does it not, mademoiselle?" said the princess, in a triumphant tone. "Your tender concern for this interesting smith must be great indeed, since it deprives you of your ironical assurance."

"Yes, madame; for I have more weighty matters to attend to than railing at that which is both hateful and ridiculous," answered Adrienne, whose fast-gathering tears filled her eyes as she thought of the cruel uneasiness the imprisonment of Agricola would cause his family; and taking up her hat, she placed it on her head, tied the ribands of it, and, addressing herself to the doctor, said, "M. Baleinier, a little while ago I asked your interest with the minister?"

"You did, mademoiselle, and I shall be happy to mediate for you with him."

"Is your carriage below?"

"It is, mademoiselle!" replied the doctor, greatly surprised.

"Will you, then, do me the favour to conduct me at once to the minister? Presented by you, he will not refuse me the favour, or, rather, the justice I have to ask at his hands."

"How, mademoiselle!" said the princess; "do you presume to form such a determination without my orders, after what has just occurred? Your conduct passes all bounds!"

"It is pitable," added M. Tripeaud; "but we must not be surprised at anything!"

D'Aigrigny started as Adrienne inquired of the doctor whether his carriage was in waiting. A gleam of joyous, unhoped-for satisfaction shone in his eyes, and scarcely could he restrain his violent emotion while casting a rapid and significant glance at the doctor, who returned the look by twice dropping his eyelids in token of intelligence and assent. When, therefore, the princess added, in a wrathful tone, addressing Adrienne,

"Mademoiselle, I forbid you to go out!" —

M. d'Aigrigny observed to Madame de Saint-Dizier, with a peculiar inflexion of voice,

"I think, madame, we may intrust mademoiselle to the care of the doctor."

The marquis pronounced these last words in so significant a manner, that the princess, having scrutinized alternately his countenance and that of M. Baleinier, comprehended all, and her physiognomy became radiant with joy.

Not only had all this passed very rapidly, but evening was closing in, and Adrienne, preoccupied in the painful consideration of Agricola and his family, perceived not the signs exchanged between the princess, the doctor, and the abbé; nor, indeed, would she have been able to guess at their meaning.

Madame de Saint-Dizier, however, to avoid the appearance of yielding too easily to the observation made by the marquis, continued:

"Spite of the evident indulgence the doctor is disposed to show Mademoiselle de Cardoville, there is, perhaps, no positive reason to forbid her going with him; nevertheless, the concession must not be used as a precedent, for from this hour mademoiselle can have no will but mine."

"Madame la Princesse," replied the doctor, gravely, as though hurt by the words of Madame de Saint-Dizier, "I do not think I have exhibited any excessive leaning toward mademoiselle. I have been just, nothing more. I am now ready to conduct her to the minister, if she wishes it. I do not know what it is she wishes to solicit; but I believe her incapable of abusing the confidence I have in her, by inducing me to support an unworthy recommendation."

Adrienne, much affected, held out her hand with frank cordiality to the doctor, saying,

"Make yourself easy, my excellent friend; you will thank me for the part assigned to you, for it gives you a share in the performance of a good action."

Tripeaud, who was not in the secret of the recently contrived scheme between the doctor and the abbé, said to the latter, in a low tone, and with a puzzled look,
"Will you really let her go?"
"Yes, yes!" replied M. d'Aigrigny, hastily, making a sign to him to hear the princess, who was about to speak.

Madame de Saint-Dizier, in fact, advancing to her niece, said, in a slow and measured tone, laying great emphasis on each word,

"One word more, mademoiselle! one last word in the presence of these gentlemen! Answer me! Are you, spite of the terrible charges which are now brought against you, still resolved to disobey my authority?"
"I am, madame!"
"And, notwithstanding the disgraceful exposure which has taken place, your intention of withdrawing from my guardianship is still the same?"
"It is, madame!"
"And you positively refuse to submit yourself to the secluded and decorous mode of life I am desirous of prescribing for you?"
"I have already told you, madame, that I shall leave this house to live where and in what manner I please."
"And this is your final resolve?"
"It is my unalterable determination!"
"Reflect! This is an important crisis. Have a care!"
"I have told you my resolution once, madame. I do not repeat my words."
"Gentlemen, you hear!" cried the princess: "I have done all in my power to effect a reconciliation. Mademoiselle must, therefore, blame herself alone for the steps which so audacious a disregard of obedience compels me to adopt."
"So be it, madame!" answered Adrienne. Then addressing herself to M. Baleinier, she said, quickly, "Come, come, my dear doctor! I am dying with impatience; let us go at once; each moment lost is causing a worthy family to shed bitter tears."

So saying, Adrienne, followed by the doctor, hastily left the room.

A servant ordered the carriage of M. Baleinier to draw up, and, assisted by him, Adrienne took her seat, without observing that the doctor said a few words in a whisper to the footman who opened the carriage-door. When the doctor had seated himself beside Mademoiselle de Cardoville, the servant closed the door, and almost immediately after M. Baleinier called to the coachman in a loud voice, "To the minister's hotel, private entrance!"

The horses dashed off at full speed.
A FALSE FRIEND.

The sky, which had been clear until sunset, was now covered with dull, gray clouds; the wind, blowing harshly, whirled in driving sheets a thick snow, which had begun to fall.

The lamps threw a doubtful light into the carriage of Doctor Baleinier, where he and Adrienne were alone.

Adrienne’s lovely face, enclosed in her small bonnet of gray beaver, faintly lighted up by the lamps, showed white and fair against the dark hue of the stuff with which the carriage was lined, and which was odorous of that sweet, delicious perfume, almost voluptuous, which always exhales from the garments of females who pay refined attention to their toilet. The position of the young girl, as she sat by the doctor, was full of grace. Her elegant and pliant figure, confined in her high dress of blue cloth, impressed its graceful motion on the soft cushion against which she leaned; her little feet, crossed one over the other, rested on a thick bear-skin, which served for a carpet; in her ungloved white left hand she held a handkerchief, magnificently embroidered, with which, to the extreme astonishment of M. Baleinier, she wiped her eyes, that were suffused with tears.

Yes; for this young girl then suffered under the reaction of the painful scenes through which she had passed at the Hôtel de Saint-Dizier. To a feverish and nervous excitement had succeeded an extreme depression; for Adrienne, so bold in her independence, so haughty in her disdain, so implacable in her irony, so daring in her resistance to unjust oppression, was endowed with the deepest sensibility, which she always repressed in the presence of her aunt and those of her circle.

In spite of her self-possession, none could be less masculine, less shrewish, than Mademoiselle de Cardoville. She was essentially the woman; but then, as woman, she knew how to exercise a perfect self-command, when any symptom of weakness on her part would rejoice and inspirit her enemies.

The carriage had proceeded for some minutes, and Adrienne, silently drying her tears, to the doctor’s great astonishment had not uttered a word.

“What, my dear Mademoiselle Adrienne!” said M. Baleinier, really surprised at the young girl’s emotion; “what! you who were just now so bold—you weeping!”

“Yes,” replied Adrienne, in a broken voice; “I weep before you—a friend; but before my aunt—oh, never!”
Yet, in our long interview, your sarcasms—"

"Can you suppose that I do not utter those bitter sarcasms in spite of myself? Nothing disgusts me more than these contests of hostile irony, to which I am driven by the necessity of defending myself against that woman and her friends. You speak of my courage; it was not shown in sarcastic wit, but in repressing, concealing all I endured, when I found myself so coarsely treated before persons whom I hate and despise. I who, after all, have never done them any harm, and only ask to live alone, free, quiet, and see all around me happy!"

"Yes, so it is; they are envious of your happiness, and that which others owe to you."

"And it is my aunt!" exclaimed Adrienne, indignantly; "my aunt, whose life has been one lengthened scandal, who accuses me in so revolting a manner! as if she did not know that I am proud enough, loyal enough, to make only such a choice as would do me honour! Oh! when I love, I shall proclaim it, triumph in it; for love, as I understand it, is the most glorious thing in the world."

Then Adrienne added, with extreme bitterness, "Of what avail, then, are honour and frankness, if they do not place you beyond suspicions which are even more stupid than hateful?"

And again Mademoiselle de Cardoville raised her handkerchief to her eyes.

"Come, my dear Mademoiselle Adrienne," said M. Baleinier, with a soothing and insinuating voice, "calm yourself; this is all over now. You have in me a devoted friend."

And as this man spoke he blushed, in spite of his devilish cunning.

"I know you are my friend," said Adrienne; "and I shall never forget that you exposed yourself to-day to the resentment of my aunt in taking my part; for I am not ignorant of her power—a power great for evil—"

"As for that," said the doctor, affecting perfect indifference, "we medical men are beyond the reach of many revenges."

"Ah, my dear M. Baleinier, Madame de Saint-Dizier and her friends never forgive!" And the young girl shuddered. "It has required my unconquerable aversion, my innate horror of all that is cowardly, base, and unprincipled, to enable me to break so openly with her; but if it were a question of death itself, I should not hesitate; and yet," she added, with one of those captivating smiles which gave so much grace to her lovely countenance, "I enjoy life very much, too, and if I have to reproach myself, it is that I like it too brilliant, too attractive, too harmonious; but, as you know, I make up my mind to put up with my faults."

"Come, come, I am easier now," said the doctor, gayly; "you smile, and that is a good sign."

"And often the wisest. But ought I to smile, after the threats of my aunt? Yet what can she do? What was the meaning of this kind of family conference? Seriously, could she think for a moment that I was to be influenced by the opinions of a D'Aigrigny or a Tripeaud? Then she spoke of rigorous measures! What measures could she take? Do you know?"

"I think, between ourselves, that the princess only meant to frighten you. She relies on being able to influence you by persuasion; she, unfortunately, persuadesthat she is a mother of the Church, and dreams of your conversion," said the doctor, ironically, desirous of giving Adrienne full confidence in him. "But do not let us talk of this; your eyes must shine with their accustomed lustre, to seduce and fascinate the minister we are going to see."

"You are right, my dear doctor; we must shun grief, for one of its least disagreeables is to make us forget the grief of others; but I am making use of your kindness without saying what I wanted from you."

"We have plenty of time, fortunately, to converse, for our man of state lives a long distance from you."

"In two words, then," replied Adrienne, "I have told you the reasons I had for interesting myself in this worthy artisan, who came this morning in great dis-
trees to tell me that he had compromised himself by some songs he had written (for he is a poet), and was threatened with arrest; that he was innocent, but, if they put him in prison, his family, of whom he was the sole support, would starve. He came, therefore, to me, asking me to become his security, so that he might be let free to work, and I promised him, thinking of your intimacy with the minister; but they were already on the traces of the poor fellow; I thought of hiding him in my house, and you know the interpretation which has been put upon that by my aunt. Now tell me, do you believe that by means of your introduction the minister will grant what we are going to ask—the liberty of this workman on the security given?

"Unquestionably; there will not be a shadow of difficulty, particularly when you tell him all the facts with that eloquence of the heart which you possess so completely."

"Do you know, dear Doctor Baleinier, why I have taken the resolution—a strange one, perhaps—to ask you to take me, young girl as I am, to the minister?"

"Why, I imagine, to recommend your protégé in as urgent a manner as possible."

"Yes; and also to cut short, by a bold step, the calumnies which my aunt will not be slow to disseminate, and which she has already, as you have seen, caused to be inserted in the report of the commissary of police. I have, therefore, chosen to address myself freely and openly to a man placed in an eminent position. I shall tell him what is really the case, and he will believe me, because the truth has a voice which never deceives."

"This is all, my dear Mademoiselle Adrienne, wisely and cleverly reasoned. You will, as they say, kill two birds with one stone; or, rather, from one good action you will derive two acts of justice. You will put down dangerous scandals, and set at liberty a worthy fellow."

"Now, then," said Adrienne, with a smile, "all my gayety has returned, thanks to this happy prospect."

"Oh!" replied the doctor, philosophically, "in this life all depends on the point of sight from which we take our view."

Adrienne was so completely ignorant of constitutional government and administrative arrangements, and had so blind a confidence in the doctor, that she did not for a moment doubt what he told her. She therefore said, joyfully,

"How delightful! So I shall be able, when I go to see the daughters of Marshal Simon, to comfort the artisan's poor mother, who is, perhaps, at this moment in cruel anxiety on his account, as he does not return to her."

"Yes, you will have that pleasure," said M. Baleinier, smiling; "for we will beg and bother him in such a manner, that the good mother shall learn through you that her excellent son is at liberty before she knows he has been in custody."

"How kind, how good you are!" said Adrienne. "Really if it were not that the matter is so serious, my dear M. Baleinier, I should be ashamed to make you lose so much precious time; but I know your heart."

"I have but one desire, and that is to prove to you my profound devotion, my sincere attachment," said the doctor, taking a pinch of snuff.

At the same moment he gave an unquiet glance at the coach window, for the carriage was crossing the Place de l'Odeon, and, in spite of the heavy fall of snow, the façade of the theatre was illuminated, and he feared lest Adrienne, who at this moment turned her head in the same direction, might be astonished at the singular route they had taken.

In order to draw off her attention by a skilful diversion, the doctor suddenly exclaimed, "Alas! I have forgotten—"

"What is it, M. Baleinier?" said Adrienne, turning quickly to him.

"I forgot one thing very important to the success of our petition."

"What is it?" asked the young lady, uneasy at the remark.

M. Baleinier smiled playfully: "All men," he said, "have their weaknesses, and a minister more than any other. He whom we are going to solicit has the
THE WANDERING JEW.

absurdity to pique himself ridiculously on his title, and his first impression would be far from favourable, if you did not salute him very emphatically as Monseigneur le Ministre!"

"If that be all, my dear M. Baleinier," said Adrienne, smiling in turn, "I will go as far as 'Your Excellency,' which is, I believe, one of the proper titles."

"No, not now, but so much the more reason for using it; and if you could let fall one or two 'Monseigneurs,' our affair would be done out of hand."

"Make yourself easy; since there are low-born ministers as well as low-born gentlemen, I will remember M. Jourdain, and satisfy the glutinous vanity of your man of state."

"I give him up to you, and he will be in good hands," replied the physician, seeing with satisfaction that the carriage had reached the dark streets which lead from the Place de l'Odeon to the quarter of the Pantheon; "but, under the circumstances, I have not the courage to reproach my friend the minister with being vain, since his vanity comes to our assistance."

"Besides, the little ruse is innocent," added Mademoiselle de Cardoville, "and I have no scruple in having recourse to it."

"What! ungrateful and unnatural inhabitant, do you not recognise by the absence of shops your dear quarter, the Faubourg St. Germain."

"I thought we had left it long ago."

"And so did I," said the doctor, looking out of the window as if to reconnoitre the place in which he was; "but we are still here. My stupid coachman, blinded by the snow which dashes in his face, must have mistaken his road, but now we are all right. Yes; I see we are in the Rue St. Guillaume—not a very gay street, by the way, but in ten minutes we shall reach the private entrance of the minister's, for intimates like me have the privilege of escaping the honours of the state entrance."

Mademoiselle de Cardoville, like most persons who usually go out in carriages, knew so little of many streets in Paris, and of ministerial habits, that she doubted not for an instant what Dr. Baleinier affirmed, having also in him such implicit confidence.

From the moment of leaving the Hôtel de Saint-Dizier, the doctor had on his lips a question he still feared to ask, lest by so doing he should excite the suspicions of Adrienne.

When, during her stormy interview with her aunt, she hinted at the important interests which had been concealed from her, the doctor, a keen and acute observer, had perceived the agony and embarrassment of the princess and M. d'Aigrigny. He doubted not that the conspiracy against Adrienne, in which he had taken part in blind obedience to the will of his Order, bore reference to these interests, which were also kept back from him, and for that very reason he burned with impatience to know what they were; for being compelled, in common with each member of this dark confederacy, to be constantly playing the spy, he felt, as a natural consequence, the rapid growth within him of the odious vices peculiar to being an accomplice, such as envy, mistrust, and jealous curiosity.

It will, therefore, be easily understood that Doctor Baleinier, while perfectly resolved to aid M. d'Aigrigny in all his projects, was yet most eager to learn of what it was he had been kept in ignorance; therefore, surmounting his hesitation, and finding the present opportunity not only favourable but urgent, he said to Adrienne,

"I am about to ask you, perhaps, a somewhat impertinent question; but, should you view it in that light, do not answer it."

"Proceed, I beg of you!"

"Some time ago, a few minutes before the commissary of police was announced to your aunt, I fancied you spoke of some vast expectancies which had been kept from your knowledge."
"I did so express myself."

"Those words," continued M. Baleinier, proceeding slowly and emphatically, "appeared to make a strong impression on the princess!"

"So strong," said Adrienne, "as to change certain suspicions into convictions."

"I need not tell you, my dear young friend," pursued M. de Baleinier, in a tone of paternal kindness, "that, if I revert to this circumstance, it is but to offer my services, should they be useful to you, in any emergency; otherwise, if you see the shadow of an objection in giving me any farther information, just forget that the subject has been named between us."

Adrienne became pensive and serious: after a silence of some moments, she said to M. Baleinier,

"There are some parts of this affair of which I am ignorant, others that I can tell you; others, again, of which I must not speak. In return for your kindness of to-day, I am glad to afford you another proof of the confidence I place in you."

"Then, my dear young lady," said the doctor, with an air of mortified regret, "you shall tell me nothing, since it would have the appearance of a recompense for the trifling service I have rendered, when I am paid a thousand times by the pleasure I experience in serving you."

"Listen!" said Adrienne, without appearing to notice the delicate scruples of M. Baleinier. "I have powerful reasons for believing that an immense inheritance must, sooner or later, be divided between the branches of my family, not all known to me at present; for, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the persons from whom they are descended were dispersed through various kingdoms, where they experienced very different fortunes."

"Really!" exclaimed the doctor, with the most intense interest. "Where is this inheritance? Whom does it come from? in whose hands is it?"

"I do not know!"

"How, then, will you establish your claim?"

"I shall be informed hereafter."

"And who will inform you?"

"I cannot tell you."

"From whom did you learn the existence of this inheritance?"

"Neither can I tell you that," replied Adrienne, in a tone of gentle sadness, which contrasted greatly with the habitual energy of her manner: "it is a secret! a strange secret! In those moments of excitement in which you have sometimes surprised me, I have thought of the extraordinary circumstances connected with this mystery, and magnificent ideas have awakened within me."

Adrienne was silent, and fell into a reverie so profound, that M. Baleinier made no effort to withdraw her from it; for one reason—it prevented Mademoiselle de Cardoville from remarking the direction they were taking; then, he himself was not sorry for leisure to arrange his own ideas. With his habitual perspicacity, he suspected that a rich succession was the object of D'Aigrigny's movements; he therefore determined to make the affair the subject of a private report. Of two things, one was certain; either D'Aigrigny acted by the direction of his Order, or from his own personal reasons. In the first case, the doctor's secret intimation would confirm an already known fact; in the other, it would bring one to light.

For some time, both Mademoiselle de Cardoville and M. Baleinier maintained a profound silence, unbroken even by the noise of the wheels as they rolled over a deep bed of snow, for the streets were becoming more and more deserted.

Spite of his subtlety, his boldness, and the blindness of his dupe, the doctor did not feel quite at ease for the result of his scheme; as the critical moment approached, the slightest suspicion awakened in the mind of Adrienne would ruin his projects.

Adrienne, fatigued by the trials of this painful day, shivered with the cold, which became more and more intense; and, in her haste to accompany M. Baleinier, she had forgotten to take either shawl or cloak.
For some time the carriage had passed along a very high wall, which, covered with snow, stood out in bold relief against the thick darkness of the night. A deep and gloomy silence pervaded the spot.

The carriage stopped.

The footman went to the entrance gate, where he gave two quick raps; then, after waiting some length of time, he gave a third.

Adrienne had taken no notice of this circumstance, for the knocking had not been loud, and, besides, the doctor had skilfully called off her attention by speaking at the very instant, so as to prevent this species of signal from reaching her ear.

"Well, here we are!" he said, gayly, to Adrienne; "now you must be very captivating—that is to say, you must be yourself!"

"I will do my best," rejoined Adrienne, smiling. Then, spite of herself, shuddering with the cold, she said, "What a bitter night! I must own, my good doctor, that, after bringing my poor little relations from the house of our honest protégé's mother, I shall not be sorry to find myself this evening in my nicely warmed and well-lighted drawing-room, for you know my aversion to cold and darkness."

"That is quite natural," said the doctor; "the loveliest flowers bloom only in light and heat."

While these words passed between the doctor and Mademoiselle de Cardoville, the heavy gates swung back with a grating sound, and the carriage entered the courtyard.

The doctor descended first and offered his arm to Adrienne.
CHAPTER II.

THE MINISTER'S RESIDENCE.

The carriage had drawn up before a small flight of steps covered with snow, and leading to a vestibule lighted by a lamp. As Adrienne leaned on the arm of the doctor while ascending the slippery stairs, he exclaimed,

"Good heavens! how you tremble!"

"Yes," she answered, shivering; "I never felt the cold so severely. In my haste I forgot even to throw on a shawl."

Then, as they reached the top of the ascent, she added,

"What a gloomy place!"

"It is the minister's private dwelling—the sanctum sanctorum, where the great man retires from vulgar gaze," replied M. de Baleinier, smiling. "But pray walk in."

So saying, he pushed open the door of a large and completely deserted hall.

"Well," said M. Baleinier, striving to conceal his uneasiness under the mask of gaiety, "I can't say much for the splendour of our friend's private residence! Not a footman! not an official servant to receive visitors! However, fortunately," he continued, opening the door of a room communicating with the vestibule, "brought up in the seraglio, I know its every turn."

As the doctor spoke, he ushered Mademoiselle de Cardoville into a salon hung with green paper, figured with velvet, and simply furnished with mahogany chairs, &c., covered with yellow plush. The floor was carefully polished; and a circular lamp, which scarcely afforded more than half the light it was intended to convey, hung from the ceiling at a much greater height than it is usual to place lamps.

Astonished at finding a minister's abode so very modest, Adrienne, although she entertained no suspicion, could not restrain an exclamation of surprise, and paused an instant on the threshold.

M. Baleinier, whose arm she held, guessing the cause of her hesitation, said to her, smiling,

"This house strikes you as somewhat mean for an excellency—does it not? But if you only knew what constitutional economy is— In fact, when you see the master, you will find very little difference between the plainness of his appearance and that of his hotel. But have the goodness to wait for me a little while: I will go and open our business to the minister, and prepare him to receive you. I will be back directly."
And gently disengaging his arm from that of Adrienne, who involuntarily clung to him, the doctor opened a little side-door and disappeared.

Adrienne de Cardoville was left alone.

Although unable to account for it, a strange and indefinable dread stole over the mind of the poor girl as she surveyed the cold, scantily-furnished apartment, with its uncurtained windows; and as she more closely observed its peculiarities, a vague sense of impending danger quickened the beating of her heart.

Drawing near the fireless hearth, she saw with surprise that the mouth of the chimney was closed by an iron grating, and that the tongs and shovel were attached by chains to the sides of the fireplace. Amazed at this oddity, she mechanically attempted to draw forward a chair, but it would not move. She then perceived that all the chairs were fastened to the wainscot by iron clamps.

Involuntarily smiling, she said to herself, "They must have no great opinion of this minister, since they fasten his furniture to the walls;" but though by this forced pleasantry she tried to make head against her growing uneasiness, it gathered strength at each moment from the death-like silence that prevailed throughout this house, where nothing indicated the movement, the activity which generally appear in places where affairs of importance are transacted. Nothing was heard save the occasional howlings of the storm.

More than a quarter of an hour had elapsed, and M. Baleinier came not. In her uneasiness and impatience Adrienne thought of summoning an attendant, of whom she might make inquiries; she looked beside the mirror for a bell-rope, and saw none; but she did see that what, in the feeble light, she had supposed to be a mirror, was really a large sheet of polished tin. Drawing nearer, she struck her hand against a candlestick of bronze—this candlestick, like the mantel clock, was fastened to the marble.

In certain moods of the mind the veriest trifles often assume an imposing aspect; and thus the immovable candlestick, the chairs fastened to the wall, the metal substitute for a mirror, the gloomy silence, the prolonged absence of M. Baleinier, all combined to work so profoundly on the spirit of Adrienne, that she began to feel an aimless terror. Nevertheless, such was her confidence in the doctor, that she reproached herself for her alarm, insisting that, after all, there was nothing to furnish cause for it, and that it was foolish to bestow so much thought on matters of such trivial import. As for the absence of M. Baleinier, its prolongation was no doubt caused by the occupations of the minister, which forbade an immediate audience.

Yet the young girl, though she strove to reassure herself by suggestions like these, so far yielded to her uneasiness as to do what only such a combination of circumstances could have extorted from her—she gradually approached the little door through which the doctor had passed, and bent forward, listening. She held her breath and listened intently, but she heard nothing.

Suddenly a noise resounded over head; a dull and heavy sound, as though of a body falling; and she even fancied that she heard a stifled groan. Raising her eyes quickly, she saw fragments of plaster falling, broken off, no doubt, by the concussion of the fall. Mastered by her fears, she ran to the door by which she had entered, to call some one who could tell her what all these things meant. To her great surprise, the door was fastened from without. Yet, since she came in, she had heard no sound of a key turning, and the lock was on the outside. The physician, therefore, could not have fastened it. More and more alarmed, she hurried back to the little door at which she had been listening; it, too, was fastened from without. Yet wishing to oppose the terror which gained upon her, she summoned to her aid the firmness of her character, and strove, as the expression is, to reason herself out of her fears.

"I must have been deceived," she said; "it was only the fall I heard; the groan existed only in my imagination. There are a thousand reasons for supposing it something besides a body that fell. But these-locked doors; perhaps nobody knew that I was here, and this room was supposed to be empty."
THE BURGOMASTER.
As she thought thus, Adrienne took another anxious survey of the apartment; and then said, with a firm voice,

"I must yield to no weakness; my duty is not to deceive myself as to my present position, and shut my eyes upon the difficulties, perhaps dangers, which surround me, but rather to look them in the face. One thing is certain: this is the house of no minister—a thousand reasons now prove the contrary! M. Baleinier has deceived me; but wherefore? why has he brought me here? and where am I?"

These questions were more easily asked than answered: one fact alone remained incontrovertible—that she was the victim of M. Baleinier's treachery.

To a mind so noble, so generous as Adrienne's, there was something so abhorrent in this certainty, that she sought to repel it by recalling the confiding friendship with which she had ever treated this man, and she bitterly exclaimed,

"See to what hateful and unjust suspicions we may be led by fear and weakness! Deceit so base cannot be imputed until it is no longer possible to doubt, and it is borne out by the clearest evidence! Let me summon some one who shall at once end all these doubts—it is the only means of clearing them up."

Then, remembering there was no bell, she said,

"No matter! I will knock. Somebody will be sure to come."

And Adrienne knocked against the door with her delicate knuckles again and again. By the dullness of the sound produced, it was easy to imagine the thickness of the door. There was no reply.

She ran to the other door, knocked, and with the same effect—the profound silence of the place being disturbed only by the loud gusts of wind.

"I am not more timid than other people," said Adrienne, shuddering: "I know not whether it is the deathly cold of this place, but I tremble involuntarily; I try to guard against weakness, yet I cannot help fancying that any person would consider what is passing here strange and alarming as well as myself."

All at once cries and savage yells resounded from the room over the one in which she stood, succeeded by a hurried and violent trampling of feet, as though several persons were engaged in a desperate struggle.

In the first shock Adrienne screamed loudly; then, becoming pale as death, stood for an instant motionless with terror; but quickly recovering herself, she rushed to one of the windows, and threw open the shutters.

A violent gust of wind, mixed with sleet and snow, dashed into her face, and, after filling the place with the smoke from the flickering lamp, extinguished it. Thus, plunged in utter darkness, her hands grasping the iron bars with which the window was barricaded, Mademoiselle de Cardoville, yielding to her long-restrained alarm, was about to call for help, when an unexpected sight rendered her speechless with terror.

Nearly opposite to where she stood was a similar wing of the building; and, twinkling amid the murkiness of the night, she saw a large window, from which proceeded a clear, strong light. Through this curtainless window
Adrienne saw a pale, haggard, emaciated creature, wrapped in a large white cloth like a sheet, part of which dragged on the ground. This unhappy being was passing rapidly backward and forward before the window, with a hasty and ceaseless motion.

With her eyes fixed on this window, which shone brightly amid the darkness, Adrienne stood transfixed at the sight of this fearful spectre. Then, as her fears overpowered her, she shrieked loudly for help, without, however, quitting her hold of the bars she still convulsively grasped.

At the end of a few minutes, and while Adrienne was repeating her cries for assistance, two powerful women crept softly into the room; Mademoiselle de Cardoville, still clinging to the window, did not perceive their approach. These persons were from forty to forty-five years of age, large, robust, and masculine, and shabbily dressed, after the fashion of servants of the lowest class. Over their dresses they wore large aprons of coarse blue cloth, reaching to the throat, round which they closely fitted, and falling to their feet.

One of them, who held a lamp in her hand, had a broad, red, shining face, with a large pimpled nose, small greenish eyes, and a quantity of frizzled hair, the colour of flax, sticking out from beneath her dirty cap.
The other was a yellow, bony, withered hag, whose thin, forbidding, parchment-like visage was enshrouded beneath a black cap. She was marked with the smallpox, displayed a pair of thick black eyebrows, and some long gray hairs shaded her upper lip. This woman carried over her arm a vestment of thick, gray cloth, which, but partially unfolded, seemed a garment of singular formation.

Both these persons had glided stealthily into the room by the little door at the instant when Adrienne, impelled by terror, was holding by the bars and calling for help. Making a sign to each other, these women pointed to the poor girl; and while one placed her lamp on the mantel-piece, the other (the one in the black cap), approaching the casement, placed her great bony hand on the shoulder of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, who, turning quickly round, screamed with fresh alarm at the sight of so repulsive an object.

But the first impulse of terror over, Adrienne felt almost relieved at the presence of this woman, who, however unpleasant to behold, was, at least, some one to whom she could speak; and she eagerly inquired, in an agitated voice,

"Where is M. Baleinier?"

The women looked at each other, exchanged signs of intelligence, but made no reply.

"I ask you," repeated Adrienne, "where is M. Baleinier, who brought me here? I wish to see him directly!"

"He is gone," said the fat woman.

"Gone!" exclaimed Adrienne; "gone without me! Gracious Heaven! what can this mean?"

Then, after a moment's reflection, she added,

"Get for me a coach!"

The women looked at each other and shrugged their shoulders.

"Will you have the goodness," said Adrienne, still restraining herself, "to order a coach, since M. Baleinier has gone without me? I wish to leave this place instantly."

"Come, come, mademoiselle," said the large woman (who was called Thomas), seeming not to understand what Adrienne said; "come, it is time now—you must go to bed!"

"Go to bed!" repeated Mademoiselle de Cardoville, with alarm. "For God's sake, do you mean to drive me mad?" Then addressing the other woman, she said, "What house is this? Where am I? Answer me!"

"Oh!" answered Thomas, in a rough voice, "you are in a house where you must not stand howling out of window, as you did just now."

"And where folks are not allowed to put lamps out, as you have been doing; because, if you do," added the woman in the black cap, whose name was Gervase, "we shall quarrel."

Adrienne, unable to utter another word, and shuddering with fear, continued to gaze on these horrible females as one stupefied; in vain did she rack her brain to divine the meaning of all she saw and heard. All at once an idea struck her, and she exclaimed,

"I see! I see! there is some mistake here; what it is I do not know; but, assuredly, a mistake does exist. You take me for some one else. Do you know who I am? I am Adrienne de Cardoville! So you see I am at liberty to leave this house. No one has the right to detain me; therefore, I desire you will go this moment and order a coach, and if you cannot obtain one, find a guide who will accompany me and conduct me to the Hôtel de Saint-Dizier, Rue de Babylon. I will liberally reward this person, and you likewise."

"Come," said Thomas, "will you leave off talking? What is the good of running on in that way?"

"Take care!" said Adrienne, who was fain to try every method; "if you detain me here forcibly, you will be sorry for it. You little know the consequences."
"Will you come to bed, or will you not?" repeated Gervase, in an angry, impatient voice.

"Listen to me!" exclaimed Adrienne, hastily; "let me out of this house, and I will give each of you two thousand francs. Is it not enough? I will give you ten, twenty—what you please! I am rich. But let me go hence—for God's sake do not hinder me! I will not stay! it terrifies me to death!" cried the poor girl, in distracting tones.

"I say, Thomas, twenty thousand francs! not so bad, is it?"

"Oh, let her alone, Gervase; they all sing the same song."

"Well, then," cried Adrienne, calling up all her energy in her desperate position, "since neither reasons, prayers, nor threats avail anything, I tell you go I will, and this very instant! We shall see whether you have the audacity to employ force against me!"

So saying, Adrienne proceeded resolutely toward the door. But at this instant the wild harsh screams that had preceded the struggle which so terrified Adrienne were repeated, but this time there was no trampling of feet.

"Oh, what dreadful cries!" said Adrienne, stopping, and, in her terror, advancing to the women. "Do you hear those cries? What house is this? what dreadful deeds, oh, God! are going on, to call forth such fearful screams! And there, too," she added, almost wildly, pointing to the opposite building with its illuminated window, before which the pallid figure kept up its rapid motion; "look there, I say! do you see? What does it mean?"

"Why," answered Thomas, "that person is, like you, not over-strong in the sense way."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Mademoiselle de Cardoville, clasping her hands with terror; "for mercy's sake, what sort of house is this, and what is done in it?"

"What will be done to you if you behave bad, and refuse to come to bed," answered Gervase.

"They will put that on you," said Thomas, holding out the garment she carried under her arm. "Yes, they clap a strait-waistcoat on."

"Ah!" shrieked Adrienne, concealing her face between her hands in terror. A fearful revelation now entered her mind; she understood it all.

After all the emotions of the day, this last shock produced a fearful effect; a faintness seized her, her hands fell listless by her side, a mortal paleness overspread her countenance, her whole body trembled, and, sinking on her knees, and pointing with averted eyes to the jacket, she faintly cried,

"No! no! for the love of God, not that! Pardon! I will do what you desire—" and then, her strength being utterly exhausted, she fainted, and, but for the two women catching her in their arms, would have fallen on the floor.

"A faint! There is no danger in that," said Thomas. "Let us take her to her bed, and undress her; this will do her no harm."

"Do you carry her," said Gervase, "and I'll take the lamp."

And the gigantic Thomas seized upon Adrienne, and carried her off as easily as though she had been a sleeping infant, into the chamber by which M. Baleinier had disappeared.

This apartment, though extremely clean, was almost destitute of furniture; a green paper covered the walls; a small, low, iron bedstead stood in a corner of the room; a stove in the chimney was surrounded by an iron-work, which forbade a near approach to it; a table affixed to the wall, a chair standing before the table, but likewise riveted to the flooring; a mahogany commode, and a straw arm-chair, completed the scanty plenishing; the window, without curtains, was lined on the inside with iron gratings, so as to prevent the breaking of the glass.

It was in this gloomy chamber, which so painfully contrasted with the elegance of the pavilion in the Rue de Babylone, that Adrienne was carried by Thomas, who, aided by Gervase, laid the inanimate form of Mademoiselle de Cardoville on the bed, placing the lamp on a little shelf at the head of it.
While one of the keepers held her, the other unfastened and took off the young girl's dress, her head hanging helplessly on her bosom. Although she was insensible, two large tears trickled slowly from her closed eyelids, whose long, dark lashes shaded her pale cheeks, while her ivory neck and bosom were covered with the silky tresses of her rich golden hair, which had become unfastened when she fell. When unlacing her bodice, of satin less soft, white, and delicate than the youthful form which rose and fell beneath the lace and cambric that surrounded it, like an alabaster figure slightly tinged with a carnation hue, the touch of the rough, hard hands of the old hags, without completely recalling the wandering senses of the victim, produced a sort of spasmodic shudder as their coarse fingers came in contact with the bare arms and shoulders of the helpless girl.

"What little feet!" said the one who, stooping down, was taking off Adrienne's shoes and stockings. "I could hold them both in the palm of my hand."

And well enough might the woman break forth in admiration of the small rosy foot, smooth and soft as that of a child, divested of its delicate covering each azure vein lightly traced over the surface, while the ankle, knee, and leg might, for fineness of proportion, have vied with those of Diana.

"And look at her long hair!" said Thomas; "how soft and smooth it is, to be sure! She could step upon it if she was standing. It would be a pity to cut it off to put ice on her head."

And so saying, Thomas, after her rough fashion, put up the magnificent mass of hair which fell down Adrienne's back.

Alas! it was no longer the white and delicate hand of Georgette, Florine, or Hebe arranging the beautiful hair of their beloved mistress, with as much affection as pride.

And as the coarse touch of the keepers offended Adrienne's delicate skin, she experienced a repetition of the same nervous shuddering which had first attacked her, but more severe and at shorter intervals.

Whether it was a sort of instinctive repulsion, magnetically developing itself in her swoon, or owing to the coldness of the night, Adrienne, after repeated shiverings, at length recovered her senses.

Words cannot describe her alarm and horror, her justly indignant wrath, when, pushing back the long curls which covered her face, she found herself half naked, and in the hands of these diabolical old women.

A cry of shame and offended modesty, mingled with terror, burst from the lips of Adrienne. Then, to save herself from being exposed to the gaze of the two hags, she hastily knocked over the lamp, which fell upon the floor, was broken, and extinguished.

Then, wrapping herself in the bedclothes, and surrounded by perfect darkness, the unhappy girl gave vent to her wretchedness in hysteric sobs. The keepers ascribed the cry and the violent action of Adrienne to a paroxysm of madness.

"Oh! you have got back to your old trick of breaking and putting out lamps, have you?" cried Thomas, in a rage, groping her way about in the dark. "Well, I warned you of it! Now to-night you shall wear the strait-waistcoat, like the mad woman overhead!"

"So she shall!" returned the other. "Hold her tight, Thomas, while I go and get a light; and then, between us, we shall manage to make her quiet."

"Make haste, then! for, spite of her delicate looks, she is as mad as she can be, and we must make up our minds to sit up all night with her."

What a sad and wretched contrast! In the morning Adrienne had risen happy, smiling, free, surrounded by the rich treasures of art and luxury, and her toilet waited upon by the tender, delicate cares of the three affectionate girls who served her. In her generous and sportive humour she had prepared for her relative, the young Indian prince, a magnificent and fairy-like surprise. She had taken the most noble resolution concerning the young orphans Dagobert had
brought from so distant a land. During her interview with Madame de Saint-Dizier, she had shown herself, by turns, proud, yet sensitive; melancholy, yet gay; ironical and grave; noble and courageous; and she had come into this accursed house to solicit pardon for an honest and industrious artisan.

And night found the same Mademoiselle Cardoville delivered, by base treachery, into the coarse hands of two keepers in a madhouse, her delicate limbs imprisoned in one of those horrible accompaniments to a lunatic asylum—a strait-waistcoat.

Mademoiselle de Cardoville, guarded by the two hags, passed a night of indescribable wretchedness.

What was the astonishment of the poor girl when, about nine o’clock on the following morning, she saw Doctor Baleinier, wearing the same bland, smiling, paternal air, enter her apartment!

“Well, my child,” he inquired, in a soft and affectionate voice, “how have we passed the night?”

CHAPTER III.

THE VISIT.

The keepers of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, yielding to her entreaties, and especially to her promise to be good, had only kept the strait-waistcoat upon her a portion of the night. When daylight came she had arisen and dressed herself, unaided and unhindered.

Adrienne was seated on the edge of her bed: her extreme pallor, the excessive change in her features, her eyes sparkling with the fire of fever, and the convulsive shudderings of her frame from time to time, already bore testimony to the fearful consequences of this horrible night in a frame so delicately organized and nervously sensitive.

At the sight of Doctor Baleinier (at whose signal Gervase and Thomas left the room), Mademoiselle de Cardoville was petrified. She experienced a kind of vertigo when she thought of the audacity of this man, who dared to present himself before her.

But when the physician repeated, in his bland tone, and with a voice which expressed the deepest interest,

“Well, my poor child! how have we passed the night?”
Adrienne lifted her hands suddenly to her burning brow, as if to ascertain whether she was waking or dreaming; then, looking at the physician, her lips half opened, but they shook so fearfully that she could not articulate a syllable.

Anger, indignation, contempt, and, above all, that bitterly painful resentment which confidence basely betrayed excites in noble hearts, so bewildered Adrienne, that, overcome and intensely suffering, she was unable, in spite of every effort, to break silence.

"Come, come, I see what it is!" said the doctor, shaking his head sorrowfully; "you are very angry with me, aren't you? Well, I expected it, my dear child!"

These words, uttered with unblushing hypocrisy, made Adrienne almost bound from her seat. She rose, her pale cheeks flushed, her full black eye glittering, and haughtily drew back her lovely head; her upper lip was slightly curled by a smile of bitter disdain; and then, silent but indignant, the young girl passed in front of M. Baleinier, who was still sitting, and went toward the door with a quick and firm step. The door had a small wicket, and was fastened on the outside.

Adrienne turned to the doctor, pointed to the door, and with an imperious gesture said to him,

"Open this door!"

"Come, my dear Mademoiselle Adrienne!" said the physician; "calm yourself—let us talk like good friends—for you know I am your friend." And he calmly took a pinch of snuff.

"What, sir!" said Adrienne, in a voice tremulous with anger, "am I not to leave this place to-day?"

"Alas! no—in such an excited state! If you knew how inflamed your face is—how burning your eyes! Why, your pulse must be at eighty a minute! I entreat you, my dear child, not to increase these bad symptoms by such extreme agitation!"

After having looked steadfastly at the doctor, Adrienne returned slowly to the bedside, and again seated herself.

"That's right!" said M. Baleinier; "be calm, and, I say again, let us talk like good friends."

"You are right, sir!" replied Adrienne, in a brief, restrained, and perfectly calm tone; "let us talk like friends. You desire to make me pass for a mad woman—is it not so?"

"I desire, my child, that one day you shall feel for me as much gratitude as you now entertain aversion. This aversion I foresaw; but, painful as are certain duties, one must resign one's self to carrying them out," said Baleinier, with a sigh, and in a tone so natural that Adrienne could not repress a gesture of surprise, followed by a sarcastic smile.

"Really! indeed! all this, then, is for my good?"

"It is, frankly, my dear young lady! Have I ever had any object in view but that of being useful to you?"

"I hardly know, sir, which is more disgusting, your impudence or your base treachery."

"Treachery!" said M. Baleinier, shrugging his shoulders with a gesture of pain; "treachery! Reflect, my poor dear! Can you think that, if I were not acting faithfully and conscientiously in your interest, I should return this morning to face your indignation, which I must have expected? I am the head physician of this Maison de Santé, which belongs to me. I have two pupils here, medical men, like myself, who act with and for me, and I might have transferred to them the charge and care of you; but no, I would not; I knew your disposition, your character, all your former life; and, putting aside all the interest I feel in you, I could, better than any other person, treat you properly."

Adrienne had listened to M. Baleinier without interrupting him. She now gazed at him steadfastly, and said,

"Monsieur, how much are you to be paid for making me pass for a lunatic?"

"Mademoiselle!" exclaimed M. Baleinier, wounded in spite of his sang froid.
"I am rich, as you know," replied Adrienne, with supreme disdain; "I will
double the sum they are to give you. Now, then, sir, in the name of that—
friendship which you profess, at least let me be the best bidder!"

"Your keepers, in their report of the night's proceedings, have informed me
that you made them a similar proposition," said M. Baleinier, resuming his usual
presence of mind.

"Your pardon, sir! I offered to them what may be offered to poor, unedu-
cated women, who are forced by misfortune to accept the painful situations they
occupy; but you, sir, a man of the world—a man of profound knowledge—a
man of clear understanding—are very differently situated: we must bid very
much higher. There is treachery of all prices; therefore do not found your
refusal on the smallness of my offers to these poor creatures. Come, tell me
how much must it be!"

"The keepers, in their nightly report, have also referred to your threats," re-
plied M. Baleinier, very calmly: "have you none of these for me also? Ah!
my dear child, take my advice, and let us at once lose sight of all attempts at
bribery and threats of vengeance; let us rather come at once to the reality of
our position."

"What! my threats are vain, are they?" exclaimed Mademoiselle de Cardo-
ville, allowing all her indignation, restrained until that moment, to burst forth.
"What, sir! you believe that when I leave this place (for my confinement must
have an end) I shall not loudly proclaim your perfidious treatment! Ah! you
believe that I will not hold up to full exposure, to public horror, your infamous
complicity with Madame de Saint-Dizier! you believe that I will be silent as to
the horrible treatment I have experienced! But, sir, mad as I may be, I know
that there are laws, and I will demand a full and open reparation for all I have
endured—shame, reproach, and chastisement for you and your accomplices!
And, mark me! henceforth there will be hatred—war to death; and I will use
on my part all my strength, understanding, and—"

"My dear Mademoiselle Adrienne, allow me to interrupt you!" said the doc-
tor, who was perfectly calm and affectionate: "nothing can more retard your
cure than false and foolish hopes; they will keep you in a state of deplorable
excitement. It is, therefore, necessary that I should state facts clearly, in order
that you may more thoroughly see and appreciate your position. First, it is
impossible for you to leave this place; secondly, you cannot have any communi-
cation outside these walls; thirdly, no persons enter here but those on whom I
can fully rely; fourthly, I am completely protected from your threats and your
vengeance, because all circumstances and all right are in my favour."

"All right! to shut me up here—"

"That would not have been resorted to if a crowd of the most serious rea-
sons had not rendered it necessary."

"Oh! there are reasons?"

"Unfortunately, but too many."

"Perhaps you will be so indulgent as to enumerate them?"

"Also! they are but too apparent; and if, one day, you should appeal to law,
as you have but just now threatened, then, to our extreme regret, we should be
compelled to adduce them: the more than singular eccentricity of your mode
of life—your style of dressing your waiting-women—your unbounded expendi-
ture—the history of the Indian prince, to whom you offer a royal hospitality—
your unheard-of resolution, at eighteen years of age, to live alone, like a bach-
elor—the adventure of the man who was found concealed in your sleeping
apartment—in a word, the report of your yesterday's interrogatory would be
produced, as it was faithfully taken down by a person engaged for that purpose."

"How! yesterday!" exclaimed Adrienne, with equal surprise and indignation.

"Yes; in order to be perfectly prepared, if, at some future day, you should
misinterpret the interest we take in you, we had your replies taken down in
short-hand by a man who was placed in an adjoining room behind the curtains;
and really, when your mind is calmer, and you will one day read over this interrogatory, you will not be astonished at the resolution we were compelled to take."

"Continue, sir," said Adrienne, with disdain.

"The facts, as I allude to them, being thus substantiated and recognised, you must see, my dear Mademoiselle Adrienne, that the responsibility of those who love you is perfectly protected: they were bound to attempt the cure of that derangement of mind, which, it is true, only betrays itself by singular manias, but which would seriously compromise your future if they were more developed. As far as my opinion goes, a cure may be hoped for, by a system at once moral and physical, the first step of which is to remove you from the fantastic arrangements that excited your fancy; while living here in retreat, the soothing calm of a simple and solitary life, and my constant and anxious, I ought to say paternal care, will, by degrees, accomplish a perfect cure."

"So, then," said Adrienne, with a bitter smile, "the love of a noble independence, generosity, the cultivation of the beautiful, hatred for all that is odious and base—these are the maladies of which you would cure me! I fear I am incurable, for it is a long while since my aunt began to try this change."

"It may be that we shall not succeed, but at least we will try. You must observe that there are a mass of circumstances sufficiently serious to authorize our determination, which was come to at a family consultation, and that completely protects me from your menaces: it was to this I meant to recur. A man of my age and consideration never acts inconsiderately in such a case. So now you will comprehend what I said to you just now: in a word, do not indulge a hope of leaving this house before your perfect cure has been effected, and believe that I am, and shall be always, in no danger from your threats. This well understood, let us now discourse of the actual state in which you are, with all the interest with which you inspire me."

"I think, sir, that if I am a lunatic, you speak to me very rationally."

"You a lunatic! Thanks be to heaven, my poor child, you are not so yet, and I trust that, by my care, you never will be. To prevent such a consequence, it was necessary to act in time, and, believe me, it was more than time. You look at me with an air of surprise—of doubt. Consider, what interest can I have in talking to you thus? Is it to indulge your aunt's hatred? Why should I do that? What could she do for or against me? I do not think of her at this moment less or more than I did yesterday. Do I use new language to you? Have I not often—yesterday—spoken to you of this excitement so dangerous to your understanding, of your capricious fancies? I have used a stratagem to bring you here. I seized with eagerness the opportunity which you yourself offered to me—that is also true, poor, dear child! for you never would have come here willingly, and one day or other we must have sought some pretext to bring you hither; and I confess I did say to myself, 'Her interest before anything! Do your duty, happen what may.'"

As M. Baleinier spoke, Adrienne's countenance, until then alternately expressive of indignation and disdain, assumed a singular appearance of anguish and horror.

Hearing this man express himself in a manner apparently so natural and sincere, so truthful, and really so just, she felt more fearful than ever. A base treachery, clothed in such a guise, terrified her a hundred times more than the hatred frankly avowed by Madame de Saint-Dizier. She found, indeed, this audacious hypocrisy so monstrous, that she thought it actually impossible.

Adrienne had so little the art of concealing her resentment, that the physician, who was a skilful and profound physiognomist, perceived the impression he had made.

"Come," thought he, "this is a great step—to disdain and anger, fright has succeeded. Doubt is not far off. I shall not leave her without her saying, 'Return soon, my good M. Baleinier!'"

The physician resumed, in a voice so sad and full of emotion, that it appeared to come from the very bottom of his heart,
"I see you are still distrusting of me—what I tell you is but a lie, cheat, deceit, hypocrisy, hatred, is it not? I hate you! and wherefore? What have you done to me, or, rather—you will, perhaps, receive this as a more forcible reason from a man like me," added M. Baleinier, with bitterness—"or, rather, what interest have I to hate you? What, you! you who are only in your present state through the exaggeration of your most generous instincts—you, who only have what may be termed the malady of your qualities—you can coolly, resolutely, accuse an honest man, who has never, hitherto, given you anything but proofs of affection! accuse him of the most cowardly, black, abominable crime with which manhood can be stained! Yes, I say crime; because the atrocious treason of which you accuse me deserves no other name. Ah! my poor child, it is bad, very bad, and I see that an independent mind can display as much injustice and intolerance as narrower dispositions; it does not anger me, but it pains me deeply. Yes, I assure you, deeply."

And the doctor passed his hands over his moistened eyes.

We cannot pretend to describe the accent, the look, the countenance, the attitude of M. Baleinier, as he thus expressed himself.

The most skilful and practiced advocate, the first comedian in the world, could not have played his part better; indeed, no person could have performed it so well, for M. Baleinier, carried away by the situation in spite of himself, was half convinced of what he said.

In a word, he felt all the horror of his perfidy, but he knew also that Adrienne could not believe it; for there are plotings so horrible, that sincere hearts can never look upon them as possible; and when an elevated mind looks into the abyss of evil beyond a certain depth, it is seized with a vertigo, and can no longer distinguish anything.

And then, too, even the most evil disposed have a day, an hour, a moment, in which what God has put of good into the heart of every creature will be revealed in spite of themselves.

Adrienne was too interesting, she was in a position too cruel, for the doctor not to feel in his heart some pity for the unfortunate girl: the obligation he had long been under to show sympathy for her, the full confidence which the young girl had in him, had become for this man pleasant and cherished habits; but sympathy and habits must yield before implacable necessity.

And so did the Marquis d'Aigrigny by the mother he idolized; in her dying hour she called him to her bedside; yet, spite of his passionate adoration of this parent, he departed at the bidding of his Order, and her last wish was unheeded. How, then, after so stern an example, could M. Baleinier hesitate to sacrifice Adrienne? The members of the Order to which he belonged were bound to him, but he was infinitely more their slave than they could ever be his, for a long partnership in crime creates indissoluble and dreadful bonds.

At the moment when M. Baleinier had finished speaking so warmly to Mademoiselle de Cardoville, the outer plank of the wicket glided noiselessly back in its groove, and two eager eyes

glares into the chamber.
M. Baleinier did not perceive them.

Adrienne could not turn her gaze from the eyes of the doctor, which appeared to possess a sort of fascination over her. Silent, oppressed, overborne by a vague terror, incapable of penetrating the dark recesses of his mind, yet affected, in spite of herself, by the half-real, half-seigned sincerity of the voice in which he spoke, for a moment she doubted.

For the first time the idea suggested itself to her that M. Baleinier committed a fearful error, but with honest motives.

Added to this, the sufferings of the night, the dangers of her position, her feverish state, all conspired to throw doubt and confusion into the mind of the poor girl, and she gazed upon the doctor with increasing wonder; then, making a violent effort against a weakness whose fearful consequences she vaguely perceived, she exclaimed,

"No, no, sir! I neither can nor ought to believe what you say; you have too much skill, too great experience, to be capable of committing such a mistake!"

"A mistake!" said M. Baleinier, in a grave and mournful voice; "a mistake! Allow me, in the name of that skill and experience for which you give me credit, to say a few words. Listen to me, my dear young lady, for a short time, and then I will appeal to yourself."

"To me!" replied Adrienne, almost speechless with surprise. "Would you seek to persuade me that— " Then interrupting herself, she added, with a burst of convulsive laughter, "It needed only that I should pronounce myself mad to complete your triumph; that I should confess my place is in a madhouse, and that I owe you for having put me there— "

"Thanks, as I told you at the commencement of this conversation: listen to me, then! My words will be cruel, but some wounds cannot be cured without the knife or the caustic. Let me beseech of you, my dear child, to reflect; cast an impartial retrospect over your past life; recall your thoughts, and you will be afraid to look back upon them. Remember those moments of enthusiastic flightiness, in which, as you have said, you felt as though you did not belong to this earth; and above all, at this moment, while your reason is still equal to the task, compare your life with that of other young females of your age. Can you tell me of one who has lived as you have done? who thinks like you? unless, indeed, you fancy yourself so superior to all others of your sex, that you would fain arrogate to yourself the right of leading a life entirely at variance with the notions, habits, and customs of the world."

"You know perfectly well," said Adrienne, regarding the doctor with increasing terror, "that I have never been actuated by so absurd a vanity."

"Then how, my poor child, are we to account for your strange and inexplicable manner of living? Could you ever persuade even yourself that it was reconcilable with common sense? Ah, my child, beware! you have at present merely indulged in charming originalities, poetical fancies, vague yet delicious dreams—but the bias is fatal, irresistible. Oh, beware! beware! the strong, healthful part of your intelligence having as yet the ascendancy over your weaker faculties, its impress is fixed upon your eccentricities; but you know not with what fearful violence the irrational part will develop itself, and, at a given moment, stifle the more intellectual portion. Then yours will be no longer mere graceful caprices; they will become the wild, insane doings of a wandering mind, the hideous aberrations of a lunatic!"

"Alas, you fill me with terror!" interrupted the unhappy girl, pressing her trembling hands on her burning forehead.

"Then," continued M. Baleinier, in an agitated tone, "then the last glimmer of sense becomes extinguished, madness—yes, the dreadful word must be spoken—madness gains the ascendant. Sometimes it bursts forth in wild, furious transports—"

"Like the unhappy woman up there," murmured Adrienne, as, with fixed, feverish eye, she pointed to the ceiling.
“At others,” resumed the doctor, terrified himself at the effect of his words, yet yielding to the inexorable fatality of his position, “madness assumes the form of stupidity and brutality, leaving the unhappy being afflicted with no semblance of humanity; merely the instincts of a brute; eating voraciously, and keeping up an incessant motion in the cell in which she is confined. That is her life.”

“Like the woman out there,” cried Adrienne, becoming more and more wild in her aspect, as she extended her arm toward that part of the building which could be seen through the window of her chamber.

“Alas, yes!” replied M. Baleinier. “Like you, unfortunate child, these women were young, beautiful, and clever; but, like you, they had within them the fearful germ of insanity, which, not being destroyed in time, has increased and increased, until, at length, it has stifled their intellect forever.”

“In mercy!” exclaimed Mademoiselle de Cardoville, her brain bewildered with horror, “oh! in mercy do not tell me such dreadful things! Once again I tell you, you terrify me! Take me away! take me away, I say, or I shall end by becoming mad!”

Then, struggling with the agony which overpowered her, she said,

“But no! do not hope it—I shall not become mad. I am in full possession of my reason. Do you think I am weak enough to believe what you tell me? True, I have not lived as others have done, neither have I thought with them. True, also, I have revolted at that which appeared to give no offence to others; but what does that prove? simply that I am not like others. Have I a wicked heart? have I been selfish or envious? I admit that my ideas are strange—I confess it; but you know well, M. Baleinier, their aim is generous and elevated.”

The voice of Adrienne trembled, and sunk into a supplicating tone, while tears coursed down her cheeks. “Never have I committed an unworthy action; if I have done wrong, it has been from excess of generosity. Surely a wish to diffuse happiness on all around us cannot be madness? Besides, we can feel whether we are in our right mind or not; and I know I am not mad. Yet, though I know this, the fearful things you tell me of the two females I have seen and heard this night, make me—you ought to understand these things better than I; besides,” added Mademoiselle de Cardoville, in a voice of despair, “something ought to be done. Why, if you really regarded me, have you delayed so long? could you not sooner have taken pity on me? And the most cruel part of my misery is, that I cannot tell whether I ought to believe your words—you may only be laying a snare for me; but no, no! you weep! Then it must be true, since you attest it with your tears!”

M. Baleinier, spite of his cold-hearted selfishness, could not restrain his tears at the sight of the nameless tortures the poor girl suffered.

“You weep for me! But you can do something for me, can you not? I will do every thing you wish—every thing—that I may be preserved from the fate of those women. What if it should be too late? But no, no! there is yet time; is there not, my good M. Baleinier? Oh, pardon, I beseech you, all I said when you first came in—I understand—I—was not—”

To these broken exclamations, mingled with sobs, and uttered with feverish wildness, succeeded an interval of profound silence, during which the physician, deeply affected, wiped away his tears. His hard heart was melted.

Adrienne had sat with her face buried in her hands; all at once she raised her head, her features calmer, though still exhibiting a degree of nervous tremour.

“M. Baleinier,” she said, with touching dignity, “I know not what I have been saying. Terror, I fear, had disturbed my reason, but I am myself again. Listen to me! I am in your power; I know it; nothing can deliver me from it. Am I to look upon you as an implacable enemy, or a friend? I cannot decide. Do you really fear that what is merely flightiness of character in me at present may hereafter degenerate into madness? or are you an accomplice in some diabolical scheme? You alone can answer that question. Spite of my courage, I
confess myself vanquished. Whatever it is that is required of me—do you hear?—whatever it may be, I accede to it; to that I pledge my word, and you know how faithfully I always keep it. There cannot be, then, any farther motive for detaining me here. If, on the contrary, you sincerely believe my reason is in danger—and I confess that you have awakened within me a fearful, though indistinct apprehension—then tell me so, and I will believe you. I am at your mercy; alone, friendless, unaided by counsel, I trust blindly in you. Do I address my savior or my assassin? I have no power to decide; but I say this much, I offer you my life, my future; take them, I have no longer strength to dispute them with you."

These words, evidences of an unresisting resignation and a despairing confidence, gave the last blow to the vacillations of M. Baleinier. Already cruelly moved by this scene, he wished, without reflecting on the consequences which might arise from so doing, to tranquillize Adrienne against the terrible and unfounded apprehensions he had excited within her; and these sentiments of repentance and benevolence were visible on his features. They were too legible.

At the instant when he approached Mademoiselle de Cardoville to take her hand, a sharp, shrill voice was heard behind the wicket, pronouncing only the words,

"Doctor Baleinier!"
"Rodin!" murmured the doctor, much alarmed; "he has been watching me!"
"Who called you?" inquired the young girl.
"A person I desired to meet me here this morning, for the purpose of accom-
panying him to the convent of Sainte Marie, which is close by," said the doctor, in much uneasiness.

"And what is your reply to my question?" asked Adrienne, in a state of mental anguish.

After a short interval of solemn silence, during which the doctor turned to the wicket, he said, in a voice of deep emotion,

"I am—what I have always been—a friend, incapable of deceiving you."

Adrienne's features assumed the paleness of death. Then, extending her hand to M. Baleinier, she said, in a voice which she sought to render calm,

"Thanks! I shall have courage. Will it last very long?"

"Perhaps a month. Solitude—reflection—a suitable regimen—my devoted attention! Make yourself easy; every thing that is consistent with your condition will be allowed you, and every attention shall be shown to your wishes. If you disapprove of this chamber, another shall be provided for you."

"This or another," replied Adrienne, oppressed by heavy grief; "it matters little."

"Come, take courage! all is not lost yet!"

"Perhaps you flatter me," said Adrienne, with a gloomy smile; and then added,

"Let me see you again soon, my good M. Baleinier! Now my only hope is in you!"

So saying, her head dropped on her breast, her hands fell listlessly on her lap, and she remained sitting on the side of her bed—pale, motionless, crushed.

"Mad!" she cried, as M. Baleinier disappeared; "perhaps mad!"

We have given this episode at some length, and it has less of romance than the reader may imagine. Many a time have interest, revenge, and perfidious machinations abused the imprudent facility with which the keepers of houses for the reception of insane persons will receive an individual committed to their charge by friends or relatives.

We shall hereafter give our opinion as to the necessity of establishing a superintendence, on the part of the civil authorities, with the view of periodically visiting houses destined for the reception of insane persons, as well as other institutions not less important, though even still more overlooked by judicial watchfulness. We refer to certain convents, of which we shall soon have occasion to speak.
PERE LORIOT.
PART VIII.
THE CONFESSOR.

CHAPTER I.

PRESENTIMENTS.

As we now from the private madhouse of Doctor Baleinier to the Rue Brise-Miche, and the humble roof of Françoise Baudoin, where other events were at the same time in progress.

Seven o'clock had struck from the church of Saint Merry; the morning was dark and lowering, and the sleet and hail pattered against the casement of Françoise's gloomy chamber.

Ignorant of the arrest of her son, Françoise had expected him all the evening, and far into the night, a prey to a thousand fears; then, worn out with fatigue and want of sleep, she threw herself on her mattress beside the bed of Rose and Blanche.

With the first dawn of day she arose and ascended to the attic in which Agricola slept, in the faint hope of finding that he had returned during her short slumber.

The sisters also arose, and, having performed their simple toilet, found themselves alone in the cold, cheerless apartment.

Killjoy, who had been left behind by Dagobert, was stretched before the now cold stove; and, resting his long nose between his forepaws, never took his gaze from the two girls.

The orphans, who had slept but little during the night, had perceived the agitation and wretchedness of Dagobert's wife; sometimes they saw her pacing the little chamber, and talking to herself; then hurrying at the least sound to the staircase to listen; and often kneeling before a crucifix placed in a corner of the room: they did not imagine that, while she prayed for her son, she likewise sought Heaven in their favour, for the state of their minds terrified the excellent woman.

After Dagobert's precipitate departure for Chartres, Françoise, having assisted Rose and Blanche with their toilet, had called on them to say their morning prayers; but they innocently assured her they knew no other form of prayer than invoking their mother's blessing from the heaven she dwelt in. And when the good woman, recovering from her first surprise, questioned them as to their knowledge of the catechism, confirmation, or communion, they opened their large blue eyes with astonishment, unable to comprehend the meaning of all she said.

In her strong religious belief, the wife of Dagobert believed the souls of the orphans to be in a more perilous state, when, having to the best of her ability explained to them the meaning of baptism, she inquired whether they had ever received this sacrament, and received for answer that, to the best of their knowledge, no such rite could have been performed, inasmuch as neither priest nor
church was to be found in the hamlet in which they had been born during their mother's exile.

Looking at the case from her point of view, it will be imagined with what anguish she looked upon these young creatures, whom she already tenderly loved for their sweetness and gentleness, and who now appeared in her eyes like poor heathens innocently devoted to eternal damnation. Unable to restrain her tears or conceal her terrors, she clasped them tenderly in her arms, assuring them her first care should be to provide for their souls' welfare, and bitterly lamenting that Dagobert had not caused them to be baptized on their journey; an idea which, it must be confessed, never occurred to the ex-grenadier.

When Françoise left the sisters to go to mass, she durst not take them with her; their complete ignorance of everything connected with religion rendering their presence in the sacred building, if not improper, at least useless; but in her prayers Françoise most fervently besought the mercy of Heaven for two young creatures who knew not the perilous state of their own souls.

Rose and Blanchet then were left alone in the chamber during the absence of Dagobert's wife. They were still in their deep mourning, while their lovely countenances were more pensive than sad. Although they had, from their cradle, been accustomed to a life of hardships, from the moment of their arrival in the Rue Brise-Miche they had been deeply struck by the difference which existed between the humble abode they were in and the marvels their fancies had pictured in Paris, that golden city of their dreams.

But soon this astonishment, so easily imagined, gave place to thoughts of singular gravity for young persons like themselves; the aspect of poverty so nobly sustained, and toil so industriously pursued, made them reflect deeply, not merely as children, but as young females endowed with an observant mind, a sympathizing spirit, a noble heart, a disposition at once delicate and courageous. During the last twenty-four hours they had seen and reflected much.

"Sister," said Rose to Blanchet, when Françoise had quitted the chamber, "Dagobert's poor wife is very uneasy: did you observe how miserable she was all night? how she wept and prayed?"

"I was as much grieved as yourself, dear sister, at the sight of her grief; and I tried even to guess what could have occasioned it. I fear that I can guess what gave her such pain. Perhaps it is we who are the cause of her distress."

"Why? Is it because we do not know any prayers, and have never been baptized?"

"That did, indeed, seem to grieve her sorely, and I was much affected by it, because it proved how tenderly she loved us. But I could not understand the terrible danger she said we were in."

"No more could I, my dear sister. We try to do nothing which could displease our mother, who sees and hears us always."

"And we love every one who loves us; we hate nobody; and we submit ourselves to whatever happens. How, then, can we be so wicked?"

"I know not; only, perhaps, we might do wrong things without intending it."

"We?"

"Yes; and that is what I meant when I said that I feared it was we who occasioned the uneasiness of Dagobert's wife."

"How could that be?"

"Listen, dear sister! Yesterday, Madame Françoise wished to work at those coarse cloth bags on the table—"

"I recollect; and at the end of half an hour she told us, sorrowfully, that she must leave off—that she could not see—that her sight was entirely ruined."

"So, you perceive, she can no longer work for her own livelihood."

"No; it is her son—"

"Agricola, who maintains her. He seems so cheerful, and frank, and so happy to devote himself to his mother! He is, indeed, worthy of being brother to our angel Gabriel."
"You will see why I mentioned Agricola's maintaining his mother by his labour. Our good old Dagobert has told us that when we arrived here he had only a few pieces of money remaining."

"True."

"Like his wife, he is unable to work; what could an old soldier like him do?"

"You are right. Dagobert can do nothing but love us, and watch over us like his own children."

"Then Agricola must support his father as well as his mother, for Gabriel is a poor priest, who, possessing nothing, has no means of aiding the family which brought him up. The burden of the whole family, then, falls on M. Agricola."

"To be sure it does! But, then, you know, it is his duty to work for his father and mother, and he does it with pleasure."

"Yes, sister; but it is not his duty to support us: he owes us no obligation."

"What do you mean, Blanche?"

"He will, therefore, have us to work for in addition, since we have no means in the world of providing for ourselves."

"I never thought of that! You are right!"

"It is no use for Dagobert to tell us that our father is a duke and marshal of France; we can expect nothing from this medal; so long as our father is away and our hopes are not realized, we are nothing but two poor girls, obliged to be a burden on this worthy family, to whom we are already so much indebted, and who are themselves so much in want—"

"Why do you pause, sister?"

"What I am going to say would make other persons laugh, but you will understand me. Yesterday, Dagobert's wife said, sadly, as she watched Killjoy eating, 'He eats as much as a man;' and the tone in which she spoke brought the tears into my eyes, because it showed how poor they were; and yet we have come to increase their poverty."

And the sisters looked sorrowfully on each other, while Killjoy affected not to understand the allusion to his appetite.

"Now I understand," said Rose, after a short silence. "We must not be a burden upon any one. We are young, and have good courage. Let us, while awaiting the events which are to decide our fate, fancy ourselves the daughters of an artisan: and was not our grandfather an artisan? Let us obtain some work, and earn our own livelihood. Oh! how happy and proud ought we to be to work for our own support!"

"Good little sister!" said Blanche, embracing Rose; "how happy I am! You have anticipated me! Kiss me, dear sister!"

"What do you mean?"

"Ah, your project was mine also! Yes, when I heard Madame Françoise lament so piteously the failure of her sight, I looked at your large clear eyes, which made me think of my own, and I said to myself, 'Well, if this poor wife of our good Dagobert has lost her sight, Mesdemoiselles Rose and Blanche Simon can see perfectly well, and that makes up for it,'" added Blanche, smiling.

"And after all," replied Rose, smiling in her turn, "Mesdemoiselles Simon are not so helpless but that they can stitch together coarse bags of gray cloth, which may perhaps rub the skin off their fingers a little; but that is nothing."

"You see we both had the same thoughts, as usual, only I wanted to surprise you, and to wait till we were alone to tell you my idea."

"Yes; but one thing vexes me."

"What is it?"

"In the first place, Dagobert and his wife will be sure to say to us, 'Oh, young ladies, that is not the sort of work for you. Oh, no! you, the daughters of a marshal of France, to spoil your fingers with such coarse stuff as that!' And then, if we insist, they will pretend they have nothing to do; and that if we are resolved to employ ourselves, we must go and seek for work; and then, I fear, the Mesdemoiselles Simon would find themselves somewhat embarrassed to know where to go for employment."
"The truth is, that when once Dagobert takes a thing into his head—"

"Oh! but we can coax him."

"Yes, in some things, certainly; but in others it is impossible. Only see how determined he was all through the journey, whenever we tried to prevent his taking so much trouble for us."

"Oh, sister!" exclaimed Rose, "I have just thought of something—an excellent idea!"

"Tell me quickly!"

"You know that young workwoman they call La Mayeux, who seems so obliging and thoughtful?"

"Yes; and so timid and fearful of giving offence. I watched her yesterday, without her being aware that I saw her, while she regarded you with an air so kind, so gentle, and so full of pleasure at being permitted to behold you, that I felt myself moved even to tears."

"Well, we must ask La Mayeux how she manages to find occupation, for she certainly supports herself by her labour."

"You are right; she will tell us; and when we know that, Dagobert may scold as much as he likes; we shall be as obstinate as himself."

"To be sure we will! Let us show our resolution, and prove to him, in his own words, that we have a soldier's blood in our veins. 'You say that we shall one day be rich, good Dagobert,' we will tell him. 'Well, so much the better; we shall then look back with increased pleasure on what we are now going to do.'"

"Then it is agreed—is it not, Rose? The first time we are alone with La Mayeux we shall tell her all our plans, and ask her assistance. She is so kind and good that she will not refuse us."

"And when our father returns, I feel assured he will approve of our courage."

"And applaud us for having depended on our own exertions, just as if we had no friend in the world."

As Blanchespoke these words, Rose started, while an expression of sadness, almost amounting to alarm, passed over her sweet face, as she exclaimed,

"Heavens, sister! what a dreadful idea!"

"Rose, you frighten me! what do you mean?"

"Just as you said that our father would be pleased with us for acting as though we were alone in the world, a frightful idea entered my mind, I know not why; but feel how my heart beats, as though some terrible misfortune were about to happen to us."

"Yes, indeed, your poor little heart beats as though it would break: but what were you thinking of? You know not how you alarm me!"

"When we were prisoners, at least we were not separated; and, besides, our prison was an asylum."

"A sad one, dear sister, though shared by you."

"But suppose that, when we came here, any accident or misfortune had separated us from Dagobert; imagine our being alone, without friends, in this great city!"

"Oh, sister, do not talk of that! You are right—it is a frightful idea. Gracious heavens! what would become of us?"

At these words the orphans remained for a moment overwhelmed, while their lovely countenances, just before animated by the kindling of youthful hope, lost their rich bloom, and were overcast with sadness.

After a silence of several minutes, Rose raised her head; her eyes were filled with tears.

"Why does this thought so afflict us?" she said, in a trembling voice; "my heart is crushed by it, as if that misfortune must needs befall us."

"I feel terrified as much as you. Alas! what should we do if we were lost in this immense city?"

"Come, Blanche, don't let us encourage these thoughts. Are we not safe here with Dagobert and his good family?"
"Perhaps, sister," replied Rose, with a pensive air, "it is for our good this thought has entered our minds."

"How can that be!"

"Because now we shall set a higher value on this humble dwelling, since it serves to shelter us from all such apprehensions; and when, thanks to our own exertions, we shall not be a burden to any one, what more can we desire until the arrival of our father?"

"No, we shall not want for anything, certainly; but wherefore has the fear come to us, and why are we so much oppressed by the mere dread of such an evil?"

"Why, indeed? After all, are we not here in the midst of friends who love us? How is it for a moment to be supposed that we should ever be left all alone in Paris? It is impossible such a misfortune should befall us; don't you think so, sister?"

"Impossible!" said Rose, shuddering. "Suppose the evening we reached that village in Germany where poor Jovial was killed, any one had said to us, 'To-morrow you will be in a prison,' we should have replied, 'Impossible! Is not Dagobert here to protect us? What have we to fear?' And yet remember, dear sister, that by the day following we were in prison at Leipsic."

"Oh, do not talk so, my dear sister! it is frightful!"

And, by a sympathetic movement, the orphans took each other by the hand, and, pressing closely together, looked around them with involuntary terror; the emotion they experienced was indeed profound, strange, inexplicable, yet vaguely threatening, like those dark presentiments which terrify, even in spite of reason—those gloomy forebodings which frequently illumine with a lurid gleam the dark abyss of the future.

Wild, incomprehensible predictions, often forgotten as soon as felt, but which, when in after life their accomplishment recalls them to our mind, make us shudder while we wonder at their fearful accuracy.

The daughters of General Simon were still plunged in the mournful reverie occasioned by the thoughts so singularly awakened within their minds, when the wife of Dagobert returned from her son's chamber, her features expressive of the profoundest sorrow.
WHEN Françoise returned to the chamber, her countenance wore an appearance of such intense suffering that Rose could not forbear exclaiming,

"Dear madame, what has happened to you?"

"Alas! my dear young ladies, I can no longer conceal my grief," and here Françoise burst into tears. "I expected my son home last night, as usual—he has not returned. I did not wish you to see how much I was distressed about it, and I kept counting each minute, for never has he gone to his bed without embracing me. Part of the night I sat by the door listening for his step on the stairs, but I heard nothing. About three o'clock this morning I threw myself on a mattress beside you. I have just been to see whether, as I faintly hoped, my son had not returned while I slept."

"Well, madame!"

"He has not come," said the poor mother, wiping her eyes.

Rose and Blanche looked at each other with emotion, occupied by the same thought—should Agricola not return, how would this family be maintained? and would not their presence be doubly a burden under so trying a circumstance?

"Perhaps, madame," said Blanche, "M. Agricola was detained too late over his work to be able to return in the evening."

"Oh, no, no! he knew too well the uneasiness his absence would give me. He would have come home, even had it been the middle of the night. Alas! some accident must have befallen him—perhaps at the forge—he is so energetic and courageous at his work. Oh, my poor son! And as though I were not wretched enough on his account, I am distressed for the poor young seamstress who lives up stairs."

"What of her, madame?"

"When I left my son's apartment, I thought I would go and tell my trouble to her, for she is the same to me as a daughter. She was absent from the small chamber she occupies; the bed had not been slept in. Where can she have gone at this early hour? she who never goes out!"

Again Rose and Blanche looked anxiously at each other, for they had reckoned upon the aid of La Mayeux in the prosecution of their design. Happily their disquietude, as well as that of Françoise, was quickly dispelled by hearing first two gentle taps at the door, and then the voice of La Mayeux inquiring, "May I come in, Madame Françoise?" By a simultaneous impulse the sisters ran to the door and opened it for the young girl.

The sleet and snow had fallen incessantly during the night, and the muslin gown of the poor seamstress, her little shawl, and black net cap, which, displaying the thick braids of her chestnut hair, surrounded her pale and interesting countenance, were wet through. The intense cold had empurpled her thin white hands. In the bright gleam of her usually soft and timid blue eyes might alone be detected the energy which this ordinarily weak and shrinking creature had derived from the serious and pressing nature of the emergency which called her to action.

"My dear Mayeux," said Françoise, "where have you been? Just now, when I went to my son's room to see if he had returned, I opened your door, and was astonished at finding you had gone out. You must have gone very early."

"I bring you news of Agricola!"

"Of my son!" exclaimed Françoise, trembling. "What has happened to him? Have you seen him? spoken to him? Where is he?"

"I have not seen him, but I know where he is."

Then, perceiving that Françoise turned pale, La Mayeux added,
"Do not alarm yourself; he is quite well, and in no danger."

"Blessed be thou, my God!" cried Françoise, throwing herself upon her knees on the floor, and piously crossing herself;

"Thou dost not weary of showing mercy to a poor sinner! The day before yesterday thou didst restore my husband to me; and now, after so cruel a night of suspense, thou deignest to remove my fears for the safety of my beloved son!"

During the silence caused by this devotional movement on the part of Françoise, the orphans approached La Mayeux, and said, in a low tone, with an expression of touching interest,

"How wet your clothes are! You must be very cold! Pray take care! Only think if you were to be ill!"

"We did not like to speak to Madame Françoise about lighting the fire; but now we will remind her of it."

Equally surprised and affected by the kindness shown to her by the daughters of General Simon, La Mayeux (the most sensitive creature living to the smallest attention bestowed upon her) replied, with a look of the deepest gratitude,

"Many thanks, young ladies, for your kind consideration! But pray do not be uneasy on my account; I am used to the cold; and, besides, I am too uneasy to feel it."

"And now tell me of my son!" cried Françoise, rising, after having remained some minutes in her kneeling position. "Why did he not return home all night? And you, my good Mayeux, know where to find him? Is he coming soon? What detains him?"

"I assure you, Madame Françoise, Agricola is quite well; but I must also tell you it will be some time—"

"Well!"

"Nay, dear Madame Françoise, summon your courage."

"Merciful Heaven! my blood seems to freeze in my veins! What has happened? What prevents his coming to me?"

"Alas, madame, he is arrested!"

"Arrested!" exclaimed Rose and Blanche, with terror.

"God's will be done!" said Françoise; "but this is a heavy misfortune! Arrested! he, so good, so honest! Why has he been arrested? Surely there must be some mistake!"

"The day before yesterday," replied La Mayeux, "I received an anonymous letter, telling me that Agricola was in hourly danger of being arrested on account of his 'Workman's Song.' We agreed that the best thing he could do would be to go to the house of that rich young lady in the Rue de Babylone, who promised to serve him; so Agricola went to ask her to be security for him, to prevent his being taken to prison; and that was his reason for going out so early yesterday morning."

"You knew all this, and yet said nothing of it to me? Nor he. Why was I kept in ignorance?"
"That you might not be worried for nothing, Madame Françoise; for, relying on the generous interference of the young lady, I expected Agricola back every instant: when he did not return yesterday evening, I thought perhaps the forms requisite for putting in the security may have detained him. But hour after hour passed away, and still he did not appear. I sat up all night waiting for him."

"My poor Mayeux, you have not been in bed all night!"

"I was too uneasy; so, unable to bear this state of suspense any longer, before daybreak I went out. I recollected the address of the young lady in the Rue de Babylone, and thither I hastened."

"Quite right—quite right!" said Françoise, anxiously: "from what my son told us, the young lady seems to have been kindly and generously disposed."

La Mayeux shook her head mournfully; a tear glittered in her eye, as she continued,

"When I reached the Rue de Babylone it was still dark, so I had to wait till it was day."

"Poor child!" said Françoise, deeply affected; "you, so timid and fearful, to go all that way! and in such dreadful weather, too! Ah, you are more than a daughter to me!"

"Is not Agricola a brother to me?" said La Mayeux, slightly blushing. Then she resumed:

"When it was broad daylight I ventured to ring the bell of the little pavilion: a charming young girl, but whose countenance was pale and sorrowful, came to open the door. 'Mademoiselle,' said I, to interest her in my favour (for I was afraid, seeing me so poorly dressed, she would send me away as a beggar), 'I come from a poor mother, who is in the greatest distress.' Then, seeing that far from being angry the young girl listened kindly to what I said, I asked whether, on the previous day, a young artisan had not been there to entreat her mistress to do him a great favour.

"'Alas! yes,' replied the girl; 'and my mistress was going to do what he asked her, when, finding he was sought for the purpose of being arrested, she concealed him in the house. Unfortunately his retreat was discovered, and yes- terday afternoon, at four o'clock, he was arrested and conducted to prison.'"

Although the orphans took no part in this conversation, it was easy to perceive, by their sorrowful countenances, how deeply they sympathized with the wife of Dagobert.

"But the young lady!" cried Françoise; "you should have endeavoured, my good Mayeux, to see her, and beseech her not to abandon my poor son. She is so rich, and no doubt equally powerful; her interference may save us from so heavy a misfortune."

"Ah, no!" replied La Mayeux, with deep grief; "we must renounce all hope of that."

"And why?" said Françoise; "since this young lady is so good, when she knows that my son is the sole support of his family, she will take pity on us. She will see why a prison is more dreadful for him than for others, because it will reduce us all to misery."

"This young lady," resumed La Mayeux, "as I understood from the young girl, who wept as she told me—this poor lady was taken yesterday evening to a private madhouse, having gone out of her senses."

"How dreadful for her! as well as for us, alas! also. Now we have no hope to cling to, nothing to look forward to. What will become of us without my son? My God! my God!"

So saying, the heartbroken mother covered her face with her hands.

While Françoise thus yielded to her grief, a profound silence reigned among the three spectators of the scene.

Rose and Blanche exchanged looks of deep distress, expressive of their unfeigned commiseration, for they well understood how much they must add to the embarrassment of the family; while La Mayeux, worn out with fatigue, torn by
so many painful emotions, and shivering in her wet garments, seated herself dejectedly on a chair, reflecting on the desperate condition of the family.

And most painful, indeed, was the situation in which it was now placed.

In times of political trouble or of agitation, caused among the labouring classes by a compulsory cessation from work, or by the unjust reduction of their pay, which is imposed upon them, without redress, by the powerful coalition of capitalists—very often, at such times, whole families of artisans are, thanks to the preventive detention, placed in a position as deplorable as that of Dagobert's by the arrest of Agricola—an arrest owing, moreover, as we shall find hereafter, to the intrigues of Rodin and his myrmidons.

Apropos of preventive detention, which often falls upon honest, hardworking artisans, almost always driven to the sad extremity of coalitions by the want of organization in their own trades, and the lowness of their pay; it is, in our opinion, painful to see the law, which ought to be equal to all, refuse to these what it grants to those, because those can dispose of a certain sum of money.

In many cases the rich man, by means of caution (deposite of a certain sum), can escape the annoyance and distress of preventive imprisonment. He lays down a sum of money, gives his word to appear on a stated day, and returns instantly to his pleasures, his occupations, or the bosom of his family.

Nothing can be better: every person accused is deemed innocent, and this maxim cannot be too deeply or generally impressed.

So much the better for the rich, since he can avail himself of the benefit of the law.

But the poor man?

Not only has he no caution to lay down, for he has no capital but his daily labour, but it is for him particularly, poor as he is, that the rigours of a preventive incarceration are powerful and terrible.

For the rich man the prison is the lack of ease and comfort—it is ennui; the pain of being separated from his family, and that deserves commiseration, for all that is painful is pitiable; and the tears of the rich man separated from his children are as bitter as those of the poor man similarly removed.

But the absence of the rich man does not condemn his family to fasting and cold, or to the incurable maladies caused by exhaustion and misery.

On the contrary, for the artisan prison is actual distress, a perfect deprivation, ending sometimes in the death of his family.

Possessing nothing, he is unable to furnish any caution, and is imprisoned.

What, then, if he have, as generally happens, an infirm father or mother, a sick wife, or infants in the cradle? What will become of this unfortunate family? It can hardly live from day to day on this man's earnings, which are almost always insufficient; and in one instant this sole support is cut off for three or four months. What will become of this family? To whom can they have recourse? What will become of the infirm old man, the sickly woman, the little children unable to make the slightest exertion to gain their daily bread? If by chance they have a little linen or clothing in the house, they take it to the pawnbroker, and with this resource they may, perhaps, exist for a week; but what then?

And suppose, moreover, that winter adds its severities to this trying and inevitable misery!

Then the imprisoned artisan will see in his "mind's eye," during long and sleepless nights, those most dear to him, haggard, withering, exhausted by want, sleeping almost naked on miserable straw, and trying, by drawing close to each other, to warm their frozen limbs.

Then, if the workman is acquitted, he finds nothing but distress and ruin when, at last, he reaches his home of indigence.

And then, too, after so long a cessation from labour the connexions which brought him work are broken off; how many days are lost in seeking to find work again! And a day without labour is a day without bread.
Let us repeat, that if the law did not offer, under certain circumstances, to those who are rich, the privilege of caution, we might groan over inevitable and severe misfortunes; but since the law consents to put at liberty, provisionally, those who possess a certain sum of money, why does it deprive of this advantage those to whom liberty is especially indispensable, since liberty is to them the very life of their families?

For this deplorable state of things is there any remedy? We think so.

The minimum of the caution required by the law is five hundred francs. But five hundred francs is about the average amount of six months' labour of an industrious workman.

If he have a wife and two children (which is also about the average amount of his family), it is evidently impossible that he can have saved such a sum.

Therefore to require from him five hundred francs, that he may still be capable of maintaining his family, is virtually placing him beyond the benefit of the law; he who, more than anybody, ought to have the right to enjoy it, because of the disastrous results which his preventive imprisonment brings upon his family.

Would it not be equitable, humane, and give a noble, salutary example, to accept, in all cases where the caution is admitted, and when the honesty of the accused could be clearly shown, the moral guarantees of those whose poverty did not allow them to deposit tangible guarantees, and who have no other capital than their labour and probity, and receive their word, as honest men, to present themselves at the day appointed for their trial?

Would it not be moral and great, especially in these our days, to increase thus the value of a sworn promise, and elevate a man in his own eyes, by allowing his oath to be considered as sufficient security?

If we deny the possibility, or exclaim against the Utopianism of this suggestion, do we not depreciate the dignity of mankind? We will ask if many prisoners of war on parole have ever been known to perjure themselves, and whether the soldiers and officers who kept their parole were not generally from among the people?

Without exaggerating the virtue of an oath among the working, honest, and poorer classes, we are certain that the undertaking given by the accused to appear on the day appointed would be always fulfilled, not only with fidelity and punctuality, but also with deep gratitude, inasmuch as his family had not suffered by his absence, thanks to the indulgence of the law.

It is, besides, a fact of which France may be justly proud, that its magistracy, as miserably paid as its soldiery, is learned, upright, humane, and independent, with a deep sense of its useful and imposing functions; and, more than any other body, it can and does know how to appreciate with charity the ills and vast sufferings of the labouring classes, with whom it so often comes in contact.

Too much license cannot, then, be accorded to the magistrates in cases in which the moral caution (the only one that can be offered by a labouring man) should be accepted.

In fine, if those who make the laws and those who govern us had so prejudiced an opinion against the people as to reject disdainfully the idea we throw out, could they not at least require that the minimum of the caution should be put so low as to be within the reach of those who require so urgently to escape from the destructive hardships of the preventive detention?

Could we not take, as an extreme limit, the average salary of a workman for a month? Say, eighty francs?

That would be still exorbitant; but by the help of his friends, the help of the pawnbroker, and some little savings, the eighty francs might be raised—perhaps not always; but if sometimes, many poor families might be snatched from frightful misery.

* We have quoted in another work, and we read always with as much respect as deep sympathy, the admirable volume of M. Prosper Tarbe, Proces de Rue, "Travail et Salaire" ("Work and Pay") is one of the most sound and elevated works that a deep love of humanity ever inspired to a generous heart, a lively intelligence, and a clear and practical mind.—E. Soz.
This said, we will now return to Dagobert's family, who, in consequence of the preventive detention of Agricola, were in a most distressed condition.

Reflection served but to increase the wretchedness of Françoise; for, reckoning the daughters of General Simon, she perceived a family of four persons absolutely destitute of all means of support; though, it must be confessed, the tender mother thought much less of herself than of the misery her son would experience at the recollection of her deplorable condition.

At this moment some one knocked at the door.

"Who is there?" said Françoise.

"'Tis I, Madame Françoise—Father Loriot."

"Pray come in," said the wife of Dagobert.

The dyer, who also fulfilled the duties of porter, appeared at the door of the apartment: instead of exhibiting the same bright-green upon his hands and arms, he this day displayed a magnificent violet-colour.

"Madame Françoise," said Father Loriot, "here is a letter, which has just been brought by the person who gives the holy water at Saint Merry: he brings it from the Abbé Dubois, and wished it to be carried up to you directly, as it is on very particular business."

"A letter from my confessor!" said Françoise, astonished: then taking it, she added, "Thank you, Father Loriot."

"Is there anything I can do for you, Madame Françoise?"

"Nothing, I thank you, Father Loriot."

"Servant, ladies all!" said the dyer, as he backed out of the chamber.

"Will you read me this letter, Mayeux?" said Françoise, somewhat uneasy as to its contents.

"Oh, yes! madame," returned the girl, reading aloud as follows:

"My dear Madame Baudoin— I am usually in the habit of receiving you on Saturdays and Tuesdays, but, as I shall be engaged to-morrow and Saturday, I wish you to come to me directly— unless, indeed, you prefer allowing a week to pass without approaching the confessional.""

"A week!" exclaimed the wife of Dagobert; "good Heavens! Alas! I feel too strongly in my present state of trouble and distress the necessity for approaching it to-day." Then addressing herself to the orphans, she said, "God has heard my prayers for you, my dear young ladies, since I am this very day afforded the opportunity of consulting a holy and worthy man respecting the fearful danger you are incurring without knowing it. Poor dear souls! so innocent, and yet so guilty! although from no fault of yours. Heaven is my witness my heart bleeds for you as for my own son."

Rose and Blanché looked at each other in amazement, unable to comprehend the fears with which the state of their souls inspired the wife of Dagobert.

Françoise then addressing herself to the young needlewoman, said, "My dear Mayeux, I must ask you to do me another kindness."

"Anything, Madame Françoise."

"My husband took Agricola's week's wages for his journey to Chartres—that was all the money we had in the house; I am quite sure my poor boy had not a sou in his possession: perhaps he may want something now he is in prison. You must take the silver cup, the fork and spoon, the two pairs of sheets, with the new shawl Agricola gave me on my birthday, and go with them to the pawnbroker's. I will try and find out what prison my son is confined in. Then I will send him half of what you get for the things, and the remainder will suffice for us until the return of my husband. But when he does come back, what shall we do? What a blow for him! And to make it worse, he will find us reduced to absolute want, now that my son is in prison and my sight gone— Oh, Lord, my God!" exclaimed the unhappy mother, with an expression of impatient and bitter sorrow, "why afflict me thus? I have endeavoured to deserve pity, if not for myself, at least for those most dear to me." Then reproaching herself for
this vehemence, she added, "No! I must receive whatsoever thou bringest upon me. Pardon this repining, and let the punishment fall on me alone."

"Courage, Madame Françoise!" said La Mayeux. "Agricola is innocent; he cannot be detained in prison long."

"But, now I reflect," resumed Dagobert's wife, "to take the things to the pawnbroker's will make you lose much time, my poor Mayeux."

"I will make up for it at night, Madame Françoise: can I sleep when you are so unhappy? Work will amuse me."

"But, then, it will cost you a light."

"Never mind, Madame Françoise, I have some money in hand," said the poor girl, blushing at her own falsehood.

"Embrace me, then," said Dagobert's wife; "you are certainly the best creature in the world."

So saying, Françoise hastily left the room.

Rose and Blanche, left alone with La Mayeux, at length saw that moment arrived for which they had so impatiently waited; while Dagobert's wife soon reached the church of Saint Merry, where her confessor awaited her.
CHAPTER III.

THE CONFESSIONAL.

EPULSIVE and melancholy in the extreme was the aspect of the parish church of Saint Merry on this lowering and snowy day. For a moment Françoise was delayed at the porch by a saddening spectacle.

While a priest was murmuring some words in a low voice, two or three dirty choristers, in soiled surplices, were chanting the prayers for the dead, with an inattentive and careless air, around a miserable pine coffin, beside which an old man and a child, wretchedly clad, stood weeping bitterly.

The door-opener and the beadle, very much annoyed at being disturbed for so paltry a funeral, had not thought it worth while to put on their liveries, and were yawning with impatience for the conclusion of the ceremony which brought such small fees. At last a few drops of holy water fell on the coffin, the priest returned the sprinkler to the beadle, and went away.

Then followed one of those shameful scenes, the necessary consequence of a dishonourable and sacrilegious traffic; one of those scandalous scenes so frequent in cases of funerals for the poor who cannot pay for wax candles, or high mass, or violins, for now there are violins for the dead.*

The old man extended his hand to the beadle to receive the sprinkler.

"Take it, and be quick!" said the functionary of the sacristy, blowing his fingers.

The emotion of the old man was great—his weakness extreme. He remained for a moment motionless, holding the brush closed in his trembling hand. In the coffin was his daughter, the mother of the ragged child who was weeping beside him. The heart of this man was breaking at the thought of this last adieu. He was motionless, except for the convulsive sobs that heaved his breast.

* At the church of St. Thomas d'Aquin, at Paris.
"Come, I say, make haste!" said the beadle, brutally: "do you suppose that we are going to sleep here?"

The old man roused himself. He made a sign of the cross on the coffin, and, stooping, was about to place the brush in the hand of his grandchild, when the sacristan, thinking the affair had lasted long enough, took the sprinkler from the child's hand, and made a signal to the bearers to lift the bier up directly, which they did.

"A tedious old fellow," said the porter, in an undertone, to the beadle, as they regained the vestry-room; "we shall hardly have time to breakfast and dress ourselves for the bang-up funeral of this morning. That's the real thing—a corpse worth the trouble. Go ahead!"

"Yes, and with colonel's epaulettes on your shoulders, that you may cut a figure in the eyes of the chair-letter, you rogue!" said the beadle, with a knowing air.

"Well, Catillard, it's no fault of mine if I am a good-looking fellow," said the porter, with an air of vanity; "I cannot put out women's eyes in order to keep their hearts at ease."

And the two worthies entered the sacristy.

The sight of this funeral had added to the sadness of Françoise.

When she entered the church, seven or eight persons, sitting on chairs in different parts, were the only congregation in this damp and chilling edifice.

One of the givers of holy water, a comical old fellow, with a red face bespeaking a love of wine and wassail, seeing
Françoise came to the bénitier, said to her, in a low voice, "M. the Abbé Dubois is not yet in the confessional; make haste, and you will have the first cut at him."

Françoise, pained at this coarse levity, thanked the reverend sacristan, crossed herself devoutly, went a few steps forward, and then fell on her knees to say the prayer which she always offered up before she approached the confessional.

Having said this prayer, she went forward to a dark corner, where, in the shadow, was an oaken confessional, the latticed door of which had, on the inside, a black curtain. The two places right and left were vacant, and Françoise, kneeling on the right side, remained for some time plunged in the most bitter reflections.

After some minutes, a priest of tall stature, with gray hair, a grave and severe countenance, and wearing a long, black cassock, advanced slowly from the end of one of the aisles.

A little old man, who stooped, was shabbily dressed, and leaned on an umbrella, accompanied him, speaking to him at times in low whispers, and then the priest paused and listened to him with profound and respectful deference.

As they approached the confessional, the little old man, seeing Françoise on her knees, looked inquisitively at the priest.

"'Tis she," said the latter.

"Then in two or three hours we shall expect the two young girls at the convent of Sainte Marie; on that I rely," said the little old man.

"I hope so, for their salvation's sake," said the priest gravely, and bowing. He then entered the confessional.

The little old man left the church. This little old man was Rodin; and on leaving Saint Merry he went to the madhouse to ascertain whether Dr. Baleinier had faithfully fulfilled his instructions with regard to Adrienne de Cardoville.

Françoise was still kneeling in the interior of the confessional, when one of the side-windows opened, and a voice spoke. It was the voice of the priest, who for twenty years had confessed Dagobert's wife, and had an all-powerful influence over her.

"You received my letter?" said the voice.

"Yes, holy father."

"Good: I listen to you."

"Bless me, holy father, for I have sinned!" said Françoise.

The voice pronounced the formula of benediction.

Dagobert's wife replied Amen, in due form; said her confessio as far as "This is my sin;" gave an account of the way in which she had performed her last penitence; and came then to the enumeration of the fresh sins committed since she had received absolution.

This excellent woman, this real martyr of labour and maternal love, believed she was always sinning; her conscience was incessantly tormented by the fear of having committed indescribable peccadillos. This gentle and courageous creature, who, after a life of duty fulfilled, ought to have reposed in the serenity of her soul, believed herself a great sinner, and lived in incessant agony, doubtful of her salvation.

"Father," said Françoise, in a trembling voice, "I accuse myself of not having said my evening prayer the day before yesterday. My husband, from whom I have been separated many years, arrived, and the emotion, the excitement, the joy of his return, caused me to commit this great sin of which I accuse myself."

"Well?" said the voice, in a tone of severity, which disquieted Françoise.

"Holy father, I accuse myself of having fallen into the same sin yesterday evening. I was in a most anxious state; my son did not return—I was expecting him every moment—the time passed away in this anxiety."

"Well?" said the voice.

"Holy father, I accuse myself of having lied all the week to my son, by telling him, in answer to his remarks on the weakness of my health, that I had drunk some wine at my meals. I preferred leaving it for him; he has more need of it than I—he works so hard."
"Go on," said the voice.

"Holy father, I accuse myself of having for a moment wanted resignation this morning, when I learned that my poor son had been arrested; instead of submitting, with respect and gratitude, to the new trial which the Lord was pleased to send me, alas! I was rebellious in my grief, and I accuse myself of that."

"A bad week!" said the voice, in a tone still more severe; "a bad week! You have continually set the creature before the Creator. Go on."

"Alas, father!" said Françoise, overwhelmed with dismay, "I know I am a great sinner, and I am fearful of being in the way to still greater sins."

"Speak."

"My husband has brought from Siberia two young orphan girls, daughters of Marshal Simon. Yesterday morning, when I told them to say their prayers, I learned with fright and distress that they knew nothing of the mysteries of the faith, although they are fifteen years old: they have never received any sacrament, not even that of baptism, holy father—not even baptism!"

"Are they then idolaters?" exclaimed the voice, in accents of anger and astonishment.

"It is that which distresses me, holy father; for I and my husband, supplying the place of parents to these young orphans, should be guilty of the sins they commit, should we not, holy father?"

"Certainly! since you are in the place of those who should watch over their souls: the shepherd is answerable for his sheep," said the voice.

"Then, holy father, in case they were in deadly sin, my husband and I should be in deadly sin?"

"Assuredly," answered the voice, "you stand in stead of father and mother; and the father and mother are guilty of all the sins which their children commit, when the children sin because they have not received a Christian education."

"Alas, holy father! what am I to do? I address myself to you as to God. Every day, every hour that these poor young girls remain in idolatry may ensure their eternal damnation; may they not, holy father?" said Françoise, in tones of deep tribulation.

"Yes," replied the voice; "and this terrible responsibility now weighs heavily on you and your husband: you have the charge of souls."

"O Lord, have mercy on me!" said Françoise, weeping.

"Do not distress yourself so heavily," resumed the voice, in a gentler tone; "happily for these unfortunate children they have met you in their wanderings; they will have in you and your husband good and pious examples; for your husband, bad as he was in former times, now, I suppose, performs all his religious duties?"

"We must pray for him, holy father," replied Françoise, sorrowfully; "grace has not yet touched him. He is like a poor child who is not yet touched by it. Ah, holy father!" said Françoise, wiping her eyes, "these thoughts are my heaviest cross."

"Then neither your husband nor your son communicates," said the voice, in a tone of reflection; "this is serious—very serious! The religious education of these two unhappy young girls is still to be commenced. They will have, at your abode, at every instant, deplorable examples before their eyes. Take care; I tell you you have a charge of souls. Your responsibility is immense."

"Oh, holy father! it is that which distresses me: I do not know what to do. Come to my aid—give me your advice. For twenty years your voice has been to me the voice of the Lord."

"Well, then, you must arrange with your husband to place these unhappy girls in some religious house, where they will receive instruction."

"We are too poor, holy father, to pay their board; and, unfortunately, my son has just been sent to prison for some songs he has written."

"This is what impiety leads to," said the voice, in a severe tone. "Look at Gabriel, who has followed my counsels, and at this hour he is a model of all Christian virtues!"
"My son Agricola has his good qualities, holy father: he is so kind, so dutiful!"

"Without religion," said the voice, with redoubled severity, "what you call good qualities are but vain appearances: at the least breath of wind from the devil they disappear, for the wicked one dwells in every soul without religion."

"Alas, my poor boy!" said Francoise, in tears; "I pray every day that he may be enlightened to the true faith!"

"I have always told you," replied the voice, "that you have been too weak with respect to him, and now God punishes you for it. You must separate from this irreligious son, and not encourage his impiety by loving him as you do. When you have an offending member, saith the Holy Scripture, cut it off."

"Alas, holy father! you know it is the only time I ever disobeyed you; but I could not bring my mind to separate from my child."

"And therefore your salvation is uncertain; but God is merciful! Do not fall again into the same fault with respect to these two young girls, whom Providence has sent to you that they may be saved by you from eternal damnation. Take care that they are not plunged into it by your culpable indifference."

"Alas, holy father! I have wept and prayed much for them!"

"That is not sufficient: these unhappy girls can have no notion of good or evil. Their souls must be an abyss of impurities, brought up, as they have been, by an impious mother and an unbelieving soldier."

"As to that, holy father," said Francoise, ingenuously, "do not be alarmed: they are as gentle as angels; and my husband, who has not quitted them since they were born, says there cannot be purer hearts."

"Your husband has spent his life in mortal sin," said the voice, harshly; "his is not the mind to judge of the state of souls; and I repeat to you, since you replace the parents of these unfortunate children, it is not to-morrow, but to-day—this very hour—that their salvation must be worked out, or you incur an awful responsibility."

"That is true; I know it well, holy father; and this fear is as heavy on me as my grief for my son's arrest. But what can I do? I cannot, ignorant as I am, instruct these young girls at home. I have nothing but faith; and then my poor husband, in his blindness, jests at holy things, which my son respects in my presence, through consideration for me. Again, holy father, I conjure you to help me! Tell me what to do!"

"We must not abandon to perdition these two young souls," said the voice, after a moment's silence; "there are no two roads to salvation—there is but one. They must be placed in a religious house, where they will be surrounded by none but holy and pious examples."

"Ah, holy father! if we were not so poor, or even if I could work, I would endeavour to gain wherewithal to pay for their board, and do as I did for Gabriel. Unfortunately, my sight is quite gone; but, holy father, you must know so many charitable souls—could you not interest them in favour of these two poor orphans?"

"But where is their father?"

"He was in India; my husband told me that he expected his arrival in France immediately, but nothing is certain. And then, again, father, my heart would bleed to see these poor children share our misery—and that will soon be very great, for we only lived on the labour of my son."

"Then the girls have no relation here?" inquired the voice.

"I think not, father."

"And it was their mother who confided them to your husband to bring to France?"

"Yes, father; and he was compelled to go yesterday to Chartres on a very urgent affair, as he told me."

It will be remembered that Dagobert had not thought fit to tell his wife of the hopes which Marshal Simon's daughters founded on the medal, and that they
themselves had had express instructions from the soldier not to speak of it to Francoise.

"So, then," resumed the voice, after some minutes' silence, "your husband is not in Paris?"

"No, father; but he will return to-night or to-morrow morning."

"Listen," said the voice, after another pause; "every minute lost in the salvation of these young girls is a new step which they will take to perdition. At any moment the hand of God may fall heavily on them, for He only knows the hour of our death! and dying in their present state, they would be damned to all eternity! From this very day, therefore, their eyes must be opened to the Divine light, and they must be taken to a religious house. Such is your duty—such should be your desire!"

"Oh, yes, holy father! but, unfortunately, I am too poor, as I have told you."

"I know that you want neither zeal nor faith; but, even if you were capable of directing these young girls, the impious examples of your husband and son would daily destroy your work. Others, therefore, must do for these orphan girls, in the name of Christian charity, what you cannot do—you, who are answerable for them before God!"

"Ah, holy father! if, thanks to you, this good work could be accomplished, what would be my gratitude!"

"It is not impossible. I am acquainted with the superior of a convent, where the young girls would be brought up as they ought to be. The usual pension would be diminished on account of their poverty; but, though the sum be small, it must be paid. They will also require suitable clothing; that, also, would be out of your power to provide."

"Alas, yes, holy father!"

"By drawing upon my charity-box, and applying to certain benevolent persons, who are always ready to assist me in any good work, I could make up the requisite sum, and thus procure the admission of these young girls into the convent."

"Oh, reverend father, you are my saviour, as well as that of the poor children!"

"I wish to be so; but, from the interest I take in their welfare, and in order to render my exertions still more efficacious, I must attach several conditions to the assistance I offer you."

"Oh, name them, holy father! They are gratefully accepted beforehand. Your commands are laws to me."

"In the first place, they shall be taken to the convent this very morning; you shall bring them to my housekeeper for that purpose as soon as you return home."

"Impossible, reverend father!" exclaimed Francoise.

"Why impossible?"

"In my husband's absence—"

"Well!"

"I dare not take such a determination without consulting him."

"You must not only abstain from consulting him, but select the very time of his absence for doing as I command you."

"How, father? may I not await his return?"

"For two reasons," replied the voice, in a severe tone; "first, because his hardened impiety would certainly lead him to oppose your wise and pious resolution; and, secondly, because it is indispensable that these young girls should hold no farther communion with your husband, and therefore he must be kept in ignorance of their retreat."

"But, father," replied Francoise, a prey to the most cruel emotions, "these children were confided to my husband: how can I dispose of them without his knowledge? It would be—"

The voice interrupted Françoise:

"Can you or can you not instruct these young people if they remain with you?"
"Alas, no, reverend father! I have not the power."
"Would they or would they not be exposed to a continued state of ignorance and impenitence if they continued with you?"
"Yes, father, they certainly would!"
"Are you or are you not responsible for all the sins they may commit, being to them instead of a parent?"
"Alas! I am responsible for them before God."
"Is it or is it not to promote their eternal salvation that I enjoin you to place them in a convent this very day?"
"It is for their souls' welfare."
"Then it is for you to decide."
"Father, I implore you to tell me truly, have I the right to dispose of these children without the consent of my husband?"
"The right! This is no question of right; it involves a sacred duty. Would it not be your duty to pluck these unfortunate girls from the midst of a burning fire, even against the prohibition of your husband, or during his absence? Well, then, you are now called upon to snatch them from flames, not such as would consume their mortal frame, but from a fire which would burn their souls to all eternity!"
"Pardon me, holy father! I humbly supplicate, if I still hesitate," cried the unhappy woman, whose uncertainty and apprehension grew stronger at each moment. "Can I act thus after having solemnly vowed obedience to my husband?"
"Obedience for good, not evil; and you yourself admit that, if left to him, the salvation of these orphans would be endangered, if not rendered impossible."
"But, reverend father," said Françoise, trembling, "when, upon his return, my husband shall ask where I have placed the children, must I answer him with a lie?"
"Silence is not falsehood; you will tell him you cannot reply to his question."
"My husband is the best of men; but such a reply would enrage him: he has been a soldier, and his anger would be fearful, holy father!" cried Françoise, shuddering at the thought. "And were his anger a hundred times more terrible, you should brave it, and glorify yourself for suffering in such a cause," exclaimed the voice, indignantly. "Think you that it is so easy to work out salvation on this earth? Should the repentant sinner, who sincerely desires to serve his Lord, complain of the stones which bruise his feet, or the thorns which lacerate his flesh?"
"Pardon, holy father, pardon!" said Françoise, with a crushed spirit; "deign but to answer one question—one only. Alas! if you do not guide me, to whom can I turn?"
"Speak!"
"When Marshal Simon arrives, he will demand his daughters of my husband: what answer can he make?"
"You will let me know as soon as Marshal Simon arrives, and then I will consider how to act; for the rights of a parent are only sacred so long as he employs them for the salvation of his children. Above the earthly parent, and before him, comes the Heavenly Father, who must first be served. Reflect well, then; by accepting what I propose, these young girls will be rescued; you will be freed from all expense in maintaining them; they will not be involved in your distress; and they will be educated in a holy mansion becoming their station as the daughters of a marshal of France: so that, upon their father's arrival in Paris, if he be worthy of seeing them again, instead of finding them poor idolaters, half savage, he will find two modest, pious, well-informed young persons, who, having obtained favour in the sight of God, may invoke his mercy and grace for their father, who stands sorely in need of it, being, as he is, a man of violence, of war, and of battle. Now decide: will you, at the peril of your soul, sacrifice the welfare of these young girls, both in this world and in that which is to come, to the impious dread of your husband's anger?"
However harsh and marked with intolerance might be the language of Françoise's confessor, it was what the honest and sincerely zealous man believed, according to his view of the case, to be only reasonable and just. The blind instrument of Rodin, and ignorant of the purpose he was set to accomplish, he firmly believed that, while in a manner forcing Françoise to place these children in a convent, he was only fulfilling a pious duty.

Such was, and still is, one of the marvellous resources of the Order to which Rodin belonged—obtaining men of upright and sincere integrity as confederates in schemes whose villany they never suspect, while acting, though unconsciously, a most important part in them.

Françoise, for many years accustomed to yield implicit obedience to her confessor, knew not what to reply to his last words: she therefore laid aside all opposition, even while shuddering at the anticipation of Dagobert's furious rage at the loss of those children a dying mother had committed to his charge. Now, according to her confessor, the greater her dread of Dagobert's anger, the greater should be her humility and submission to all that might befall her. She therefore replied,

"The will of God be done, holy father! And whatever may happen, I will discharge the duty of a good Christian, according to your directions!"

"And the Lord will be pleased to accept of all you may have to endure in the performance of this duty. You solemnly vow, then, in the presence of God, to answer no question your husband may put to you concerning the daughters of General Simon."

"I promise!" answered Françoise, with a shudder.

"And you also engage to maintain the same silence to General Simon, in the event of his returning before I shall consider his daughters sufficiently established in the right road to be given up to him?"

"I promise, holy father!" replied Françoise, in a voice of increasing feebleness.

"You will come to relate to me every particular of the scene which ensues upon your husband's return?"

"I will, holy father! When shall I bring the orphans to you?"

"In an hour. I will now go and write to the superior. I will leave the letter with my housekeeper, who is a very trustworthyperson, and will conduct the young girls herself to the convent."

After having listened to the exhortations of her confessor as to her past misdoings, and received absolution, accompanied by adequate penance, the wife of Dagobert left the confessional.

The church was no longer empty. An immense crowd was assembled, attracted by the pomp of the funeral of which the porter had spoken to the beadle two hours before.

It was with much difficulty Françoise reached the door of the church, sumptuously hung with draperies.

What a contrast to the humble train that had so timidly crept under the same porch in the morning!

The numerous clergy of the parish advanced majestically to receive the coffin, covered with its velvet pall, while the rich silk of their copes and stoles, glittering with silver embroidery, shone in the blaze of the numerous wax tapers.

The porter, wearing his full-dress livery, and the beadle, holding his whalebone staff, stood opposite each other in grand state; the choristers, in white garments, sang their loudest, sweetest strains; the full peal of the organ resounded through the building. Each person who took part in these demonstrations of regard for the rich deceased seemed elate with satisfaction at making one in an affair where no expense had been spared. And this complacency was still farther manifested in the pleased and contented countenances of the heirs, two healthy-looking, robust men, who, while carefully preserving the modest dejection and
prescribed composure of feature, were evidently indulging their anticipations of the future, and, beneath their long, sable garments of wo, revelling in many a pleasing scheme for days to come.

Spite of her pure and simple faith, the wife of Dagobert was painfully struck by the revolting difference in the reception of the coffin of the rich man and that of the poor at the door of the house of God! for, if there is any real equality, surely it must be in the presence of death and an eternal future.

The two painful spectacles increased the depression of her spirits; and having with some difficulty left the church, she quickened her steps to the Rue Brise-Miche, in order to conduct the orphans to her confessor, whose housekeeper was to convey them to the convent of Sainte Marie, situated, as the reader is aware, adjoining the madhouse of Dr. Balsamier, where Adrienne de Cardoville was confined.

CHAPTER IV.

Monsieur and Killjoy.

Leaving the church, Franchise had reached the entrance to the Rue Brise-Miche, when she was overtaken by the giver of the holy water, who had run after her, until out of breath, to beg her to return immediately to Saint Merry, as the Abbé Dubois had something important to say to her.

At the moment when Franchise turned to retrace her steps, a hackney-coach stopped at the door of the house which she inhabited.

The coachman descended from his box and opened the coach-door.

"Coachman," said a stout female clothed in black, who was seated in this carriage, and had a pug-dog on her knees, "inquire if Madame Franchise Baudoin lives here."

"Yes, mistress," said the coachman.

Our readers no doubt have recognised Madame Grivois, first lady-in-waiting to the Princess de Saint-Dizier, accompanied by Monsieur, who exercised a real tyranny over his mistress.

The dyer, whom we have already seen discharging the functions of porter, being asked by the coachman as to the residence of Françoise, left his workshop and came politely to the coach-door to tell Madame Grivois that Françoise Baudoin lived in the house, but had not yet come in.

Father Loriot's arms, hands, and a part of his face were of a splendid gold colour. The sight of this personage, covered with yellow ochre, offended and irritated Monsieur; and, at the moment when the dyer placed his hand on the edge of the coach-door, the pug gave a snappish bark, and bit him in the wrist.

"Ah!" exclaimed Madame Grivois, in an agony, while Father Loriot withdrew his hand hastily. "I trust there is nothing poisonous in the dye you have on your hand—my dog is so very delicate."

And she carefully wiped the flat muzzle of Monsieur, which was spotted with yellow.

Father Loriot, but little satisfied with this substitute for apologies which he expected from Madame Grivois for the bad conduct of her pet cur, could hardly repress his anger.
"Madame, if you did not belong to the sex who always have my utmost respect, which I therefore extend to this beastly cur, I would take him by the tail, and in one moment transform him into an orange-coloured pug, by dipping him in my dyeing vat, which is at this moment ready."

"Dye my dog orange colour!" shrieked Madame Grivois, who, in excessive rage, alighted from the coach, hugging Monsieur tenderly to her bosom, and looking at Father Loriot with an angry glance.

"Madame, I have told you that Madame Francoise was not within," said the dyer, seeing the mistress of the surly pug about to ascend the dark staircase.

"Very well; I will wait for her," said Madame Grivois, dryly; "on what floor does she live?"

"On the fourth," said Father Loriot, returning abruptly to his shop. And he said to himself, smiling complacently at the mischievous idea, "I hope Father Dagobert's great dog will be in an ill humour, and take this nasty brute by the scruff of his neck."

Madame Grivois went up the rugged staircase with considerable difficulty; stopping at each story to take breath, and looking around her with exceeding disgust. At last she reached the fourth floor, and stopped a moment at the door of the humble chamber in which were the two sisters and La Mayeux.

The young work-girl was occupied in getting together the different things she was to take to the Mont de Piété.

Rose and Blanche seemed very happy, and somewhat reassured as to the future, for they had learned from La Mayeux that they might, if they worked hard, and they could sew, gain between the two eight francs a week—at least a resource for the family.

The presence of Madame Grivois at Françoise Baudoin's was caused by a new determination of the Abbé d'Aigrigny and the Princess de Saint-Dizier, who had judged it more prudent to send Madame Grivois, in whom they blindly confided, for the young girls at Françoise's; she (Françoise) being informed by her confessor that it was not to his housekeeper, but to a lady who would come with a message from him, that the young girls were to be intrusted for conveyance to a religious house.

After having knocked, the confidential maid of the Princess de Saint-Dizier entered, and inquired for Françoise Baudoin.

"She is not here, madame," said La Mayeux, timidly, much astonished at such a visit, and casting down her eyes before the look of this woman.

"Then I will wait for her, for I wish to speak to her on very particular business," replied Madame Grivois, looking closely and with curiosity at the faces of the two orphans, who, much abashed, also cast their eyes on the ground.

Having spoken, Madame Grivois seated herself, not without some repugnance, in the old arm-chair belonging to Dagobert's wife; and thinking she might then let Monsieur be at liberty, she placed him carefully on the floor.

At that moment a sort of low, deep, hollow growl was heard behind the arm-chair, which made Madame Grivois start; and the pug, uttering a cry of terror which made his fat sides shiver, ensconced himself near his mistress with every symptom of angry fear.

"What! is there a dog here!" exclaimed Madame Grivois, who stooped and took Monsieur up in her arms as quickly as possible. Killjoy, as if desirous of replying to the question himself, rose slowly from behind the chair where he had been lying and showed himself, yawning and stretching.

At the sight of this powerful animal, and his two rows of sharp and formidable fangs, which he complaisantly exhibited by opening his wide throat to the utmost, Madame Grivois could not restrain a cry of affright. The ugly pug had at first trembled in every joint when he found himself confronted by Killjoy, but, once in safety on his mistress's knees, he began to growl impertinently, and to cast at the Siberian dog most provoking looks; but the worthy companion of the deceased Jovial replied disdainfully by a fresh yawn, after which, sniffing
the clothes of Madame Grivois with a kind of dissatisfaction, he went and stretched himself out at the feet of Rose and Blanche, on whom he fixed his large intelligent eyes as if he anticipated that some danger threatened them.

"Turn the dog out from here!" said Madame Grivois, in an imperative tone; "he frightens mine, and may do him some harm."

"Do not be alarmed, madame," replied Rose, smiling; "Killjoy is never naughty unless he is attacked."

"No matter," said Madame Grivois; "a misfortune soon happens. To look at that enormous dog, with his wolf's head and his horrid teeth, makes one tremble for what may happen. I tell you to turn him out!"

Madame Grivois had pronounced these last words in an angry voice, whose tone sounded ill in the ears of Killjoy, for he growled, showed his teeth, and turned his head in the direction of this woman, whom he did not know.

"Be quiet, Killjoy!" said Blanche, sharply.

A person now entered the room, who put an end to this posture of affairs, which was very embarrassing to the two girls. This was a messenger, who held a letter in his hand.

"What is your pleasure, sir?" inquired La Mayeux.

"I have a letter in very great haste from a worthy man, the husband of the mistress here; the dyer down stairs desired me to bring it up, although she is not at home."

"A letter from Dagobert!" exclaimed Rose and Blanche, with much joy. "What! has he returned? where is he?"

"I do not know if the gentleman's name is Dagobert," said the messenger; "but he is an old trooper, with a cross and gray mustaches: he is not two steps off, at the office of the coaches for Chartres."

"Yes, that is he!" said Rose; "give me the letter."

The messenger handed the letter, and the young girl opened it hastily.

Madame Grivois was thunderstruck; she knew that Dagobert had been sent away in order that the Abbé Dubois might the easier influence Françoise: so far all had succeeded, and the latter had agreed to confide the young girls to religious hands; but at this very moment the soldier arrived—he whom they believed absent from Paris for two or three days; and thus his sudden return would ruin the laborious machination, at the very moment when they believed they were about to reap the fruit of it!

"Ah!" said Rose, after having perused the letter, "what a misfortune!"

"What, sister?" asked Blanche.

"Yesterday, when half way on his road to Chartres, Dagobert discovered that he had lost his purse. He could not continue his journey, but obtained credit for a place back again; and he begs his wife to send him money to the office of the diligence, where he is waiting."

"Yes, that's it," said the commissioner; "for the worthy man said to me, 'Make haste, my lad, for here you see I am in pawn.'"
"And nothing—nothing in the house!" said Blanche. "Oh! what shall we do?"

At these words Madame Grivois had a moment's hope, but it was soon damped by La Mayeux, who said, pointing to the bundle she was collecting,

"Make yourselves easy, young ladies; we have a resource in the Mont de Piété, which is not far, and where I will take this. I shall get the money, take it directly to M. Dagobert, and he will be here in half an hour at farthest."

"Ah, dear Mayeux! you are right," said Rose; "how good you are! you think of everything."

"Here," added Blanche, "the address is on the messenger's letter; take it."

"Thank you, mademoiselle," replied La Mayeux: and then she said to the messenger, "Return to the person who sent you, and tell him that I will be with him at the coach-office directly."

"Infernal humpback!" thought Madame Grivois, with concentrated rage: "she thinks of everything; but for her we should have avoided the unlooked-for return of this confounded man. What is to be done now? the young girls will not go with me before the soldier's wife returns; to propose it would be to incur certain refusal and excite suspicion. What is to be done?"

"Do not be uneasy, mademoiselle," said the messenger as he went away. "I will give your message to the good man, and tell him he will not have long to wait at the office."

While La Mayeux was making up her packet, and putting the silver cup, and spoon, and fork in it, Madame Grivois was lost in reflection. All at once she started; her countenance, which for some time had been overcast, brightened up, and she rose, still holding Monsieur in her arms, and said to the young girls,

"Since Madame Francoise does not return, I will make a visit close by: I shall soon return. Be so good as to tell her so."

So saying, Madame Grivois went out a few minutes before La Mayeux.

CHAPTER V.

APPEARANCES.

After having again bid the orphans take courage, La Mayeux went down the stairs, but with some difficulty, for she had first gone to her own chamber, to add to the bundle, already heavy, a woollen counterpane, the only one she possessed, which protected her a little from the cold in her miserable apartment.

The night before, overcome by uneasiness on Agricola's behalf, the young girl could not work; the pangs of expectation, hope, and anxiety had prevented her; and the day, also, was to be lost. Still she must live.

The overwhelming troubles which deprive the poor, even of their power to work, are doubly terrible: they paralyze the strength, and with the relaxation from work which necessity imposes come destitution and distress.

But La Mayeux, the perfect and touching type of holy duty, had still to tax herself, to be useful, and she found strength for that. The most frail and weak creatures are sometimes endowed with extraordinary vigour of soul, and it might be said that in feeble constitutions the mind is so far superior to the body as to give it a factitious energy.

Thus La Mayeux for four-and-twenty hours had neither eaten nor slept, and
had suffered the cold of a freezing night. In the morning she had undergone great fatigue in traversing Paris twice through snow and sleet, to go to the Rue de Babylone, and yet her strength was not exhausted: so vast is the power of the heart.

La Mayeux had reached the corner of the Rue Saint Merry.

Since the recent conspiracy in the Rue des Prouvaires, many additional agents of police and sergents-de-ville had been stationed in this district.

The young workwoman, although bending under the weight of her bundle, ran quickly along the pathway; and at the instant when she passed near a sergent-de-ville, two five-franc pieces fell behind her, thrown down by a large woman clothed in black, who followed her.

The stout woman then directed the sergent-de-ville to the two pieces of money which had fallen, and said in a quick tone a few words, pointing to La Mayeux.

She then disappeared, at a quick pace, in the direction of the Rue Brise-Miche. The sergent-de-ville, struck by what Madame Grivois had said to him (for it was she), picked up the money, and, running after La Mayeux, exclaimed,

"Holla, holla, you there! Stop! stop that woman!"

At these cries several persons turned quickly, and in these quarters a knot of five or six people increases in a few moments to somewhat of a crowd.

Ignorant that the call of the sergent-de-ville was directed to her, La Mayeux hurried onward, only thinking of reaching the Mont de Piété as quickly as possible, and endeavouring to pass through the crowd without jostling anybody, so much did she dread the brutal jests which her infirmity so often excited.

Suddenly she heard several persons running behind her, and at the same moment a hand was rudely laid on her sholder.

It was the sergent-de-ville, followed by a police-agent, who came up at the noise.

La Mayeux, equally surprised and alarmed, turned round.

She found herself already in the midst of a crowd, composed of that idle, and ragged, wretched, and insolent mob, brutalized by ignorance and misery, which is always tramping the streets. In this assemblage we seldom see working-people, for they are usually at their shops or at labour.

"I say, don't you hear? why, you are like Jean de Nivelle's dog," said the police-agent, seizing La Mayeux so rudely by the arm that she dropped her bundle.

When the unfortunate girl, looking timidly about, saw all eyes fixed upon her with insolent, brutal, and insulting glances—when she saw the scowl or coarse grin on all these low and ill-cast countenances, she shuddered and turned deathly pale.

The police-sergeant spoke roughly; but how could he be expected to speak otherwise to a pale, terrified, and deformed object, whose countenance was convulsed with fear and grief, whose attire betokened the most abject poverty, and whose wretched cotton gown was drenched with wet and heavy with mud? for long and wearisome had been the poor girl's journeyings during the hours she had toiled to obtain news of Agricola. Thus, therefore, the police-sergeant, in obedience to that universal law of appearances, that poverty warrants suspicion, added, in a tone of severe authority,

"Holla, my girl! you must be pressed for time, since you cannot stop even to pick up your money after you have dropped it."

"I suppose she makes her hump her savings' bank," cried a hoarse voice, proceeding from a vendor of lucifer matches, whose countenance was the very type of precocious depravity. This witticism was received with shouts and laughter, which so completely overwhelmed poor La Mayeux, that it was with difficulty she replied to the police-officer, who offered her the two pieces of money,

"Sir, that money does not belong to me!"

"That's a lie!" answered the sergeant, approaching; "a respectable woman saw it fall from your pocket!"
"No, I assure you, sir!" answered La Mayeux, trembling from head to foot.

"And I tell you that is a falsehood!" continued the man; "the lady who saw it drop from you, struck by your guilty and frightened looks, said to me, 'Sergeant, look at that humpbacked girl running off with that great bundle, and let's money fall without stopping to pick it up! There's something wrong.'"

"I say, sergeant," cried the husky voice of the match-seller, "keep your eye open! Just feel her hump—that's her hoarding-place. I'll be bound she's got all manner of things hid there—boots, cloaks, umbrellses, and clocks! I heard a clock strike just now in her hunch!"

Fresh laughter, shouts, and hallooing; for an ignorant and brutal mob rarely shows mercy to those who, whether from crime or misfortune, stand the most in need of it. More and more dense became the assemblage, while hoarse cries, shrill whistlings, and low jests passed from mouth to mouth.

"Let's have a look— there's nothing to pay!" said one.

"I say, don't push—I paid for my place!" cried another.

"Make the woman stand up on something, that we can all see!" shouted a third.

"Yes," chimed in a fourth; "my feet are getting stamped on, and I sha'n't get a sight after all."

"Show her up, or return everybody their money!"

"Our money or our places!"

"Let's have a look at her! Show her up, alive or dead!"

Let the reader picture to himself this unfortunate girl, whose soul was so delicately attuned to every good and gentle impulse—whose nature was so timid and sensitive—constrained to hear these coarse jests, standing in the midst of the pitiless crowd alone and unprotected, ignorant of the cause of her degradation, and unable to comprehend the charge which led to it.

She was not, however, long to remain in doubt; for the police-officer, seizing the bundle she had picked up, and was holding in her trembling arms, roughly inquired,

"What have you got there?"

"Sir, it is only— something—I was going—"

And in her terror the words died away, and she found it impossible to utter another sound.

"Is that all the answer you can make?" said the officer. "Well, then, you have not much to say for yourself. Come, open your bundle!"

So saying, the police-officer, aided by the sergeant, took the bundle from her, opened it, and said, while enumerating the objects it contained,

"The devil! Sheets—a blanket—spoon—fork—and silver cup! a shawl, too! Not a bad haul! You are dressed like a rag-picker, and you have silver-ware! Not much, to be sure!"

"These things are not yours," said the sergeant.

"No, sir," replied La Mayeux, who felt her strength failing her; "but I—"

"Ah, you wicked little humpback! Why, you steal things larger than yourself!"

"Steal!" exclaimed La Mayeux, clasping her hands with horror, and understanding at once the position in which she stood; "steal! I steal!"

"The guard! the guard!" cried several voices at once.

"Here are the jack-a-dandies!"

"The Arab-eaters!"

"Room for the twenty-third dromedaries!"

In the midst of these witticisms two soldiers and a corporal, with some difficulty, approached. Nothing could be discerned of them in the midst of the dense mass but the glittering of their bayonets and muskets.

Somebody had run to the nearest guardhouse to report the obstruction so large an assemblage caused in the public street.

"Now, then, here is the guard!" said the police-officer, seizing La Mayeux by the arm; "to the guardhouse!"
"Oh, sir!" cried the poor girl, half choked by her sobs, clasping her hands in terror, and falling on her knees; "oh, sir! mercy! Only let me tell you, let me explain to you—"

"You can explain at the guardhouse. March, I say!"

"But, sir, I have not stolen anything," cried La Mayeux, in a tone of distraction. "Pray take pity on me! To be led away like a thief before all these people! Oh, mercy! mercy!"

"I tell you, you can explain at the guardhouse: the street is quite blocked up. Will you go, or will you not?"

And taking the wretched girl by both hands, he in a manner compelled her to stand up.

At this moment the corporal and his two men, having succeeded in penetrating the crowd, approached the sergeant.

"Coral," said the latter, "conduct this girl to the guardhouse! I am a police-officer."

"Oh, gentlemen, mercy!" said La Mayeux, clasping her hands and weeping bitterly; "don't take me away before you have allowed me to explain. I am no thief—God knows I have stolen nothing! Let me tell you—it was to serve another person. Let me tell you how—"

"I say again, that you can explain at the guardhouse. Come," added the sergeant, "if you won't walk, they must drag you."

It is impossible to paint this disgraceful and fearful scene. Weak, exhausted, overcome by terror, the poor girl was led away by the soldiers, her knees tottering under her, so that it became necessary for the sergeant and police-officer to support her between them; and she mechanically accepted this assistance.

As they moved on, fresh yells and cries burst forth from the multitude.

Half dragged, half supported by these men, the unfortunate Mayeux was led along; beneath the hazy sky, thronging the muddy street, hemmed in on each side by large, gloomy dwellings, this swarming and revolting mass resembled the wildest images of Callot or Goya. Children in rags, drunken women, men with forbidding and degraded visages pushed against each other—strived, struggled, trampled on each other—while they followed hissing and yelling at the half-dead creature, victim of an infamous error.

An error! Well may one shudder at the thought how often such arrests may be made, founded simply on the outward appearance of want and misery exhibited by the party suspected, or an inaccurate information!

For ourselves, we shall long remember the fate of that unfortunate girl, who, wrongly arrested upon a disreputable charge, contrived to escape from the persons who were leading her to prison, and, rushing to the top of a house, threw herself, wild with despair, from a window, and dashed out her brains on the pavement! * * * *

After making the abominable accusation of which La Mayeux was the victim, Madame Grivois returned with all haste to the Rue
Brise-Miche. She hurried up the stairs till she reached the fourth landing-place, and opened the door of Franchise's apartment. What did she behold? Dagobert, surrounded by his wife and the young orphans!

CHAPTER VI.

THE CONVENT.

Let us in two words explain the presence of Dagobert.

His countenance bore so clearly the impress of military frankness, that the director of the coach-office was content with his word that he would return and pay his fare, yet the soldier had obstinately insisted on staying in pawn, as he called it, until his wife had answered his letter; but, on the return of the messenger, who told him that the money required would be forthcoming shortly, Dagobert, feeling his scruples satisfied, hurried to his home.

We may, therefore, imagine the surprise of Madame Grivois when, on entering the apartment, she saw Dagobert (whom she easily recognised by the description she had heard of him) with his wife and the orphans.

The anxiety of Franchise at the sight of Madame Grivois was equally great.

Rose and Blanche had told her that a lady had called during her absence on a very important affair, and, instructed as she had been by her confessor, Franchise could not doubt that this lady was the person charged to conduct Rose and Blanche to a religious house.

Her agony was excessive; for, although resolved on following the commands of the Abbé Dubois, she was afraid that a word dropped by Madame Grivois might awaken Dagobert's suspicions, and then all hope was lost—then the orphans would remain in that state of ignorance and mortal sin for which she believed herself responsible.

Dagobert, who was clasping the hands of Rose and Blanche in his own, rose when Madame de Saint-Dizier's confidential attendant entered, and cast an inquiring look on Franchise.

The moment was critical—decisive; but Madame Grivois had profited by the examples of the Princess de Saint-Dizier, and so, at once making up her mind, she turned to account the hast with which she had ascended the four pairs of stairs, after her scandalous denunciation against La Mayeux; and the annoyance which the sight of Dagobert had caused her giving to her features an expression of great disquietude and chagrin, she exclaimed, in a pitiful voice, after a moment's silence, which she seemed to employ in calming her agitation and collecting her thoughts,

"Ah, madame! I have just seen such a terrible thing—excuse my agitation; but, really, I am so deeply pained!"

"What is the matter?" said Françoise, in a tremulous voice, fearing some indiscretion on the part of Madame Grivois.

"I came here a short time since," resumed that lady, "to speak to you on a very important affair, and while I was waiting for you, a young deformed workwoman was putting up several things in a bundle."

"Yes, no doubt," said Françoise, "it was La Mayeux, an excellent, worthy creature!"

"I thought so, madame; but listen to what happened. Seeing that you did not return, I resolved on taking a turn in the neighbourhood, and, going down stairs, I went to the Rue Saint Merry—ah, madame—"

"Well," said Dagobert, "what happened?"

"I saw a mob; I asked the cause, and they told me that a sergent-de-ville had just apprehended a young girl as a thief, because they had surprised her carrying off a bundle containing things which appeared not to belong to her. I went
up, and what did I see? The young workgirl whom an instant before I had left here!"

"Ah, poor child!" exclaimed Françoise, turning pale, and clasping her hands in alarm; "what a misfortune!"

"What, then," asked Dagobert of his wife, "was in this bundle?"

"Well, I must tell you: being short of money, I had begged poor Mayeux to take, as quickly as possible, to the Mont de Piété several things of which we did not stand in immediate need."

"And they have supposed that she stole them!" exclaimed Dagobert; "she, the honestest girl in the world! What a shame! But, madame, you should have interfered, and said that you knew her!"

"I did attempt to do so, sir, but unfortunately they would not listen to me. The crowd increased every moment; the guard came up and took her off."

"It will kill her, timid and sensitive thing as she is!" exclaimed Françoise.

"Ah, the good Mayeux! she who was so kind and thoughtful!" said Blanche, turning to her sister, with tears starting to her eyes.

"Unable myself to do anything for her," replied Madame Grivois, "I made all the haste I could to run here and tell you of this mistake, which may soon be rectified; all that is requisite is for some one to go as quickly as possible and give evidence for the young girl."

At these words, Dagobert took up his hat quickly, and turning to Madame Grivois, said, bluntly,

"Madame, you should have begun by saying that. Do you know where the poor girl is?"

"I do not know, sir; but there are still in the street so many people, and such a disturbance, that if you have the kindness to go down directly, and make inquiries, you will easily learn."

"What the devil do you mean by 'have the kindness?' Poor child!" said Dagobert, "apprehended as a thief! it is horrible! I will go to the commissary of police, or to the guardhouse, and find her; they shall give her up, and I will bring her here."

So saying, Dagobert went out quickly.

Françoise, assured as to the fate of La Mayeux, returned thanks to the Lord for having by this event taken her husband out, as his presence at this moment embarrassed her seriously.

Madame Grivois had left Monsieur in the hackney-coach before she came up, for time was precious; and giving Françoise a significant look as she handed the Abbé Dubois's letter to her, she said, giving significance to each word,

"You will see in this letter, madame, the object of my visit here, which I have not yet been able to explain; and I am delighted at the opportunity it has given me of forming the acquaintance of these two charming young ladies."

Rose and Blanche looked at each other with surprise.

Françoise trembled as she took the letter. It required all the urgent and threatening injunctions of her confessor to subdue the last scruples of the poor woman, who shuddered when she reflected on the fierce anger of Dagobert. In her candour, however, she did not know how she should announce to the young girls that they were to go away with this lady.

Madame Grivois saw her embarrassment, and giving her an encouraging look, said to Rose, while Françoise was reading her confessor's letter,

"How delighted your relative will be to see you, my dear young lady."

"Our relative, madame!" said Rose, still more astonished.

"Yes, certainly; she has heard of your arrival here, but as she has been suffering for a long time under a severe complaint, she could not come herself to-day, and has, therefore, desired me to bring you to her. Unfortunately," added Madame Grivois, as the girls started with surprise, "as she says in the letter to Madame Françoise, you can only see her for a very short time, and in one hour you will be back again; but to-morrow or next day she will be able to go
abroad, and will come and have some talk with madame and her husband as to your taking up your residence with her; for she would be much distressed at your being any expense to persons who have been so kind to you."

These last words of Madame Grivois made a strong impression on the two sisters, inasmuch as they removed their fears lest they might in future become a serious cost to Dagobert's family. If it had been a question of leaving the house in the Rue Brise-Miche without the consent of their friend, they would doubtless have hesitated; but Madame Grivois spoke only of an hour's visit, and they had no suspicion. Rose said to Françoise,

"We may go and see our relative without awaiting Dagobert's return to tell him of it; may we not, madame?"

"Certainly," said Françoise, in a weak voice, "since you will come back directly."

"Now, madame, I will request these young ladies to accompany me as quickly as possible, that I may bring them back before noon."

"We are ready, madame," said Rose.

"Well, young ladies, embrace your second mother, and come," said Madame Grivois, who could hardly restrain her diquity, and trembled lest from one moment to another Dagobert should return.

Rose and Blanche embraced Françoise, who, pressing in her arms the two charming and innocent creatures she was surrendering, could hardly subdue her tears, although she had a deep conviction that she was acting for their benefit.

"Come, young ladies," said Madame Grivois, with an affable tone, "make haste: excuse my hurry, but it is in the name of your relative that I speak."

The two sisters, after having tenderly embraced Dagobert's wife, left the room; and holding each other by the hand, descended the staircase after Madame Grivois, followed, without their knowing it, by Killjoy, who walked cautiously after them; for in Dagobert's absence the intelligent animal never left them.
For the sake of greater precaution, no doubt, the confidential attendant of Madame de Saint-Dizier had ordered her coach to wait a little way from the Rue Brise-Miche, in the little square of the Cloister.

In a few seconds the orphans and their conductress reached the carriage.

"Ah, mistress!" said the coachman, as he opened the door, "I don't wish to affront you, but you have a beast of a dog which is anything but an agreeable customer; since he has been in my coach he has done nothing but howl, and looks as if he'd like to eat everybody that comes in his way."

In truth, Monsieur, who detested being alone, gave many lengthened howls.

"Silence, Monsieur! here I am," said Madame Grivois; then turning to the girls, she desired them to enter the coach.

Rose and Blanchetook their seats. Madame Grivois, before she got in, gave the coachman the address, in a low tone, to the convent of Sainte Marie, adding other instructions, when suddenly the pug, which had growled with a savage air when the two sisters took their places in the coach, began to bark furiously.

The cause of his rage was easily explained; Killjoy, who, until then, had not been discovered, leaped with a bound into the coach.

The pug, enraged at this audacity, forgetful of his habitual caution, and giving way to his anger and bad temper, jumped at Killjoy's muzzle, and bithim so severely, that the bold Siberian dog, exasperated by the pain, threw himself on Monsieur, seized him by the neck, and with two gripes of his powerful jaw strangled the pug, which was already half choked by his own fat.

All this passed in less time than it takes to describe it, and Rose and Blanche had not the time to do more than call out twice,

"Down, Killjoy! Have done, sir!"

"Oh heavens!" exclaimed Madame Grivois, turning round at the noise; "this beast of a dog again! He will hurt Monsieur! Young ladies, send him back— make him get down: it is impossible to take him with us."

Unconscious of the extent of Killjoy's misconduct, for Monsieur was lying inanimate beneath the seat, yet feeling that it was not right to pay a first visit accompanied by the dog, the sisters gently pushed him with their feet, saying, in an angry tone,

"Get down, Killjoy! Go away, sir!"

The faithful animal hesitated at first to obey; sorrowfully and beseechingly he looked at the orphans with an air of gentle reproach, as though blaming them for thus sending away their only defender; but at a repetition of the command, pronounced in Blanche's most angry voice, Killjoy, with drooping tail, descended from the coach, feeling, perhaps, conscious of having shown himself somewhat rude in the affair with Monsieur.

Madame Grivois, who had her own reasons for wishing to leave that neighbourhood as quickly as possible, hastily entered the carriage; the coachman closed the door and got on his box, when the vehicle drove rapidly away, Madame Grivois prudently drawing down the blinds for fear of a meeting with Dagobert.

These indispensable precautions taken, she began to think of her dog, which she loved with the exaggerated fondness persons of vicious minds are apt to bestow upon animals, frequently exhausting and lavishing on them the affection which is justly the right of one's own species. In a word, Madame Grivois was passionately fond of the ugly, cowardly, snarling cur, probably from some secret affinity between their natures: the attachment had existed for the last six years, and seemed but to increase as time went on.

We dwell thus upon an apparently trifling circumstance, because it is frequently from small causes that the most disastrous results arise; and because we wish our readers fully to understand the despair, the rage, the fury of this woman on having her darling thus torn from her—a rage which fell with deadly fury on the heads of the orphan girls.

The vehicle had rolled on at a smart pace for some few seconds, when Madame Grivois, who had taken the front seat, called Monsieur.
THE WANDERING JEW.

Very sufficient reasons, however, prevented Monsieur from replying.

"Oh! what, you are angry, are you!" said Madame Grivois, carelessly.

"Why, it was not my fault that the ugly great dog got into the carriage; was it, young ladies? Come, come, then! give mistress a kiss, and let us be friends, there's a darling!"

Still the same determined silence on the part of Monsieur.

Rose and Blanche looked at each other with some uneasiness; they knew Killjoy's manners were not particularly gentle to those who offended him, but they did not anticipate the severity of the punishment he had this time inflicted.

Madame Grivois, more surprised than alarmed at finding her affectionate appeals unanswered, stooped, at last, to take him from his hiding-place under the seat. Seizing one of his paws, she drew him out rather impatiently, saying, in a tone half serious, half playful,

"Come out, naughty fellow! what will these young ladies think of you?"

So saying, she lifted up the pug, not a little astonished at the listlessness he manifested; but what was her horror when, upon placing him in her lap, she found he was utterly motionless!

"Good heavens!" she cried, "he is in a fit! He has eaten too much." Then quickly turning round, she exclaimed, without remembering that the person she addressed could not possibly hear, "Coachman! coachman! stop!" Then lifting up the head of Monsieur, under the belief that he had only fainted, she perceived with horror the bleeding marks of five or six huge fangs upon his fat throat—clearly proving the violent death which had torn him from her. Her first emotions were grief and despair. "Dead!" she cried; "dead! he is dead and cold! Gracious heavens!"

So saying, she burst into tears.

The tears of the wicked are always to be mistrusted. They must suffer deeply to make them weep; and grief, instead of softening, inflames their minds, and inspires them with fresh hatred.

Thus, therefore, when the first burst of her grief had passed away, Madame Grivois gave way to a feeling of deadly hate against the young girls, who had been the involuntary cause of her dog's death; and so plainly was her rage depicted on the harsh countenance of Madame Grivois, that Rose and Blanche were terrified at the purple and inflamed features so sternly fixed on them, while, with a voice convulsed with fury, she exclaimed,

"'Twas your beast of a dog that killed him!"

"Pray, madame," cried Rose, "do not be angry with us for it."

"Your dog bit Killjoy first," said Blanche, in a fearful voice.

The terror impressed on the faces of the orphans recalled Madame Grivois to herself, and brought to her recollection the serious consequences of indulging her anger at the moment. Even for the furtherance of vengeance, it was necessary to restrain herself, lest she should inspire the daughters of Marshal Simon with any mistrust of her. Unwilling, however, to seem too easily pacified, she continued for several instants to contemplate the sisters with looks of displeasure; then, by degrees, her irritated feelings seemed to calm down into a bitter regret; after which, Madame Grivois, covering her face with her hands and sighing heavily, affected to weep sorely.

"Poor lady!" said Rose, in a low tone, to Blanche, "how she weeps! I dare say she was as fond of her dog as we are of Killjoy."

"Oh, yes!" answered Blanche; "we cried, too, when our old Jovial was killed."

After some minutes, Madame Grivois raised her head, and finally drying her eyes, said, in an almost affectionate tone,

"Pray excuse me, young ladies, for thus yielding to the first emotions of grief and distress at the loss of my poor dog, to which I was tenderly attached, and which, for the last six years, has never quitted me."
"We are grieved for your misfortune, madame," said Rose; "and the more so as your loss is not to be repaired by any means in our power."

"I was saying just now to my sister that we were the more sorry for you, because we lost an old horse that brought us from Siberia, and we shed many tears for him."

"Well, my dear young ladies, don't let us say any more about it. It is my fault; I ought not to have brought him with me; but he was always so miserable when I was absent from him—you can understand this weakness. A feeling heart is shown by the treatment of dumb things. I trust, therefore, that your affectionate hearts will pardon my harshness."

"Oh, madame, we have forgotten it already: all our regret arose from seeing you so distressed."

"That will soon pass away, my dear young ladies; and the sight of the joy your relative will feel in beholding you will assist in consoling me—she will be so happy, you are such sweet creatures; and then the singular resemblance you bear each other increases the interest you cannot fail to inspire."

"You are too good to us, madame," said Rose.

"Not at all; and I feel certain you resemble each other as much in disposition as you do in countenance."

"Oh, yes, madame!" said Rose; "how could it be otherwise, when, from the hour of our birth, we have never been separated for a single instant, night or day! How could we fail to be of similar natures?"

"Is it possible, my dear young ladies, that you have never been parted in your lives?"

"Never, madame," cried the two sisters at once, as, grasping each other's hand, they exchanged an affectionate smile.

"Then how miserable you would be if you were taken from each other!"

"Oh, but we never should be separated, madame," said Blanche, smiling.

"How do you know that?"

"Nay, madame, who would have the heart to do it?"

"Why, certainly, my dear young ladies, none but very wicked people would think of such a thing."

"Oh, madame!" replied Blanche, smiling in her turn, "not even wicked people could part us."

"So much the better, my dear mademoiselle; but tell me why it would be impossible."

"Because we should die of grief."

"Poor dears!"

"Three months ago we were thrown into prison: well, when the governor of the prison, who was a very harsh-looking man, saw us, he said, 'It would be the death of these poor girls to separate them;' so he let us be together, and we were as happy there as it is possible to be in prison."

"That speaks much for the goodness of your hearts, as well as of those who so fully entered into your happiness in being together."

The vehicle stopped.

The driver called out, "Now, gate, if you please!"

"Ah, here we are, at your dear relative's house!" cried Madame Grivois.

The large gates were opened, and the carriage was driven into a large, sanded courtyard.

Madame Grivois having drawn up one of the blinds, a large court appeared, intersected by a high wall, in the midst of which was a sort of porch, forming a small lodge, supported by plaster pillars. Under this porch was a small door. Beyond the wall were visible the roof and pediments of a large stone building, which, in comparison with the houses of the Rue Brise-Miche, seemed a palace; and, in their guileless admiration, Rose and Blanche could not forbear exclaiming,

"Oh, madame, what a beautiful place!"
"Oh, the outside is nothing!" answered Madame Grivois: "wait till you see the interior; then, indeed, you will be surprised."

The coachman opened the door: what were the rage of Madame Grivois, and the surprise of the sisters, at seeing Killjoy, who had carefully tracked the vehicle, and stood at the steps wagging his tail and erecting his ears, as if expecting not only to be pardoned for his crime, but even praised for his intelligence and fidelity!

"What!" exclaimed Madame Grivois, whose anger blazed again; "this abominable brute has dared to follow us!"

"He is a fine dog, though, missus!" said the coachman; "he wouldn't wag a step from my horses' heels; he's been used to it, I'm sure! He's a famous dog! No two men could frighten him, I'll answer for't. Here's a chest for you!"

The mistress of the defunct Monsieur, but little pleased with these eulogiums on his destroyer, so inopportunely uttered by the coachman, said to the orphans, "I will go and arrange for your introduction to your relative. Sit quietly in the coach till I return."

And hastily proceeding to the little gate, Madame Grivois pulled a bell. A female wearing a religious dress appeared, and made a respectful inclination of the head to Madame Grivois, who merely said to her, "These are the two young persons. The orders of M. d'Aigrigny and the princess are, that they be instantly and henceforward separated from each other, and placed in different cells—the severe cells; you understand, sister—and the regimen of the impenitent."

"I will inform our mother, and all shall be done according to your commands," said the female, bowing a second time.

"Will you come now, my dear young ladies!" said Madame Grivois to the poor girls, who were stealthily caressing Killjoy, and thus expressing their approval of his zeal. "Come, mesdemoiselles, and you will be conducted at once to the presence of your relative. I will return in half an hour to fetch you. Coachman, keep back the dog!"

Rose and Blanche, who, on alighting, were solely occupied with Killjoy, had not observed the lay-sister, who stood half concealed behind the little door. Thus, therefore, the orphans did not perceive the religious dress worn by the person into whose charge they were given, until the sister, taking a hand of each, to assist them over the threshold, closed the door behind them.

As soon as Madame Grivois saw the convent gates securely closed upon the poor girls, she directed the coachman to drive out of the yard and await her at the gate. The man obeyed.

Killjoy, who had seen Rose and Blanche enter by the little gate, ran to it. Madame Grivois called to the porter of the outer lodge, a tall, robust man.

"Nicolas, I will give you ten francs if you will knock that huge beast on the head in my presence; that great brute crouched down before that door."

Nicolas shook his head as he surveyed the gigantic proportions of Killjoy, saying, "I tell you what, madame, knocking such an animal as that on the head is sooner talked about than done."

"You shall have twenty francs—only kill him! Let me see you do it."

"I ought to have a gun. I have nothing but a sledge-hammer."

"That will do. One good blow, and you will knock his brains out!"

"Well, madame, I'll try, at any rate; but I don't think it's to be done."

So saying, Nicolas went in search of his weapon.

"Oh, if I had but strength enough!" said Madame Grivois.

The porter, armed with his hammer, returned, and approached Killjoy with slow and treacherous steps, while the dog still kept his position before the gate.
"Here, old boy! here, here, good dog!" cried Nicolas, slapping his thigh with his left hand, while with his right he held the hammer concealed behind him.

Killjoy arose, examined Nicolas with close attention; then, doubtless suspecting that the porter devised some mischief against him, he made one spring, turned the enemy's flank, saw the projected villany, and kept aloof.

"Ah, he smells a rat!" said Nicolas: "the beggar suspects something. It is no use trying of him; he won't let anybody come nigh."

"You are an awkward fellow!" cried Madame Grivois, in a rage. "There," said she, throwing a five-franc piece to the man, "drive him away, at least."

"That won't be so difficult as to kill him," said the porter.

Killjoy, seeing the inutility of an open war on his part, left the court and returned into the street; but once there, and feeling himself in a manner on neutral ground, no attempts of Nicolas could drive him farther from the gates than was requisite to keep beyond reach of the hammer.

When, therefore, Madame Grivois, pale with rage, entered the coach, in which were the inanimate remains of Monsieur, she beheld, with equal spite and anger, Killjoy stretched on the pavement a few steps from the entrance to the convent.

Nicolas, seeing the uselessness of any farther attempts to dislodge him, contented himself with retiring and closing the gates.

The Siberian dog, with that intelligence peculiar to his species, confident of finding his way back to the Rue Brise-Miche, quietly awaited the return of the orphans.

The sisters thus found themselves enclosed within the walls of the convent of Sainte Marie, which, as the reader has been already told, closely adjoined the private madhouse in which Adrienne de Cardoville was confined.

We shall now conduct the reader to the apartment of Dagobert's wife, who sat waiting, with painful anxiety, her husband's return, when the awful question would be put, what had become of the daughters of General Simon.
CHAPTER VII.

THE INFLUENCE OF A CONFESSOR.

SCARCELY had the orphans left the Rue Brise-Miche, before Françoise, throwing herself on her knees, began praying fervently, while the tears she had hitherto restrained flowed abundantly; for, spite of her entire conviction that she did but discharge a religious duty in surrendering the sisters, she could not divest herself of excessive alarm at the thought of her husband's return. However blinded by excessive zeal, the poor woman could not conceal from herself that Dagobert had just reason for complaint and anger; and she had to inflict a second wound, by informing him of Agricola's arrest, of which Dagobert was as yet ignorant.

At each sound on the staircase Françoise listened, trembling violently; then resumed her devotions with redoubled fervour, supplicating the Almighty to give her strength to endure the fiery ordeal through which she had to pass.

At length a heavy foot was heard on the landing-place, and not doubting that it was the step of her husband, she hastily dried her eyes, and, to give herself an appearance of composure, sat down to her work, feigning to be occupied in making one of the coarse gray bags that lay upon the table; but her trembling fingers were scarcely able to hold the needle.

In a few minutes the door opened, and Dagobert appeared.

The rough features of the old man wore an expression at once severe and sad; he threw his hat down impetuously on the table as he came in, and, owing to the preoccupation of his mind, did not immediately perceive the absence of the two orphans.

"Poor child!" he said, at length; "it is dreadful!"

"Have you seen La Mayeux? have you obtained her release?" asked Françoise, forgetting for a moment her own apprehensions.

"Yes, I have seen her; but in what a condition! Enough to break one's heart. I have claimed her too, and not without speaking a bit of my mind, I can tell you. But they said, before she could be released, the commissary must come here to—" Dagobert, casting a troubled look round the room, suddenly broke off, and exclaimed,

"Wife, where are the children?"

A cold shudder passed over Françoise's frame. She said, in a feeble voice, "Dear husband! I—" she could get no farther.

"Answer me! where are Rose and Blanche? I do not see Killjoy either."

"Pray do not be angry!"

"Come!" said Dagobert, somewhat roughly; "you have permitted them to go out with some neighbour; but why did you not accompany them yourself, or ask them to wait for me, if they wished for a walk? which is not unlikely, for this must be a dull place to them. Still I wonder they went without waiting to hear about that poor Mayeux, for their hearts are as tender as those of angels. But how pale you are!" continued the soldier, looking at Françoise. "What ails you? are you ill?" So saying, Dagobert affectionately took the hand of Françoise, while she, wounded deeply by his unsuspecting kindness, bent her head, weeping, and kissed her husband's hand.

The soldier, more and more uneasy, exclaimed, "What brings these tears to your eyes, my poor wife? Come, why do you not answer me? Tell me what it is that grieves you so? was it because I spoke so abruptly about your letting the dear children go out with a neighbour? Why, now, their mother gave them into my charge as she was dying; and you understand, such a thing is as sacred as one's life. So, you see, I am with them like an old hen with her chickens," he added, laughing, to cheer up his wife.

"And you are quite right to love them."
"Come, wife, you know if I have a rough voice, I have not a rough heart; and since the person they have gone out with is a friend you can trust, why, there is not so much harm done; but for the future, my good Françoise, you must never do such a thing without first consulting me. I suppose the children asked you to let them take a walk with Killjoy?"

"No! husband, I—"

"No! to whom, then, have you intrusted them? where has she gone with them? when will she bring them back?"

"I—know not," murmured Françoise, in a faint voice.

"You know not?" cried Dagobert, deeply irritated; then restraining himself, he said, in a tone of friendly reproach, "you do not know? Could you not have fixed some time for their return, or, rather, not have intrusted them to any hands but your own? The children, no doubt, importuned you: when they knew that I should be back in a few minutes, why did they not wait for me, Françoise? I ask you, why did they not wait for me? Answer me, will you? Upon my soul," cried Dagobert, stamping with rage, "you are enough to make a saint swear. Will you answer, or no?"

The courage of the unfortunate woman was exhausted; these earnest and reiterated questions, which must end in eliciting the full truth, made her suffer a thousand sharp, though slow agonies; she preferred coming to the worst at once, and determined, like an humble and devoted victim, to bear the weight of her husband's wrath, in pursuance of the promise she had made before God to her confessor.

Too feeble to rise, she bent her head; and letting an arm fall at each side of the chair, she said, in a tone of the deepest distress,

"Do what you will with me, but ask me no farther questions about the children, because I cannot answer them."

Had a thunderbolt fallen at the soldier's feet, he could scarcely have received a more violent shock. He turned pale; a cold sweat broke out on his bald forehead, and with fixed, stupified gaze, he remained for some moments petrified, speechless, motionless.

Then breaking from this stupor, with terrible energy he seized his wife by the shoulders, and lifting her as easily as though she had been an infant, he stood her upright before him; and stooping toward her, he shouted in a voice at once of terror and desperation,

"The children!"

"Mercy! mercy!" said Françoise, in a feeble tone.

"Where are the children?" continued Dagobert, shaking the weak, half-fainting woman with his powerful hands; "will you answer me? What has become of my children?"
"Kill me or pardon me, for I cannot answer!" cried the unhappy creature, with that pertinacious obstinacy peculiar to feeble characters when they take up what they believe a right course of action.

"Wretched woman!" cried the soldier; and, mad with rage, grief, and despair, he lifted up his wife as though he would dash her on the floor; but the heart of the brave soldier was too noble for so cowardly an act, and, as this burst of fury subsided, he let her go, while Françoise, exhausted, fell upon her knees, clasped her hands, and, by the faint motion of her lips, was apparently engaged in prayer.

A momentary vertigo, a species of bewilderment took possession of Dagobert's brain; all that had occurred had been so sudden, so incomprehensible, that it required some time to recover, and to feel convinced that one so good, so amiable as his wife, whose whole life had been one unbroken series of devotion and care for others, knowing, as she did, how dear to him were the daughters of General Simon, could say to him, "Question me not concerning them; I cannot answer."

The strongest, the firmest mind would have been shaken by a fact so inexplicable, so overwhelming.

But with his usual strong sense, the soldier coolly looked upon the matter, and, as his self-possession returned, he reflected thus:

"My wife alone can unravel this dark mystery. I will not kill her or hurt her. I must employ every means to get at the truth, and, above all, I must try to keep my temper."

Thus reflecting, Dagobert took a chair, and placing another for his wife, who was still kneeling, he said,

"Sit down."

Exhausted and submissive, Françoise obeyed.

"Listen to me, wife," pursued Dagobert, in a stern voice, interrupted by involuntary catchings of the breath, betraying the impatience he strove to subdue; "you cannot suppose this matter can end here. I am not going to use any violence toward you; just now I gave way to my first angry feelings—but—I am sorry, and shall not do that again; so lay aside all fear. But I must know where the children are; their mother—their mother intrusted them to me; and I did not bring them all the way from Siberia hither for you to say to me, 'Don't ask me any questions; I cannot tell you what I have done with them!' These words are not reasons. Suppose Marshal Simon were to arrive, and come to me, saying, 'Dagobert, my daughters!' what should I say to him in reply? Come, now, you see I am calm; put yourself in my place; once more, what should I say to the marshal? Come, speak—speak, I say."

"Alas! my husband—"

"Alas!" cried the soldier, wiping his forehead, whose veins were swollen and distended almost to bursting; "alas is no answer to my questions. I ask you what I should say to the marshal?"

"Tell him I am the guilty person. I will bear all."

"What will you say to him?"

"That you confided to me two children—that you went out, and not finding them on your return, questioned me as to what had become of them, and that I told you I could not say what had become of them."

"And do you suppose the marshal will be contented with such an explanation as that?" said Dagobert, convulsively pressing his clinched fists on his knees.

"Unfortunately, it is the only one I can give either to him or to you; though death were before me, I could not."

At these words, pronounced as they were with despairing resignation, the old man sprang from his seat, his patience utterly exhausted; but, unwilling to break out in fresh acts of violence or threats, which he knew would be powerless, he threw open one of the windows, and exposed his burning forehead to the cool air; then becoming a little calmer, he took a few turns up and down the chamber, and returned to seat himself beside his wife, who, with eyes from
which rained plentiful tears, sat gazing on a figure of Christ crucified, thinking that she, too, had a heavy cross laid on her.

Dagobert resumed:

"It is clear, from your manner of speaking, that no dangerous accident has happened to the children."

"No, no! God be praised, they are perfectly well; that is all I can tell you!"

"Did they go out alone?"

"I cannot answer."

"Were they taken away by any one?"

"Alas! my husband, why persist in putting questions to me? I cannot answer."

"Will they return here?"

"I know not."

Dagobert rose; again he found his patience failing him, and once more he tried to calm himself by pacing the chamber; then he returned and seated himself beside his wife.

"Now," said he, "you cannot have any interest in concealing from me where these children are; why, then, refuse to tell me?"

"Because I cannot do otherwise."

"I think you can when you know one thing, which you force me to tell you. Listen!" continued Dagobert, in a voice of deep emotion. "If these young girls are not brought back by the evening before the 13th of February—and we are close upon it—you place me in the situation of a man who has robbed and plundered the daughters of Marshal Simon. Do you hear? Plundered! yet," continued the soldier, in a tone of such misery as struck to the heart of Françoise, "I did all that lay in an honest man's power to bring the children here, and you little know all I underwent on the road—the care, the uneasiness; for let me tell you, that for a soldier like me, having the charge of two young girls, nothing but a resolute and devoted heart could have carried me through; and when, for my reward, I expected to say to their father, 'Here are your children—'

The soldier paused abruptly; an overwhelming grief succeeded to his anger, and he wept.

At the sight of the large drops which coursed down the gray mustache of Dagobert, Françoise felt her resolution beginning to fail her; but recalling the solemn promise she had made to her confessor, and firmly believing that the immortal souls of the orphans were at stake, she mentally reproached herself for her weakness, for which she knew the Abbé Dubois would severely reprove her. She therefore only said, in a timid voice,

"How could you be accused of plundering these children?"

"Hearken, then!" replied Dagobert, passing his hard hand across his eyes; "the reason why these young girls have endured such hardships, coming hither from the remotest part of Siberia, is, that matters of immense interest to them, perhaps a princely fortune, depend on their being in the Rue Saint François, here in Paris, on the 13th of February. If they do not present themselves, all is lost, and all through me; for I am responsible for what you have done."

"The 13th of February! Rue Saint François!" said Françoise, regarding her husband with surprise; "that is just like Gabriel."

"What do you say? like Gabriel?"

"Yes; when I first received him, the poor deserted infant wore round his neck a bronze medal."

"A medal of bronze!" cried the soldier, struck with astonishment; "did it bear these words: 'You shall be in Paris, Rue Saint François, on the 13th of February, 1832?'

"Yes; how did you know it?"

"Gabriel, also!" said the soldier, speaking to himself. "And does Gabriel know of this medal having been found on him?"

"I mentioned it to him when he grew old enough. There was also in his
pocket a case full of papers, written in a strange language, all of which I carried to my confessor, the Abbé Dubois, that he might examine them. He afterward told me the papers were unimportant. Sometime afterward, when a charitable person, named Rodin, undertook to educate Gabriel, and to obtain his admission into the seminary, Abbé Dubois delivered the writings, with the medal, into the hands of M. Rodin, since which I have never heard any mention of them."

As Françoise spoke of her confessor, a sudden light darted across the mind of the soldier, who, however, was far from suspecting the plot and machinations which had so long been working around the orphans and Gabriel: he had a vague belief that his wife's conduct grew out of some order issued from the confessional—an interference, the aim and motive of which were beyond his power to understand, but which served to account, in some measure, for the immovable obstinacy of Françoise in concealing the retreat of the orphans.

After a moment of reflection he rose, and gazing fixedly on his wife, he said, in a severe tone,

"Some priest is mixed up with all this."

"Husband, what do you mean?"

"You have no interest in concealing from me where the children are. You are as good a wife as ever man had. You see what misery I am suffering. If you acted only for yourself, you would take pity on me."

"Husband!"

"I tell you," continued Dagobert, "all this speaks of the confessional. You are sacrificing me and those poor girls to your confessor; but take care. I will find out where he lives, and, ten thousand thunders! I'll go and ask him whether he or I am to be master in my own house! and if he refuses to answer," said the soldier, with a threatening expression, "I will find a way to make him!"

"God of heaven!" cried Françoise, clasping her hands with terror at hearing such sacrilegious words; "a priest—think of what you are saying—a priest!"

"A priest who introduces discord, treachery, and wretchedness into my house is as much a villain as any other, and I have the right to exact from him vengeance for wrong done to me and mine. So tell me at once, where are the children? or I tell you that I will demand them from your confessor. There is some plot going on, in which you, wretched woman! are an accomplice without knowing it. Besides, I would rather have some other to quarrel with than you."

"My husband!" said Françoise, in a firm though gentle voice, "you deceive yourself if you expect to terrify, by your violence, a worthy and respectable old man, who, for twenty years, has had the care of my soul."

"No age shall afford impunity—"

"For heaven's sake, where are you going? you terrify me!"

"I am going to your church; you must be known there. I will inquire for your confessor, and then we shall see."

"For God's sake, husband!" exclaimed Françoise, much alarmed, throwing herself between Dagobert and the door, to which he was hurrying, "think of what you are exposing yourself to. Mother of heaven—outrage a priest! do you not know that that is a sin for which there is no absolution?"

In the simplicity of her heart, Françoise believed these last words the most terrible that could be spoken; but the soldier, caring naught for them, broke away from the feeble grasp of his wife, and would have rushed out bare-headed—so great was his exasperation—when at this instant the door opened.

It was the commissary of police, followed by Le Mayeux, and the police-officer, carrying the bundle taken from the poor girl.

"Oh, the commissary!" cried Dagobert, recognising him by his scarf. "Ah! so much the better; he could not have come at a better moment."
ADAME Françoise Baudoin?" said the magistrate.

"That is my name, sir," replied Françoise; then seeing La Mayeux, who, pale and trembling, dared not advance, she stretched out her arms to her.

"Ah, my poor child!" she exclaimed, bursting into tears, "pardon, pardon! it is for us, again, that you have suffered this humiliation."

After Dagobert's wife had tenderly embraced the young workgirl, La Mayeux, turning to the commissary, said to him, with an expression of sad but touching dignity,

"You see, sir, I have not stolen."

"Then, madame," said the magistrate, addressing Françoise, "the silver cup, the shawl, and the sheets contained in this bundle—"

"Are mine, sir; and it was to do me a service that this dear girl, the best, most honest creature in the world, undertook to carry those things to the pawnbroker."

"Sir," said the magistrate to the police agent, in a tone of severity, "you have committed a deplorable error. I shall report you, in order that you may be punished. Go!" Then addressing himself to La Mayeux, with an air which showed how much he was pained, he added, "Unfortunately, mademoiselle, I can only express to you my sincere regret for what has occurred, and, believe me, I am sincerely grieved for the distress which this shameful mistake has caused you."

"I am sure of it, sir," said La Mayeux, "and I thank you very much."

She then sat down, quite overcome; for, after such severe trials, her courage and strength were exhausted.

The magistrate was about to withdraw, when Dagobert, who for some minutes had been lost in reflection, said, in a firm voice,

"Sir, be so good as listen to me; I have a deposition to make."

"Speak, sir."

"What I am about to say is very important, sir: it is before you, as a magistrate, that I make this declaration, that you may take cognizance of it."

"It is as a magistrate, sir, that I listen to you."

"I arrived here two days since, and I brought with me, from Russia, two young ladies, who had been intrusted to my care by their mother, the wife of Marshal Simon."

"Of Marshal the Duc de Ligny?" said the commissary, greatly surprised.
"Yes, sir. Yesterday I left them here, being obliged to go away on very urgent business. This morning, during my absence, they have disappeared, and I am certain that I know the man who has removed them."

"Husband!" exclaimed Françoise, alarmed.

"Sir," said the magistrate, "your declaration is of the most serious nature; a disappearance of persons—putting out of the way, perhaps; but are you perfectly sure?"

"The young girls were here an hour ago, and I repeat to you, sir, that they were carried off during my absence."

"I cannot doubt the sincerity of your declaration, sir; still so sudden a carrying off is difficult to account for. Besides, who has told you that these young ladies will not return? and whom do you suspect? One word, too, before you make your accusation. Remember that it is the magistrate who listens to you, and when I leave here, it is possible that justice may take this affair in hand."

"That is the very thing I wish, sir. I am responsible for these young girls to their father, who may arrive at any moment, and I must justify myself."

"I comprehend, sir, all your reasons; but once more, take care that you do not allow yourself to be carried away by suspicions which are, perhaps, without foundation. Your declaration once made, I may be compelled to act at once preventively against the person whom you accuse. If you are, therefore, guilty of any mistake, the consequences to yourself may be serious; and, not to go farther," said the magistrate, with feeling, and looking at La Mayeux, "you see what are the results of a false accusation."

"My husband, you hear!" exclaimed Françoise, still more and more alarmed at Dagobert's resolution with respect to the Abbé Dubois. "I beseech you, do not say another word."

But the soldier, the more he reflected, was the more convinced that the influence of Françoise's confessor alone had induced her to act as she had done and to keep silence, and he therefore said, boldly,
"I accuse the confessor of my wife of being the author, or the accomplice, in carrying off the daughters of Marshal Simon."

Françoise gave a deep groan, and hid her face in her hands; while La Mayeux, who had drawn near her, endeavoured to comfort her.

The magistrate had listened to Dagobert's accusation with deep astonishment, and said to him, with much earnestness,

"But, sir, do not accuse unjustly a man invested with the most venerable character—a priest. It is a priest, sir, who is here charged, and I warn you, that you ought to reflect; this becomes very serious; at your age, an accusation made groundlessly would be inexcusable."

"Well, sir," said Dagobert, impatiently, "at my age one has common sense. The facts are these. My wife is the best, the most conscientious of women. Ask her character in the neighbourhood, and you will hear that. But she is a devotee, and for twenty years has seen through no eyes but those of her confessor. She adores her son, and loves me well, too; but above my son and myself has always been placed the confessor."

"Sir," said the commissary, "these family details—"

"Are indispensable, as you will see. I went, not an hour ago, to rescue poor La Mayeux, and on my return the young girls had disappeared. I ask my wife, with whom I had left them, where they are? She falls on her knees, sobbing, and says, 'Do what you please to me, but do not ask what has become of the children; I cannot tell you.'"

"Is this true, madame?" inquired the commissary, looking at Françoise with great surprise.

"Anger, threats, prayers, were useless," resumed Dagobert; "to all she has replied, with the resignation of a saint, 'I cannot tell you anything.' Well, sir, this is what I assert; my wife has no interest in the disappearance of these children, but she is under the complete domination of her confessor, and acts by his direction. She is but the tool—he is the criminal."

As Dagobert spoke, the commissary's eyes were more and more fixed on Françoise, who, supported by La Mayeux, was weeping bitterly.

After having reflected for a moment, the magistrate advanced a step toward Françoise, and said,

"Madame, you have heard what your husband has said?"

"Yes, sir."

"What have you to say in justification?"

"But, sir," said Dagobert, "it is not my wife that I accuse. I do not mean that. It is her confessor."

"Sir, you have made your complaint to a magistrate, and it is for the magistrate to act as he thinks best for the discovery of the truth. Once again, madame," he resumed, addressing Françoise, "what have you to say to justify yourself?"

"Alas, sir, nothing!"

"Is it true that your husband left the young girls under your care when he went out?"

"Yes, sir.

"Is it true that when he returned they were gone?"

"Yes, sir."

"Is it true that, when he asked you where they were, you replied that you could not tell him anything about it?" and the commissary appeared to await the reply with anxious curiosity.

"Yes, sir," she said, simply and frankly; "I did reply so to my husband."

The magistrate almost started with a painful surprise.

"What, madame! to all the prayers, all the entreaties of your husband, you have only given this reply? What! have you refused to give him any information? That is hardly probable or possible."

"Yet it is the truth, sir."
"But, madame, what has become of the young girls who were intrusted to your care?"

"I can say nothing about it, sir. If I have refused to tell my poor husband, I shall certainly not tell any other person."

"Well, sir, was I wrong?" inquired Dagobert. "An upright and excellent wife, always full of good sense and devotion to her husband, how could she speak in such a way? It is not natural! I repeat, sir, it is the confessor who is at the bottom of all this. Let us go to work with him promptly and vigorously. We will discover all, and my poor children will be restored to me."

The commissary said to Françoise (and he was unable to repress his emotion),

"Madame, I must speak to you with severity; my duty compels me. This affair is so serious and complicated, that I must necessarily make justice cognizant of the facts. You acknowledge that these young girls were intrusted to you, and you cannot bring them before us. Now listen to me: if you refuse to give me any information on this subject, you, and you alone, will be accused of their disappearance; and I, to my extreme regret, shall be obliged to apprehend you."

"Me!" exclaimed Françoise, with great terror.

"My wife!" cried Dagobert, "never! Once again, I tell you, it is her confessor, and not her, whom I accuse. Apprehend my poor wife!"

And he ran to her as if to give her his protection.

"Sir, it is too late," said the commissary: "you have made your complaint of the carrying off of two young girls, and after the statements of your wife herself, she alone, up to this time, is the only party compromised. I must take her before the attorney-general, who will direct the next steps to be taken."

"I tell you, sir, that my wife shall not leave this house!" said Dagobert, in a threatening tone.

"Sir," replied the commissary, calmly, "I understand your vexation, but, for the sake of truth, I conjure you not to oppose a step which in ten minutes it will be impossible for you to prevent."

These words, spoken mildly, recalled the soldier to himself.

"But, sir," he exclaimed, "it is not my wife whom I accuse."

"Do not think of me, my husband," said the wife—martyr as she was—with the resignation of a saint; "the Lord tries me sorely; I am his unworthy servant; I must accept his pleasure with gratitude. Let me be arrested, if so it must be; I will not say in prison more than I have said here on the subject of the poor children."

"But, sir, you see my wife's head wanders," said Dagobert; "you cannot arrest her."

"There is no charge, no proof, no ground of suspicion against the other person whom you accuse, and whose character is his defence; I must take your wife. Perhaps, after one examination, she may be restored to you. I regret extremely, sir," added the commissary, in a compassionate tone, "having such a duty to discharge, and that, too, at the moment when your son has been apprehended, which must—"

"What!" exclaimed Dagobert, looking in amazement at his wife and La Mayeux; "what does he say? my son—?"

"What! did you not know it? Oh, sir, a thousand pardons!" said the magistrate, deeply grieved; "it is most distressing to me to tell you of this."

"My son!" repeated Dagobert, lifting both his hands to his brow; "my son arrested!"

"For a political offence of but slight importance," said the commissary.

"Ah! this is too much—all comes upon me at once!" said the soldier, falling on a chair in a state of utter distress, and hiding his face with his hands.

After an affecting farewell, during which Françoise remained, in spite of her
misery, firm to the oath she had made to the Abbé Dubois, Dagobert, who had refused to go and make a deposition against his wife, was leaning on a table, exhausted by his emotions, and said,

"Yesterday I had with me my wife, my son, my two poor orphans, and now—I am alone—alone!"

At the moment when he uttered these words, a gentle and saddened voice behind him said, timidly,

"M. Dagobert, I am here; if you will permit me, I will wait upon you—I will remain with you."

It was La Mayeux.
PART IX.
THE QUEEN BACCHANAL.

CHAPTER I.
THE MASQUERADE.

Let us turn now to the Place du Châtelet, where, on the morning after the day on which Dagobert's wife had been conducted by the commissary of police before the examining magistrate, a noisy and animated scene was passing, in front of a house of which the first floor and ground floor were then occupied by the extensive saloons of an eating-house which bore the sign of the Sucking Calf.

It was the morning after Shrove Tuesday. A considerable number of masks, grotesquely and meanly attired, were coming from the balls of the cabarets, situated in the quarter of the Hôtel de Ville, and singing as they crossed the Place du Châtelet; but, seeing another body of maskers coming along the quay, the first groups stopped to wait for them with shouts of mirth and joy, in the hope of one of those encounters of wit which are larded with loose phrases and those practical jokes which Vadé has illustrated.

This mob, all more or less inebriated, soon increased by the arrival of many persons whose occupations compelled them to traverse Paris at a very early hour; and it was suddenly concentrated in one of the angles of the square, so that a young, pale, deformed girl, who was crossing at this moment, was entirely surrounded.

This girl was La Mayeux, who had risen at daybreak to get some pieces of linen from the person who employed her. We may imagine the fears of the poor workwoman, when, involuntarily stopped in the midst of this crowd of revelers, she remembered the cruel scene of the previous evening; but, in spite of her efforts (alas! but weak), she could not advance a step; for the band of maskers who had just arrived bearing down upon the other, some of these last gave way while the rest pushed forward, and La Mayeux, being in the midst of the latter, was literally carried on by the mass, and thrown among the group that was nearest to the house of entertainment.

The new masks were better dressed than the others, and belonged to that gay and noisy class who frequent la Chaumière, le Prado, le Colisée, and those other
dancing saloons, more or less riotous, which are generally filled by students, shopgirls, clerks, seamstresses, &c., &c.

This party, who were quite ready to keep up a fire of jokes with the first, seemed awaiting impatiently the arrival of some person whose presence was greatly desired.

The following conversation, carried on between Pierrots and Pierrettes, stevedores and washerwomen, Turks and Sultanas, and other assorted couples, may give some idea of the importance of the personages so anxiously waited for:

"The breakfast is ordered for seven o'clock; the carriages ought to be here by this time."

"Yes; but the Queen Bacchanal would lead off the last set in the Prado."

"If I had known that, I would have remained to see her, my adored queen."

"Gobinet, if you call her your adored queen, I'll scratch your face; and there's a pinch for you, as earnest."

"Céleste, be quiet! You will make black patches on the white satin which my mother was kind enough to adorn me with at my birth."

"How dare you call this bacchanal your adored queen? What am I, then, I should like to know?"

"You are my adored, but not my queen; for as there is but one moon in the nights of nature, so there is but one bacchanal in the nights of the Prado."

"Oh, that's all very fine, you good-for-nothing fellow!"

"Gobinet's right—the queen was magnificent last evening."

"And in tip-top spirits!"

"I never saw her more animated!"

"And what a dress! marvellous!"

"Splendid!"

"Magnificent!"

"Pulverizing!"

"Fulminating!"

"No one but she can invent such costume!"

"And what a dance!"

"Yes: it was at the same time bounding, undulating, and serpentining. There is not such another Bayadère under the canopy of heaven!"

"Gobinet, give me my shawl immediately! you have spoiled it by tying it round your great fat waist. I don't see why I should have my best things spoiled for nasty fellows who call other women Bayaderes!"

"Lovely Céleste, calm thy anger! I am disguised as a Turk; and when I mention Bayaderes, I'm in character, or pretty near it."

"Your Céleste is like the other women, Gobinet; she's jealous of the Queen Bacchanal."
"I—jealous! Well, really! If I would be as bold as she, perhaps I might be as much talked about. After all, what makes her reputation? Why, because she has a nickname."

"Well, in that respect you have nothing to envy her for: your name is Céleste—heavenly!"

"You know, Gobinet, that Céleste is my real name."

"Yes; but when one looks at you, it seems as if it were a nickname."

"Gobinet, I'll put that down in your bill."

"And Oscar will help you to add it up—won't he?"

"Perhaps, and I shall see the total: I will put down the one and retain the other, and that one shall not be you!"

"Céleste, you pain me. I meant to say that your angelic name does not fit your delicious little face, which has an air of sly mischief wholly different from the Queen Bacchanal."

"Oh, yes—coax me now, will you, wretch!"

"I swear to you by the detested head of my landlord, that if you liked you could assume as much front as the Queen Bacchanal, which is saying not a little."

"The truth is, that the Bacchanal has front enough, and to spare."

"To say nothing of the way in which she fascinates the municipal guard."

"And magnetizes the sersants-de-ville."

"It is in vain they try to be angry: she always ends by making them laugh."

"And they all call her "My Queen.""

"Last night she charmed one of the municipals, a gentleman who was as modest as a new-blown rose, and whose sense of propriety had been gendarmized (gendarmized—what a nice word that would have been before the glorious days!)—I say that the modesty of the municipal had been gendarmized while the queen was dancing her famous "stormy tulip."

"What a contre-danse! Couche-tout-Nu and the Queen Bacchanal having opposite them Rose-Pompon and Nini-Moulin!"

"And all four displaying tulips, each more stormy than the other!"

"By the way, is it true what they say of Nini-Moulin?"

"What?"

"That he is a literary man, who writes pamphlets on religion?"

"Yes, quite true; I have often seen him at my employer's, where he deals—a bad paymaster, but a jolly dog."

"And he plays the pious, eh?"

"Yes, when it is needful, and then he is M. Durmoulin, as stiff as your arm: he rolls his eyes, walks with downcast look, and his toes turned in; but, that over, he rushes to the ball-rooms, which he adores. The women at these 'hops' call him Nini-Moulin; and when you add to this that he drinks like a fish, you have the full-length portrait of the youth. But all does not prevent him from writing for religious newspapers; and so the hypocrites, whom he manages infinitely better than he manages himself, swear by him. You should only see his articles or pamphlets (I say see—you need not read them). He talks, in every page, of the devil and his horns, of the fryings which await the impious and revolutionary, of the authority of bishops, and the power of the pope, and I don't know what besides. Nini-Moulin the toper, only imagine! He gives them enough for their money."

"The truth is, he is a toper, and a deuced hard-headed chap. How he did 'flare up' with little Rose-Pompon in the dance of the stormy tulip!"

"And what a funny figure he cut with his Roman helmet and top-boots!"

"Rose-Pompon dances splendidly too; what a poetic twist she has!"

"And how richly she does the figures!"

"Yes; but the Queen Bacchanal is six thousand feet above the level of an ordinary dancer. I can never forget her step last night in the tulip."

"It was adorable."

"Enough to make a man fall down and worship."
"If I were the father of a family, I would intrust her with the education of my sons."

"It was that dance which made the municipal angry, whose modesty was so shocked."

"Why, to say the truth, the step is rather out of the strict line of propriety."

"I believe you; so M. Municipal came up to her and said, 'I say, my queen, is that step all right, and according to rule?' 'No, modest warrior,' replied the queen, 'I practise it once every evening, that I may dance it perfectly when I'm an old woman. It is a voice made in order that you might become a brigadier."

"What a droll girl!"

"I cannot believe that she and Couche-tout-Nu will always keep together."

"Because he has been a workman?"

"Nonsense! It would be pretty for us students and shopboys to be proud. No! I'm surprised at her fidelity to him."

"Which has lasted these three or four months."

"She is really in love with him, and he is mad about her."

"Their conversation must be a thing to hear."

"Sometimes I ask myself where Couche-tout-Nu gets the money he spends. It seems that he pays for all to-day—three carriages and four, and breakfast for twenty, at ten francs a head."

"They say he has come into some property; so Nini-Moulin, who has a fine nose for good feeds, has formed his acquaintance to-night, without mentioning that he has designs on the Queen Bacchanal."
"He! that's a good one! He is too ugly. The women like him for a partner in a dance, because he plays up such antics as make everybody laugh; but that's all. Little Rose-Pompon, who is so nice and pretty, has taken up with him as a cavalier who cannot compromise her in the absence of her student."

"Here come the coaches! here they are!" shouted the crowd with one voice.

La Mayeux, compelled to stop among the maskers, had not lost one word of this conversation, painful as it was to her, for the subject of it was her sister, whom she had not seen for a long time. Not that the Queen Bacchanal had a bad heart, but the misery of La Mayeux, misery which she had shared, but which she had not courage long to endure, excited in this joyous girl tempests of bitter sorrow; she would not longer expose herself to it, having in vain pressed upon her sister assistance, which La Mayeux constantly refused, knowing that the source from which it was derived could not be honourable.

"The carriages! the carriages!" was shouted again and again by the mob, and with such a stir that La Mayeux found herself thrust into the front rank of people crowding to see the masquerader's arrival.

It was really a curious spectacle.

A man on horseback, disguised as a postillion, with a blue coat embroidered with silver, an enormous tail, from which the powder puffed out in volumes, and a hat bedecked with a profusion of ribbons, preceded the first carriage, cracking his whip, and calling out, in a stunning voice,

"Way there! Make way for the Queen Bacchanal and her court!"

In an open landau, drawn by four lean horses mounted by two old postillions dressed as devils, was piled a pyramid of men and women, sitting, standing, clinging together in the most whimsical, ridiculous, eccentric costumes in the world. They formed an indescribable heap of bright colours, flowers, feathers, tinsel, and spangles. From this mass of forms and odd attires projected pretty and ugly faces, odd and agreeable, each animated by the feverish excitement of tipsy jollity, and all turned, with an expression of fanatic admiration, toward the second carriage, in which was the Queen Bacchanal, throned like a sovereign, while the surrounding multitude saluted her with shouts of,

"The Queen Bacchanal forever!"

The second carriage, a landau like the first, only contained the four coryphées of the famous stormy tulip, Nini-Moulin, Rose-Pompon, Couche-tout-Nu, and the Queen Bacchanal.

Dumoulin, the religious writer who had dared to contend with his patron M. Rodin for Madame de la Sainte-Colombe, surnamed Nini-Moulin, erect on the front cushions, presented a glorious study for Callot or Gavarni—Gavarni, that eminent artist who unites to the biting satire and marvellous imagination of a first-class caricaturist the poetry and depth of Hogarth.

Nini-Moulin, who was about thirty-five years of age, wore at the back of his head a Roman helmet made of silvered paper. A voluminous plume of black feathers, in a stem of red wood, surmounted this casque, and by its graceful fall broke the otherwise too classic lines of this headgear.

Beneath this helm beamed forth as merry and bacchanalian a face as ever was impurpled by the potency of generous wine. A projecting nose, whose original shape was modestly disguised beneath the luxuriant efflorescence of grog blossoms, tinted red and violet, gave a droll effect to a face that was absolutely beardless, and to which a large mouth, with thick lips, the lower one projecting and curving downward, gave an expression of surpassing joviality that sparkled in his large gray eyes.

On seeing this reveller, with a paunch like Silenus, one asked how it was that he had not drowned in wine a hundred fathoms deep the gall, bile, venom which saturated his pamphlets against the enemies of Ultramontanism, and how his Catholic beliefs could float upward in the midst of his bacchic and choreographic excesses.
The question would have been without solution, if we did not know that actors who play the blackest and most hateful parts are often in private life the best fellows in the world.

The cold was rather severe, and Nini-Moulin wore a cloak, which was half open, and showed his cuirass of scales, and his pantaloons of flesh colour met just beneath his calf by the tops of his yellow boots.

Bending forward in the front of the carriage, he uttered wild shouts, intermingled with these words, "Long live the Bacchanal Queen!" after which he shook and twirled an enormous rattle he held in his hand. Couche-tout-Nu, standing beside Nini-Moulin, was waving a banner of white silk, on which was inscribed, "Love and joy to the Queen Bacchanal!"

Couche-tout-Nu was about twenty-five years of age; his gay and intelligent countenance, surrounded with a fringe of chestnut-coloured whiskers, though worn by late hours and excesses, exhibited no trace of coarse or evil passions, but a singular mixture of carelessness, effrontery, recklessness, and humour: he was, in fact, the perfect type of a Parisian, according to the general acceptance of the term, whether as applied to the army, to the dweller at home, or to the sailor in king's service or on board a merchantman. The term, though not exactly complimentary, is far from being used in a reproachful sense; it is an epithet combining both praise and blame, fear and admiration; for, if the Parisian is occasionally idle and self-willed, he is clever in his calling, resolute in danger, and invariably a great lover of jest and raillery.

Couche-tout-Nu, in his dress, "came it," in the vulgar phrase, "pretty strong:" a black-velvet jacket with silver buttons, a scarlet waistcoat, blue-striped pantaloons, and a Cashmere shawl tied round his waist, the long ends hanging loose; a hat covered with ribands and flowers completed this costume, which well became his manly, graceful figure.

At the back of the carriage were Rose-Pompon and the Bacchanal Queen, standing upon the cushions.

Rose-Pompon had been a fringe-maker: she was about seventeen years of age, with the sauciest and most captivating little face imaginable; a powdered wig, on the one side of which was jauntily stuck a smart little green and orange cap with a silver band, served admirably to set off her bright black eyes and round, rosy cheeks. Round her neck she wore a cravat of the same orange-coloured silk as the scarf, loosely knotted round her waist; her close-fitting jacket and waistcoat of light-green velvet, embroidered in silver, displayed the proportions of her charming figure, whose supple pliancy was well adapted to the evolutions of the dance named the stormy tulip. To complete the whole, the loose trousers she wore, of the same colour and material as the jacket, were sufficiently liberal in the revelations they permitted.

The Queen Bacchanal, who was at least a head taller than Rose-Pompon, stood with her hand resting on the shoulder of her friend; and well did the sister of La Mayeux deserve to be the sovereign of the mad revellers whom her mere presence seemed to intoxicate, so potent was the influence of her wild and headlong gayety.

She was a tall girl, about twenty years of age, slight, yet well proportioned, with regular features, and a merry, rollicking air. Like her sister, she had magnificent chestnut hair and large blue eyes; but, instead of being gentle and timid, like those of the young seamstress, they sparkled with untiring ardour in the pursuit of pleasure; and such was the energy of this vivacious being, that, although she had for several days and nights been engaged in a continual round of gayety, her complexion was as pure, her cheek as bright and blooming, as though she had but that morning emerged from some peaceful retreat. Her dress, though grotesque and theatrical, was well adapted to display the beauty of her form. It consisted of a tight-fitting, long-waisted bodice of gold tissue, trimmed with bunches of scarlet ribands, which hung half-way down her naked arms; a short petticoat of scarlet velvet, ornamented with tassels and spangles of gold.
reached midway down a leg, delicate yet vigorous, covered with an embroidered silk stocking; and on her feet she had red-morocco slippers with gilt heels.

Andalusian dancer never had a figure more supple, elastic, and agile than this wild and buoyant creature's, who seemed as though possessed by a demon of the dance, for continually were her head, shoulders, and hips moving from side to side, as though following the movement of some favourite dance, while, with the tip of her right foot placed on the door of the carriage, she seemed as though beating time to some invisible orchestra. A sort of gilded diadem, the emblem of her noisy royalty, from which hung a number of little bells, encircled her forehead; her hair, plaited in two thick braids, was wound beside her blooming cheeks and knotted at the back of her head; her left hand rested on the shoulder of Rose-Pompon, while with the other she held an enormous bouquet, with which she occasionally saluted the crowd, the movement being accompanied by joyous peals of laughter.

It would be difficult to give a full description of this wild, noisy, animated scene, which was completed by a third carriage, filled, like the first, with a pyramid of the most grotesque and extravagant masked figures.

Among the rejoicing crowd, one person alone beheld this pageantry with deep sadness; it was La Mayeux, still fixed among the foremost spectators, spite of her efforts to escape.

Long separated from her sister, she saw her again for the first time in the pomp of this her singular triumph, in the midst of the joyous cries and plaudits of her companions in pleasure. Yet the eyes of the poor seamstress were dimmed with tears; and, notwithstanding the delight with which the Bacchanal Queen seemed to participate in the noisy mirth of all around her—though she seemed to revel in luxury, and her eyes to sparkle with enjoyment—the poor workwoman, almost in rags, who crept forth at break of day to seek the means of earning her bread, forgot the crowd to gaze upon her sister, whom she tenderly loved, and the more for that she deemed her an object of compassion, and sincerely grieved for the radiant creature on whom so many admiring eyes were turned.

With her eyes fixed on the beautiful and joyous girl, her pale and gentle features expressed the most touching pity, a profound and sorrowful interest.

All at once, as the gay glance of the Bacchanal Queen surveyed the crowd before her, her eye caught the sad and tearful gaze of La Mayeux.

"My sister!" exclaimed Céphysé (such was the name of the Bacchanal Queen), "my sister!" and, light as an opera-dancer, with one bound the Bacchanal Queen left her moving throne, which, fortunately, happened to be stationary at that instant, and throwing herself into her sister's arms, embraced her with affectionate warmth.

All this had passed so rapidly, that the companions of the Bacchanal Queen, astonished at the daring of her perilous leap, were wondering what could have caused it, while the masks who surrounded La Mayeux drew back in amazement; and the poor girl, giving herself up to the delight of embracing her sister, whose caresses she warmly returned, forgot the singular contrast, which could not fail, ere long, to provoke the amazement and mirth of the crowd.

Céphysé was the first to recollect it, and, anxious to spare her sister so great a humiliation, she hastily turned to the carriage, saying,

"Rose-Pompon, give me my cloak, and you, Nini-Moulin, open the coach-door quickly!"

Having received the mantle, the Queen Bacchanal wrapped it round La Mayeux before the astonished girl could move. Then taking her by the hand, she said,

"Come, come!"

"I!" exclaimed La Mayeux, greatly alarmed; "you are not in earnest, surely!"

"I must speak with you. I will get a private room, where we shall be alone. Make haste, my good little sister; do not object before all these people, but come."
The fear of becoming an object for the public gaze decided La Mayeux, who, confused by the adventure, trembling and frightened, followed her sister almost mechanically into the carriage, the door of which had been opened by Nini-Moulin.

Concealed beneath the mantle of the Queen Bacchanal, the humble vestments of La Mayeux, as well as her deformity, escaped the notice of the crowd, still occupied in wondering what all this could mean, while the carriages proceeded to the tavern in the Place du Châtelet.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONTRAST.

Some minutes after the meeting of La Mayeux and the Queen Bacchana, the two sisters were together in a private room in the tavern.

"Let me kiss you again," said Céphyse to the young workgirl; "now we are alone, there is nothing to fear."

As the Queen Bacchanal clasped La Mayeux in her arms, the mantle which, covered her sister fell.

At the sight of the miserable garments, which she had hardly had time to remark in the throng, Céphyse clasped her hands, and uttered an exclamation of painful surprise. Then approaching her sister, that she might examine her,
more closely, she took between her own plump hands the cold and meager palms of La Mayeux, and gazed for some minutes with increasing anguish at the unhappy creature, suffering, wan, attenuated by privation and loss of rest, and scarcely covered by a wretched cotton gown, all darned and patched.

"Oh, sister, to see you thus!"

And unable to utter another word, the Queen Bacchanal threw herself on La Mayeux's neck and burst into tears.

In the midst of her sobs she added,

"Pardon! pardon!"

"Why? what ails you, dear Cephyse?" said the young needle-woman, deeply moved, and gently disengaging herself from the embraces of her sister. "Why do you ask pardon of me?"

"Why?" replied Cephyse, lifting up her face, suffused with tears and red with confusion; "is it not shameful of me to be clothed in this tinsel, to waste so much money in follies, while you are clad thus—while you are in want of everything—while, perhaps, you are dying with misery and want, for I never saw you so pale and worn by fatigue."

"Oh, do not be uneasy, sister, I am not ill; I was up rather late last night, and that accounts for my paleness; but do not cry, it makes me unhappy."

The Queen Bacchanal had just arrived, all radiant, in the midst of an intoxicated crowd, and it was La Mayeux who was consoling her!

An incident occurred at this moment which made the contrast still more striking.

Joyous cries were suddenly heard in the adjoining room, and these words pronounced with enthusiasm:

"The Queen Bacchanal forever! the Queen Bacchanal forever!"

La Mayeux started, and her eyes filled with tears on seeing her sister, her face buried in her hands, apparently overwhelmed with shame.

"Cephyse," she said, "I entreat of you not to distress yourself so. You will make me regret the happiness of this meeting; and it is such a pleasure to me! It is so long since I saw you! But what afflicts you? Pray tell me."

"You despise me, perhaps, and you are right," said the Queen Bacchanal, wiping her eyes.

"Despise you! I! and for what?"

"Because I lead the life I do, instead of having the courage to endure misery like you."

The grief of Cephyse was so excessive, that La Mayeux, always kind and tender, desirous of consoling her sister and raising her in her own estimation, said, soothingly,

"In bearing up bravely, as you did for a year, my dear Cephyse, you had more merit and courage than I shall ever have in enduring it all my life."

"Ah, sister, do not say so!"

"But," replied La Mayeux, "let us see to what temptations a creature like me is exposed. Should I not naturally seek solitude and isolation just as much as you seek a life of excitement and pleasure? What wants has a poor humble thing like me? A very little suffices."

"And that little you do not always get."

"No; but weak and ailing as I am, I can endure some privations better than you; hunger produces in me a sort of giddiness, which ends in extreme weakness, while you, robust and lively, hunger makes you fierce—maddens you! How often have I seen you suffering under these painful attacks when, in our miserable attic, after work had stopped for a while, we were unable to get even our four francs a week, and had nothing, absolutely nothing to eat—for our pride prevented us from applying to our neighbours."

"And you, at least, have maintained that pride."

"And you! Did you not struggle as much as it was possible for a human creature to struggle? But strength has its limits. I know you well, Cephyse;
it was before hunger that you yielded—yes, before hunger, and the painful compulsion of hard, cruel work, which did not even supply you with the means of obtaining indispensable necessaries."

"But you endured these privations, and endure them still."

"Am I to be compared to you? Here!" said La Mayeux, taking her sister's hand, and leading her before a glass placed over a sofa; "look at yourself! Do you think that Providence, who formed you so beautiful, gave you warm and ardent blood, a disposition full of mirth, and vivacity, and love of pleasure, desired that your youth should be spent in the seclusion of a cold garret, without ever seeing the sun, nailed to your chair, clad in rags, and working incessantly and hopelessly? No! for the Almighty has given us other wants besides those of eating and drinking. Even in our humble condition, does not beauty require some adornment? Does not youth require excitement, pleasure, and gayety? Do not all ages require some relaxation and rest? Had you gained a weekly sum sufficient to supply your hunger and allow you to have a day or two for amusement in the week, after a daily toil of from twelve to fifteen hours, to enable you to procure the modest and becoming toilet which your handsome face deserves, you would not, I know, have required more—you have told me so a hundred times. But you have yielded to an irresistible necessity, because your wants were greater than mine."

"That is true," replied the Queen Bacchanal, with a pensive air; "if I could but have gained forty sous a day, my life would have been wholly different; for, at the beginning, sister, I was ashamed to live at the expense of any one."

"Thus, therefore, my dear Céphyse, you were irresistibly led on, or I should blame instead of pitying you. You did not choose your destiny, but submitted to it, as I have done to mine."

"Poor sister," said Céphyse, embracing La Mayeux tenderly, "you, so wretched, yet encourage and console me, while it ought to be I who should pity you."

"Comfort yourself," said La Mayeux; "God is just and good, and if he has refused me many advantages, he has given me my joys as well as you yours."

"Your joys?"

"Yes, and great ones, too; without them life would be too heavy, and I should not have the courage to support it."

"I understand," said Céphyse, with emotion; "you find still a way to devote yourself for others, and that soothes your own sorrows."

"I do all in my power, although it is but very little; but when I succeed," added La Mayeux, gently smiling, "I am as happy and proud as a small ant, which, after a great deal of trouble, has brought a straw to the common nest. But do not let me talk any more of myself."

"Yes, talk of yourself, I beseech you; and, at the risk of making you angry," replied the Queen Bacchanal, timidly, "I will renew a proposal which you have already refused. Jacques* has, I think, money left; we squander it foolishly—giving some now and then to poor people whom we meet; I beg of you to let me help you; I see it in your poor face—and you need not try to hide it from me—that you are wearing yourself out with toil."

"Thank you, dear Céphyse; I know your kind heart, but I am not in want of anything—the little I earn is enough for me."

"You refuse me," said the Queen Bacchanal, in a sorrowful voice, "because you know that my claims on this money are not honourable: be it so—I understand your scruple. But, at least, accept a service from Jacques; he has been a workman like ourselves, and comrades should help one another: I beseech you accept of that, or I shall think you disdain me."

"And I shall think that you despise me if you persist, my dear Céphyse," said La Mayeux, in a tone so firm, though gentle, that the Queen Bacchanal knew all farther persuasion to be useless.

* We remind the reader that Couche-tout-No is named Jacques Renepont, and is one of the descendants of the sister of the Wandering Jew.
She bent her head sorrowfully, and tears again rolled down her cheeks:

"My refusal pains you," said La Mayeux, taking her hand; "I am very sorry; but reflect for a moment, and you will understand me."

"You are right," said the Queen Bacchanal, with bitterness, after a moment's silence, "you cannot accept of help from my lover—it was an insult to offer it. There are positions so humiliating that they taint even the good which one would desire to do."

"Céphyse, I did not mean to wound you; you know that very well."

"Oh, believe me," replied the Queen Bacchanal, "giddy and thoughtless as I am, there are sometimes moments of reflection even in the midst of my most headlong joys—fortunately those moments are rare."

"And what do you think of then?"

"Of the life I lead—that it is scarcely honest; and then I resolve on asking Jacques for a small sum of money, just enough to maintain me for one year; and I resolve, then, on rejoining you, and gradually settling down to work again."

"The idea is excellent; why do you not adopt it?"

"Because at the moment when I am about to resolve on it, I question myself sincerely, and my courage fails. I feel that I can never resume the habits of labour, and renounce a life sometimes rich, as now, sometimes precarious, but, at least, free, idle, joyous, careless, and a thousand times preferable to that which I should lead in earning four francs a week. Interests never guided me, and I have often refused to quit a lover who was not well off for one who was rich, but whom I did not like. I have never asked anything for myself; Jacques has expended, perhaps, 10,000 francs in the last three or four months, and yet we have only two miserable rooms, half furnished, for we always live out of doors like the birds. Fortunately, when I first loved him he had nothing at all. I sold, for a hundred francs, some trinkets that had been given me, and put that sum in the lottery, and as fools have always good luck, I got 4000 francs. Jacques was as gay, and giddy, and fond of amusement as I was, and we said, 'We love each other, and, as long as the money lasts, we will enjoy ourselves; when we have no more, one of two things will happen—either we shall be tired of one another, and will then say "adieu," or we shall love each other still. Then, to remain with each other, we must try and settle down to work; if we cannot, and still resolve not to part, why, a bushel of charcoal will finish the business.'"

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed La Mayeux, turning very pale.

"Oh! don't alarm yourself, we have not come to that yet; we had still something left, when a man of business who had paid me some attentions, but was so ugly that I could not see his riches, knowing that I was living with Jacques, tried to induce me— But why should I tire you with these details? In two words, he lent Jacques money on some very doubtful claims he has to an inheritance. It is with this money that we are amusing ourselves, and as long as it lasts, why, we shall be merry."

"But, my dear Céphyse, instead of spending this money so foolishly, why not invest it, and marry Jacques, since you love him?"

"Why, in the first place," replied the Queen Bacchanal, laughing, her gay and inconsiderate character resuming its ascendancy, "investing money does not give any pleasure; all the amusement one has is to look at a little scrap of paper which they give you in exchange for those handsome pieces of gold that will produce a thousand pleasures. As to marrying, I certainly love Jacques better than I ever loved anybody; yet I think if I were married to him, all our happiness would leave us, for as my lover he has nothing to reproach me with, but as my husband he might upbraid me for my past life; and if my conduct merits reproaches, I prefer making them myself, because I can make them properly."

"Well, you are a mad girl; but this money will not last forever, and when it is gone what will you do?"

"When it is gone? ah! that's still to come—to-morrow always appears to me.
THE QUEEN BACCHANAL.
as if it would not arrive these hundred years. If we were always obliged to be repeating that we must die one day, life would not be worth having."

The conversation between Céphysse and La Mayeux was again interrupted by a furious uproar which overwhelmed even the sharp, shrill noise produced by the rattle of Nini-Moulin. To this tumult succeeded a chorus of unearthly shouts, in the midst of which was distinguishable one loud cry of "Queen Bacchanal! Queen Bacchanal!"

La Mayeux started at this sudden noise.

"My court are growing impatient," said Céphysse, now laughing heartily.

"What shall I do," exclaimed La Mayeux, terrified, "if they should come here in search of you?"

"Never fear; they will not do that."

"But they will! do you hear those steps? Some one is coming along the passage—they are approaching. Oh, dear sister! let me beseech you to manage some way for me to go out alone, without being seen by all this crowd."

As the door was opened, Céphysse ran to it. In the corridor she beheld a deputation headed by Nini-Moulin, still brandishing his formidable rattle, Rose-Pompon, and Couche-tout-Nu.

"Come forth, Queen Bacchanal, or I shall poison myself with a glass of water!" cried Nini-Moulin.

"Appear, Queen Bacchanal, or, in despair, I shall publish my bans of marriage with Nini-Moulin!" said Rose-Pompon.

"Return to your court, Queen Bacchanal," cried another voice, "lest it rise in rebellion and come to carry you back by force."

"Yes, yes, let us carry her back!" responded a loud chorus.

"Jacques, come in alone," answered the Queen Bacchanal to those pressing demands; then, addressing her court in a majestic tone, she said,

"In ten minutes I will join you, and then we will have the ‘devil’s delight!’"

"Bravo! Long live the Queen Bacchanal!" cried Dumoulin, shaking his rattle as he retired, followed by the deputation, with the exception of Couche-tout-Nu, who was admitted into the apartment.

"Jacques," said Céphysse, "this is my good sister."

"I am delighted to see you, mademoiselle," said Jacques, kindly, "and the more so as you will be able to give me some news of my comrade Agricola. Since I have become a rich man, we have not seen each other, but I often think of him, for he was a worthy fellow and an excellent companion. You live in the same house with him, do you not? How is he?"

"Unfortunately, sir, he and his family have met with many misfortunes, and he is now in prison."

"In prison!" exclaimed Céphysse.

"Agricola in prison! and for what?" inquired Couche-tout-Nu.

"For a trifling offence of a political nature. We were in hopes of procuring his liberation by means of bail."

"To be sure—bail for 500 francs," said Couche-tout-Nu.

"Unhappily, sir, the person on whom we relied for assistance cannot"—Here the Queen Bacchanal interrupted La Mayeux by saying to Couche-tout-Nu,

"Do you hear that, Jacques? Agricola is in prison for the want of 500 francs."

"Bless you! I understand without your winks and nods. Poor fellow! why, he maintained his mother by his labour."

"Alas! yes, sir, and the case is the more distressing as his father has just arrived from Russia, and his mother—"

"Here, mademoiselle," said Couche-tout-Nu, interrupting La Mayeux a second time, and giving her a purse, "take this, I have paid all our expenses here in advance; here is all that remains of my riches. You will find in this bag either twenty or thirty Napoleons, which I cannot better employ than in serving
a comrade in distress. Carry this money to Agricola's father; he will take the necessary steps, and to-morrow Agricola will be at his forge again, where I had much rather he should be than myself."

"Jacques, give me a kiss directly!" exclaimed the Queen Bacchanal.

"That I will, both now, directly after, and whenever you please," cried Jacques, joyously embracing the queen.

La Mayeux hesitated for an instant, but reflecting that the money, which, if not accepted, would be spent in idle follies, might be the means of restoring a whole family to peace and happiness, and, farther considering, that these 500 francs, when returned hereafter to Jacques, might, probably, be more useful, she determined upon availing herself of the offer; and, taking the money, she said, with tearful eyes,

"Monseur Jacques, you are good and generous! Agricola's father will, at least, have one consolation amid the severe troubles by which he is surrounded. Thanks! a thousand times, thanks!"

"There is no occasion to thank me, mademoiselle; when people have money it is as much for others as for themselves."

Here the cries of the court became uproarious, and the rattle of Nini-Moulin made a horrible din.

"Come, Céphyse," said Couche-tout-Nu, "you must return to them, or they will break everything; and I have left myself nothing to pay the damages with. Excuse our leaving you, mademoiselle, but you see royalty has its duties."

Céphyse, deeply affected, extended her arms to La Mayeux, who threw herself into them, weeping, but not sorrowfully.

"And when," she said to her sister, "when shall I see you again?"

"Very soon, though nothing is more painful to me than to see you in want which you will not suffer me to relieve."

"You will come and see me? you promise me!"

"I promise for her," said Jacques; "we will both come and pay a visit to you and your neighbour Agricola."

"Then go to your feast, and amuse yourself with a light heart, Céphyse; for M. Jacques has made a family happy."

So saying, and after Couche-tout-Nu had seen that she could descend the stairs without being observed by his noisy, merry-making companions, La Mayeux slipped away, eager to solace the heart of Dagobert with one piece of good news, but intending first to repair to the pavilion formerly occupied by Adrienne de Cardoville in the Rue de Babylone.

The reader will be informed hereafter of the cause of this determination.

Just as the young girl was leaving the tavern, three men, plainly but respectably dressed, were talking together in a low tone, while watching the house, and consulting among themselves. A fourth rapidly descended the steps and joined the party.

"Well!" said the three others, with anxiety.

"He is there."

"Are you sure of it?"

"Are there two Couche-tout-Nus in the world?" replied the other. "I have just seen him; he is well in for it, too. They are safe for at least three hours."

"Well, then, wait for me here, all of you. Don't show yourselves more than you can help. I'll go and fetch our leader, and the job is done."

Saying these words, one of the men disappeared, at a quick pace, in a street leading from the square.

At this instant the Queen Bacchanal entered the banqueting-chamber, accompanied by Couche-tout-Nu, and was received with frantic acclamations.

"Now," cried Céphyse, with a feverish excitement, and as though striving to escape from her own thoughts, "now, my friends—noise, bustle, whirl, uproar,
desperation, and jollification!" Then, extending her glass to Nini-Moulin, she exclaimed, "Wine! wine!"

"Long live the queen!" shouted the whole party, in one unanimous cheer.

CHAPTER III.

THE REVEILLE-MATIN.

ong and loud was the revel where the Queen Bacchanal, having in front of her Couche-tout-Nu and Rose-Pompon, and Nini-Moulin on her right hand, presided at the repast, which was called réveille-matin (early breakfast, literally wake-morning), generously offered by Jacques to his companions in pleasure.

These young men and girls seemed to have forgotten the fatigues of a ball beginning at eleven at night and ending at six in the morning; and all these couples, as joyous as they were amorous and untiring, laughed, ate, and drank, with a juvenile ardour worthy of Pantagruel; thus, during the early part of the repast, they talked but little, and nothing was heard but the noise of plates rattling and glasses jingling.

The countenance of the Queen Bacchanal was less joyous, but much more animated than usual; her cheeks were flushed, her eyes sparkling with feverish excitement. She seemed determined to drown reflection at any cost. Her con-
versation with her sister occasionally recurred to her, and she sought to escape from these sad recollections.

Jacques looked at Céphyse from time to time with passionate adoration; for, owing to the singular conformity of character, mind, and tastes which existed between him and the Queen Bacchanal, their attachment had much deeper and more substantial root than is generally found in such ephemeral associations. Céphyse and Jacques did not themselves comprehend all the strength of a love which, up to this time, had been surrounded by enjoyments and festivities undisturbed by any misfortune.

Little Rose-Pompon, the widow for some days of a student who, to end the carnival in a befitting manner, had gone into the country to obtain some money from his family, under one of those fabulous pretexts which tradition preserves and carefully encourages in the schools of law and medicine—Rose-Pompon, an example of rare fidelity, unwilling to compromise herself, had selected for her chaperon the harmless Nini-Moulin.

This worthy, having taken off his casque, showed a bald head, surrounded by a border of black hair, which hung in curls some way down the back of his neck. Through a remarkable Bacchic phenomenon, as intoxication gained upon him, a sort of zone, as purple as his expansive face, gradually appeared on his brow, and tinted the shining whiteness of his head. Rose-Pompon, knowing the meaning of this symptom, pointed it out to the company, and exclaimed, with a burst of laughter,

"Nini-Moulin, take care, the tide of wine is rising rapidly!"

"When it reaches the top of his head he will be drowned," added the Queen Bacchanal.

"Oh, queen, seek not to distract my attention—I am meditating!" said Dumoulin, half tipsy, and holding aloft a punchbowl filled with wine, for he despised an ordinary glass, which he contemptuously called a "mouthful."
"He is meditating," said Rose-Pompon. "Nini-Moulin meditates—attention all!"

"He meditates! then he must be ill."

"What does he meditate? A new step for the stormy tulip?"

"A classic and prohibited attitude?"

"Yes, I am meditating," gravely replied Dumoulin, "on wine generally and particularly; wine, of which the divine Bossuet (Nini-Moulin had an awkward habit of quoting Bossuet whenever he was drunk) has said—and he was a connoisseur—"In wine is courage, strength, joy, spiritual intoxication" (when a man has brains in his head, be it understood)," added Nini-Moulin, by way of parenthesis.

"Then your Bossuet is the man for me," said Rose-Pompon.

"As for my particular meditation, it related to the question whether the wine at the marriage-feast of Cana was red or white; sometimes I put the question to white wine, sometimes to red, and sometimes to both at once."

"That is going to the bottom of it," said Couche-tout-Nu.

"At least to the bottom of the bottles," added the Queen Bacchanal.

"As you say, oh majesty; and by dint of research and experiment I have made a grand discovery, to wit, that if the wine of Cana was red—"

"It was not white," judiciously interposed Rose-Pompon.

"And suppose I came to the conclusion that it was neither red nor white?" demanded Nini-Moulin, with a magisterial air.

"Why, then, you must have been drunk," answered Couche-tout-Nu.

"The husband of the queen is right; see what one comes to by too eager a pursuit of knowledge; but it is all the same—going on from study to study, on that question to which I have dedicated my life, I shall reach the end of my respectable career in giving to my thirst a colour sufficiently historical, theological and archeological."

It were vain to attempt a description of the joyous grimace, and the not less joyous accent, with which Dumoulin pronounced these last words, syllable by syllable, amid laughter loud and long.

"Archeologic!" said Rose-Pompon; "what is that? Has it a tail? Does it live in the water?"

"Never mind it," answered the Queen Bacchanal; "these are a scholar's long words, or a juggler's; they are like a blown bladder—take up a great deal of room, yet have nothing in them. I would rather drink. Fill, Nini-Moulin—some Champagne. Rose-Pompon, here's the health of your Philemon—and his speedy return."

"Rather to the 'lump of tin' which he hopes to draw from his scaly brutes of relations to finish the carnival with," added Rose-Pompon. "Luckily, he is regularly on his mettle."

"Rose-Pompon!" exclaimed Nini-Moulin, "whether you made that pun purposely or not, come, my love, and kiss me."

"Many thanks; but what would my husband say?"

"Philemon is not your espoused husband! It only remains, therefore, for me the more decidedly to extend my arms to you, oh Rose-Pompon!"

"I can't say anything about that, but you are too ugly!"

"That's good reasoning; so I will drink to the health of Philemon's endeavours. Let us offer up our vows for the success of his 'tin' adventure."

"Willingly," said Rose-Pompon. "To the health of that important article in the items of a student's existence!"

"And also to the means by which they consume it," added Dumoulin.

The toast was drunk in bouncers, and with unanimous applause.

"With the permission of her majesty and her court," said Dumoulin, "I propose a toast to the success of an affair which interests me, and has some analogous resemblance to the 'tin' quest of Philemon. I have an idea that the toast will bring me good luck."
"Let us have it."

"Well, then, success to my marriage!" said Dumoulin, rising.

These words produced one universal shout, bursts of laughter, and stamping with the feet. Nini-Moulin shouted and stamped louder than anybody else, opening wide his enormous mouth, and adding to the astounding din the sharp sound of his rattle, which he took from under the chair where he had placed it.

When the storm had somewhat abated, the Queen Bacchana rose and said,

"I drink to the health of the future Madame Nini-Moulin!"

"Oh, queen! your kindness touches me so sensibly, that I must ask you to read, in the inmost depths of my heart, the name of my future spouse," cried Dumoulin. "She is called Madame the Widow, Honoree-Mostede-Messalina-Angele de la Sainte-Colombe!"

"Bravo! bravo!"

"She is sixty years of age, and has more thousands of francs a year than she has hairs in her gray mustaches and wrinkles in her visage; her plumpness is of such an extent that one of her gowns would serve as a tent for the honourable company here assembled. I hope, therefore, to present to you my future wife on Shrove Tuesday, in the costume of a shepherdess who has eaten her own flock. They are desirous of converting her; but I will undertake the charge of diverting her, and she will prefer that; you must aid me in plunging her into the most bacchanalian and rollicking enjoyments."

"We will plunge her into anything you please."

"She is a reveller with gray locks," sang Rose-Pompon, to a well-known tune. "That would have its effect with the sergents-de-ville."

"We should say, 'respect the lady;' perhaps your own mother may be as old some day."

Suddenly the Queen Bacchana rose. Her countenance had a singular expression of bitter and sarcastic delight; she held a glass brimful in her hand.

"They say," she exclaimed, "that the cholera is approaching, with its seven-leagued boots—I drink to the cholera!"

And she drank.

Spite of the general gayety, these words made a sinister impression; a sort of electric shudder ran through the assembly, and every face became serious.

"Ah, Cephyse!" said Jacques, in a tone of reproach.

"To the cholera!" replied the Queen Bacchana, fearlessly; "may it spare those who desire to live, and kill those together who do not desire to part."

Jacques and Cephyse exchanged a rapid look, which escaped their joyous companions, and for some time the Queen Bacchana remained silent and thoughtful.

"Ah, in that way it is different," replied Rose-Pompon, with a heedless air; "here's to the cholera! and may there be none but good fellows left on earth!"

In spite of this variation, the impression was oppressively painful. Dumoulin, desirous of changing the subject, exclaimed,

"Let the dead go to the devil! here's to the living! And, à-propos of living and good livers, I will ask you to fill a bumper for a health dear to our most gracious queen, the health of our Amphitryon. Unfortunately, I do not know his respectable name, inasmuch as last night was the first of my acquaintance with him; he will, therefore, pardon me if I confine myself to proposing the health of Couche-tout-Nu—a name which in no wise shocks my modesty, for Adam slept in no other guise. Now, then, for Couche-tout-Nu!"

"Thanks, my fat friend," said Jacques, gayly. "If I forget your name, I will call you Qui-vent-boire (who'll drink?) and sure I am that you would answer, 'Here am I!'"

"Here, for that, always," said Dumoulin, making a military salute with one hand, and holding his punchbowl in the other.

"When we have pledged together," replied Couche-tout-Nu, cordially, "we ought to know one another thoroughly; my name is Jacques Rennepont!"
"Rennepont!" exclaimed Dumoulin, apparently struck by the name, in spite of his half-drunkenness; "your name is Rennepont?"
"Rennepont, and no mistake! Does that astonish you?"
"There is an ancient family of that name, the Counts de Rennepont."
"Oh, indeed!" said Coucho-tout-Nu, laughing.
"The Counts de Rennepont, who are also Dukes de Cardoville," added Dumoulin.
"Well, really, my fat friend, do I seem to you like one sprung from such a family? I, a workman, at fun and frolic?"
"You a workman! why, we are falling into the thousand and one nights!" exclaimed Dumoulin, more and more surprised. "You give us a Belshazzar's feast, with the accompaniment of carriages and four; and yet you are a workman?"
"Come, don't think I am a workman in bank-notes or false coin!" said Jacques, laughing.
"What a supposition, comrade!"
"It is excusable, when you see the pace I go; but I will disabuse your mind; I am spending an inheritance."
"Eating and drinking some respectable old uncle defunct, no doubt," said Dumoulin, smiling.
"I really do not know."
"What! do not know whom you are eating and drinking?"
"Well, then, you must know that my father was a ragman (chiffonier)."
"Indeed!" said Dumoulin, somewhat out of countenance, though he was generally but little scrupulous in the choice of his bottle companions; but, his first surprise over, he added, with great amenity, "there are ragmen of great merit."
"Oh, you laugh at me," said Jacques; "and you are right, my father was a man of great merit, certainly. He spoke Greek and Latin like a professor, and always told me that he had not his equal for mathematics; and, besides, he had travelled a great deal."
"But, then," said Dumoulin, his surprise having sobered him, "you may belong to the family of these Counts de Rennepont."
"If so," said Rose-Pompon, with a laugh, "your father went rag-gathering as an amateur, and just for the honour of the thing."
"Not a bit of it! it was for his living," replied Jacques; "but in his youth he was in easy circumstances. By what appeared, or, rather, by what did not appear, he applied to a rich relation he had; but the rich relation answered, 'Can't, really!' Then he wished to turn his Greek, Latin, and mathematics to account—that was impossible. It seems that Paris was overrun with learned men; so, rather
than starve, he looked for his bread at the end of his crooked stick, and he found it there, too, for I ate of it for two years, when I came to live with him, after the death of an aunt with whom I had been in the country."

"Your respectable father, then, was a sort of philosopher," said Dumoulin; "but, unless he found an inheritance on some dunghill, I see nothing of the one you spoke of."

"Hear the song out. At the age of twelve I was apprenticed at the factory of M. Tripeaud; two years afterward my father died of an accident, leaving me the furniture of our garret, a bed, a chair, a table, and besides, in a cracked Eau-Cologne box, some papers, written, it appears, in English, and a bronze medal, which, with its chain, was worth about ten sous. He had never spoken to me about these papers, and, not knowing that they were good for anything, I left them at the bottom of an old trunk, instead of burning them; and it was well I did so, for on these papers I have had some money lent me."

"What a mercy from Heaven!" said Dumoulin. "But, then, somebody knew you had them?"

"Yes; one of those men who are always on the lookout for old debts, came to Céphyse, who told me of it, and, after he had read the papers, the man told me the affair was doubtful, but he would lend me ten thousand francs on them, if I liked. Ten thousand francs! it was a fortune, and I accepted it directly."

"But you must have supposed that these old debts were of great value?"

"Not I, since my father, who ought to have known their value, did not make any use of them; and then, ten thousand francs, in good handsome crowns, which fell from one does not know where—that was a bird in the hand, and I took it; only the agent made me sign a bill of guaranty—yes, that's it, guaranty."

"And did you sign it?"

"Of course, yes! it was a mere matter of form, as the man of business assured me; and he spoke truly, since it has been due more than a fortnight without my having heard a syllable about it. I have still about a thousand francs remaining in the hands of the agent, whom I took as my banker, because he had a strong box. So now, my boy, you see how and why it is I frolic all day with my ten thousand francs, glad enough to quit my beggarly master, M. Tripeaud."

As Jacques pronounced this name, his hitherto joyous countenance became suddenly overcast, while Céphyse, no longer under the influence of the painful ideas which had occupied her mind, looked at him with some uneasiness, knowing the irritation M. Tripeaud's name always produced in him.

"M. Tripeaud," resumed Couche-tout-Nu, "is just the man to make the good bad, and the bad worse. People say a good master makes a good horse. They ought to say a kind master makes a faithful servant. By Heaven, when I think
"Never mind him, Jacques!" said the Bacchanal Queen; "let us talk of something else. Come, Rose-Pompon, make him laugh."

"I am not in the humour to laugh," replied Jacques, roughly, and somewhat excited by the wine he had taken: "whenever I think of that man, it puts me in a rage. To hear him talk of his workmen—'Beggars! rascals of workmen! they pretend they have no food in their insides,' he would say; 'well, then, fill their bellies with bayonets;' that will put an end to their clamour!' And then the children in his manufactory—you should see them—poor little creatures—working as many hours as grown-up men, and wasting and dying by dozens; but what does that signify? let them die as fast as they may, there are always plenty of others to take their place. Not like horses, which must be bought and paid for before they can be replaced."

"It is clear you are not over-partial to your late master," said Dumoulin, more and more surprised at the gloomy, thoughtful air of his Amphitryon; and, disliking the serious tone the conversation had assumed, he whispered a few words in the ear of the Queen Bacchanal, who returned a corresponding sign of intelligence.

"Partial!" exclaimed Couche-tout-Nu. "Not I. I hate him, and do you know why? Because it is as much his fault as mine that I have become a vagabond. I don't say that to excuse myself, but it is the truth. When I was a lively young chap, first apprenticed to him, I was all heart and energy, and so bent upon working, that I used to take my shirt off while engaged at my task; and this, by-the-by, it was that got for me the nickname of Couche-tout-Nu. Well, there I toiled and sweated, but not one encouraging word did I ever receive. I was always the first at the shop, and the last to go; but no one seemed even to notice it. One day I got hurt in the machine; I was carried to a hospital; came out, still weak, and went to work again. I was not discouraged even by the other workmen, who knew their master better than I, and said, 'What a little fool he is, to be wearing the flesh off his bones! Do your task, neither more nor less; you will be just as well off.' I didn't mind them, but worked away, till, one day, a worthy old fellow, whom they called Father Arsène, who had been employed in the manufactory a number of years, and was considered a model for the other men—one day poor old Arsène was turned off, because his strength failed him; this was a death-blow to the honest fellow, for he had an infirm wife, and could not hope to obtain employment elsewhere. When the clerk of the works brought him his discharge, he could scarcely believe it, and began to cry; at this moment M. Tripeaud happened to pass by, and old Arsène, clasping his hands, begged that he might be kept on at half wages.

"'Why,' answered M. Tripeaud, shrugging his shoulders, 'do you suppose I am going to turn my manufactory into a hospital? You cannot work, therefore out you must go!'

"'But think of the forty years I have worked. What will become of me?'

"'What have I to do with that?' asked M. Tripeaud. Then calling one of his clerks, he said, 'Pay what is owing to this man, and send him about his business!'

"Poor old Arsène was sent about his business; but what became of him? Why, he and his old wife smothered themselves with charcoal. I was a lad at this time; but the history of old Arsène taught me the folly of working to death for nobody's advantage except that of a master, who did not value you a jot the more, and with no other prospect for old age but that of dying in some doghole. This put an end to my ardour for work; for, said I, how much better off shall I be for doing more than I ought? Suppose by my labour M. Tripeaud were to get

* This revolting expression was actually made use of during the deplorable events at Lyons.
heaps of gold, should I be one farthing the richer? So, having no motive, either of interest or pride, in working, I took a disgust for labour, did just what was necessary to earn my wages, and became an idle, careless, pleasure-seeking fellow, comforting myself with saying, that, when I was tired of work, I could just follow the example of old Arsène and his wife."

While Jacques was thus giving way to his bitter thoughts, the guests, instructed by the pantomimic gestures of Dumoulin and the Queen Bacchanal, had tacitly arranged their plans; and, at a signal from the Queen Bacchanal, who sprang on the table, knocking over the bottles and glasses, the whole party rose, uttering loud cries, to the accompaniment of Nini-Moulin's rattle, "The stormy tulip—the stormy tulip quadrille!"

At the sudden burst of these joyous demands Jacques started, and gazed round for an instant with a bewildered look; then pressing his hand to his forehead, as though to banish the gloomy feelings which possessed him, he exclaimed, "You are right, you are right! Now, then, forward two, and let's be merry!"

In the twinkling of an eye a number of powerful arms had conveyed the table to the other end of the large saloon; the spectators piled themselves on chairs, benches, on the window-ledges, singing, in loud chorus, the well-known air of The Students, for the dance about to be executed by Couche-tout-Nu, the Queen Bacchanal, Nini-Moulin, and Rose-Pompon.

Dumoulin, confiding his rattle to one of the guests, resumed his enormous helmet and plume; he had taken off his cloak at the commencement of the feast, so that he now appeared in all the splendour of his disguise—his cuirass of shining scales, terminated oddly enough in a petticoat of feathers, like those worn by the savages who escort the fat ox on Shrove Tuesday. Nini-Moulin had a large stomach, and very thin legs, which very inadequately filled the opening afforded by his large, turned-down boots.

Little Rose-Pompon, her military cap stuck jauntily at the side of her head, her two hands thrust into the pockets of her trousers, and bending her pliant little body gracefully from side to side, advanced in the forward two with Nini-Moulin, who, drawing himself all of a heap, advanced by sudden springs, his left leg bent under him, the right leg extended, the toe in the air, and the heel sliding on the floor; then he struck the nape of his neck with his left hand, while by a simultaneous movement he briskly extended his right arm, as though he meant to throw powder in the eyes of his vis-a-vis in the set.

This opening whim was noisily applauded, though it formed only the innocent prelude to the admired dance of the stormy tulip, when all at once the door opened, and one of the waiters, having for a few moments gazed about in search of Couche-tout-Nu, ran to him, and whispered a few words in his ear.

"Me!" exclaimed Jacques, bursting into loud laughter; "what a joke!"

The waiter having added some words, a decided uneasiness appeared on the features of Couche-tout-Nu, who replied to the waiter by saying, "Very well, I will come!" And with these words he was proceeding to the door.

"What is it, Jacques?" said the Queen Bacchanal, with surprise.

"Go on dancing!" replied Couche-tout-Nu; "let some one take my place for a few minutes—I shall be back directly!" So saying, he hastily left the room.

"Something they have forgotten to put in the bill of fare," observed Dumoulin; "he will come back again."

"No doubt," said Céphyse. "Now then, cavalier seul!" she said, to the person who had taken Jacques's place, and the dancing continued.

Nini-Moulin had just taken Rose-Pompon by the right hand, and the Queen Bacchanal by the left, to balance between the two; in doing which he introduced the most absurd and ridiculous buffoonery, when again the door opened, and the waiter who had called Jacques hastily approached Céphyse with an air of alarm, and spoke in her ear as he had whispered in that of Couche-tout-Nu.
The Queen Bacchanal turned pale, uttered a piercing cry, and rushed out of the room without uttering a word, leaving her guests in speechless amazement.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ADIEU.

The Queen Bacchanal, following the waiter, reached the bottom of the stair-case.

A hackney-coach was at the door. In this she saw Couche-tout-Nu, with one of the men who, two hours before, had been stationed in the Place du Châtelet.

On the arrival of Céphyse the man descended, and said to Jacques, drawing out his watch,

"I give you a quarter of an hour, and that is all I can do for you, my good fellow; after that we must go. Do not attempt to escape, for we shall keep guard at the doors while the coach remains here."

With one bound Céphyse was in the vehicle. Too much agitated to speak before, she exclaimed, as she seated herself beside Jacques and saw how pale he was,

"What is it? What do they want of you?"

"They have arrested me for debt," said Jacques, in a hollow voice.

"You?" shrieked Céphyse.

"Yes, for that bill of guaranty which the agent made me sign: he said it was but a mere form—the scoundrel!"

"But you have money still in his hands; let him take that on account."

"I have not a sous left; he sends word by the bailiff that he would not pay the last thousand francs, as I had not paid the bill."

"Let us go and entreat him, supplicate him to set you at liberty! He came to you to offer this money, I know that; because it was to me that he first spoke about it. He will surely take pity."

"Pity! an agent have pity! You know nothing of those men—"

"Then there is no hope—none!" exclaimed Céphyse, clasping her hands with
anguish. Then she added, “But surely he will do something; he promised you—”

“His promises! You see how he keeps them,” said Jacques, bitterly. “I signed without knowing what I signed; the time for payment is overdue, and it is all regular. It is of no use for me to resist; they have explained all that to me.”

“But they cannot detain you long in prison; that’s impossible!”

“Five years, if I do not pay; and as I never can pay, why, my business is done.”

“Oh, what a misfortune, what a misery! And we can do nothing!” said Céphyse, hiding her face in her hands.

“Listen, Céphyse,” replied Jacques, in a voice full of deep emotion. “Since this has befallen me, I have only thought of one thing—what is to become of you?”

“Oh, do not trouble yourself about me!”

“Not trouble myself about you! why, you are out of your senses. What can you do? The furniture of our two apartments is not worth 200 francs. We have wasted our money so foolishly, that we have not even paid for our lodging—we owe three quarters; therefore we must not rely on the sale of the furniture. I leave you without a sou. As for me, they must at least feed me in the prison; but how are you to live?”

“Why fret yourself about that in anticipation?”

“I want to know how you are to live to-morrow,” said Jacques.

“I will sell my dress, some small things I have, and send you half the money. I will keep the rest, which will last me several days.”

“And then, afterward?”

“Afterward—why, then, I don’t know what I shall do—what can I say? afterward we shall see.”

“Listen, Céphyse,” resumed Jacques, with bitter emotion; “now I feel how much I love you; my heart seems as if it were squeezed in a vice when I think of quitting you; I am in an agony to think what will become of you!” Then, passing his hand over his forehead, Jacques added, “You see now what has undone us—saying always, ‘Oh, to-morrow will never come!’ yet you see it does come. Now that I shall not be near you, and when you have spent the last farthing of the things you are going to sell—unable to work as you are—what will you do? Shall I tell you what you will do? You will forget me, and—”

Then, as if he recoiled from his thought, Jacques cried, with rage and despair, “Heaven and earth! if that should come, I would dash out my brain on the pavement!”

Céphyse guessed the thought of Jacques, and, throwing her arms round his neck, said, passionately,

“I? another lover? Never! for, like yourself, I feel now how much I love you.”

“But to exist, my poor Céphyse—to exist!”

“Well, I shall take courage, and go and live with my sister, as I did before. I will work with her, and that will always give me bread. I shall only go out to see you. In a few days, perhaps, the agent, on reflection, will see that you cannot pay him the ten thousand francs, and will set you at liberty. I shall have resumed the habit of labour—you’ll see! You also will return to work. We shall live poor, but quiet; and, after all, we have had a great deal of amusement for six months, while many, in all their lives, have never known pleasure! Believe what I say, my dear Jacques, for it is true. I shall profit by this lesson; so, if you love me, do not be uneasy: I tell you this, I would rather die a hundred times than have another lover!”

“Embrace me!” said Jacques, with tears in his eyes; “I believe you—I believe you. You give me fresh courage for this and for the future: you are right we must try and return to work; if not, the bushel of charcoal, like Father Ar-
sène! For," added Jacques, in a low and tremulous voice, "for six months I have been, as I may say, drunk; now I am sobered, and I see whither we were hurrying. Once at the end of our resources, I might have turned thief, and you—"

"Oh, Jacques, you frighten me! Do not say that!" exclaimed Cephyse, interrupting Couche-tout-Nu: "I swear to you that I will return to my sister; I will work and keep up my courage."

The Queen Bacchanal at this moment was perfectly sincere; she was resolved, anxious to keep her word. Her heart was not, as yet, wholly perverted: misery and want had been to her, as they have been for so many others, the cause, and even the excuse, of her going astray: up to this time, she had at least followed the inclination of her heart without any base and venal considerations. The cruel position in which she saw Jacques increased her love, and she believed that she could rely upon herself when she swore to him that she would return to La Mayeux and resume her life of barren and incessant labour—that life of painful privations which she had been unable to support before, and which must be still more painful to her now since she had led a life of idleness and dissipation. But the assurances which she gave Jacques somewhat calmed his distress and disquietude. He had good sense and good feeling enough to perceive the headlong and fatal course he had been pursuing, and which was leading himself and Cephyse to infamy.

One of the bailiffs, having rapped at the door, said to Jacques,

"My fine fellow, make haste! you have only five minutes more!"

"Well, then, my dear girl, courage!" said Jacques.

"Make yourself easy; I will have courage, rely on it!"

"You will not return up stairs?"

"Oh, no!" said Cephyse; "I have a horror of this revel now."

"I paid for all in advance, and I will get the waiter to tell them they need not expect us," added Jacques. "They will be somewhat astonished, but that is of no consequence."

"If you could only go to our lodgings with me," said Cephyse; "and perhaps this man will let you, for you cannot go to Sainte-Pélage dressed in this way."

"That's true, and he will not refuse to let you accompany me; but, as he will be with us in the coach, we cannot say anything before him; so let me, for the first time in my life, talk sense. Remember well, my Cephyse, what I say to you—and it is as suitable to myself as to you," said Jacques, in a serious and earnest tone—"begin this very day your habits of industry. It will be painful, difficult: no matter; do not hesitate, or you will soon forget this lesson; as you say, later it will not be time, and then you will end like so many other unfortunate—you understand me?"

"I do," said Cephyse, blushing; "but I would a hundred times prefer death to such a life."

"And you would be right; for in that case," added Jacques, in a low, impression voice, "I would help you to die!"

"I would expect it from you, Jacques," replied Cephyse, embracing her lover

[See cut, on next page.]

with fervour, and adding, sorrowfully, "I believe it was a presentiment when, just now, I felt myself melancholy, without knowing why, in the midst of our mirth, and that I drank to the cholera, so that it might kill us together."

"Well, who knows that it will not come—the cholera?" replied Jacques, gloomily; "that will save the charcoal, and perhaps we should not have money left to buy it!"

"I can only say one thing, Jacques, and that is, you will always find me ready to live and die with you!"

"Come, dry your eyes," he answered, with deep emotion; "do not let us play the fool before these men!"
A few minutes afterward the coach moved on toward Jacques's lodgings, where he was to change his clothes before he went to prison for debt.

Let us repeat, à propos of the sister of La Mayeux (there are things which we cannot too often repeat), one of the most injurious consequences of the want of organization in labour is the insufficiency of wages.

The insufficiency of wages inevitably forces the greater number of young girls, thus badly remunerated, to seek for a means of existence by forming connexion which deprave them.

Sometimes they receive a moderate sum from their lover, which, joined to the produce of their labour, helps them to live; sometimes, like the sister of La Mayeux, they completely abandon work, and live with the man they select, when he is able to support both; then, during this time of pleasure and idleness, the incurable leprosy of distaste for labour takes possession of these unhappy creatures forever!

This is the first phase of degradation in which the culpable neglect of society involves an immense number of females of the working classes, born with the instincts of modesty, integrity, and virtue.

At the end of a certain time their lovers grow tired of them, perhaps when they have become mothers.

Occasionally a wild prodigality conducts the inconsiderate young man to prison, and then the girl finds herself alone, abandoned, and without means of existence.

Those who have preserved courage and energy return to labour; but the number is very few. Others, impelled by misery or the habits of an idle and easy life, fall into the lowest depths of degradation.

And they ought to be more pitied than blamed for this degradation, for the first and virtual cause of their fall was the insufficient amount of their pay, or failure of employment.

Another deplorable consequence of want of organization in labour is, for men, besides insufficiency of wages, the deep disgust with which they fulfil the task imposed upon them.

That may be conceived.

Is there any attempt to make work agreeable, either by its variety, or by honourable recompense, or kindness, or a remuneration proportionate to the results of their handicraft, or by the hope of an income assured to them after long years of labour?

* We read in an excellent pamphlet, filled with practical views, and dictated by a charitable and elevated mind (National League against the Misery of Workpeople; or, Memorandum Explanatory of a Petition to be presented to the Chamber of Deputies, by J. Tonneau), these lines, unfortunately but too true: "We do not speak of workwomen placed in the same alternative; what we should have to say would be too painful; we only assert, that it is when work ceases for the longest time that the emissaries of prostitution make their proselytes from among the handsomest females in the humbler classes."
COUCHE-TOUT-NU.
No! The country neither knows nor cares for their wants or their rights.
And yet, to refer only to one branch of trade, the mechanics and workmen in factories, who, exposed to the explosion of steam and contact with innumerable wheels, every day encounter greater dangers than soldiers incur in a war, display a great deal of practical skill, render to industry, and consequently to the country, undeniable services through a long and honourable career, unless they are killed by the bursting of a boiler, or have some limb maimed by the iron teeth of a machine.

In this latter case, does the workman receive a compensation equal to that of the soldier as the price of this courage, laudable but unproductive—a berth in an asylum for invalids?

No!

What is it to the country? and, if the master is ungrateful, the maimed man, incapable of service, dies of hunger in some corner.

In those pompous exhibitions of industry, do they ever call for any of those skilful workmen who alone have produced those splendid tissues, forged and damasked those brilliant weapons, chiselled those cups of gold or silver, carved those pieces of ebony or ivory, mounted those brilliant stones with such exquisite art?

No!

Exiled to some garret, surrounded by a miserable and famished family, they hardly exist on a miserable salary—those very men who, it will be confessed, have contributed at least half to enrich the country with those marvels which make its wealth, its boast, and its pride.

A minister of commerce, who had the least comprehension of his high functions and his duties, would require that each production exhibited should be represented by a certain number of the most meritorious candidates, among whom the producer should point out the person who seemed to him most worthy to represent the working class in those grand industrial solemnities.

Would it not be a noble and encouraging example to see the master propose for rewards or public distinctions the workman deputed by his fellows as one of the most honest, hard-working, and intelligent in his profession?

Then a fearful injustice would disappear; then the virtues of the workman would be stimulated by a generous and lofty aim; then he would have an interest in behaving well.

No doubt the producer, by reason of the intelligence which he displays, the capital he ventures, the establishment he founds, and the good he sometimes effects, has a legitimate right to the distinctions with which he is honoured; but why is the workman so pitilessly excluded from those rewards whose operation on the masses is so powerful?

Are generals and officers the only individuals who are rewarded in an army?

After having justly remunerated the chiefs of this powerful and productive industrial army, why are not its soldiers thought of?

Why is there no brilliant prize for them? no consoling and kind word from an august lip? Why do we see in France not one workman decorated, as the reward of his skill, his industrial courage, his long and laborious career? The cross, and the modest pension which accompanies it, would have for him a double and justly-merited recompense. But no! for humble toil—the toil that really produces—there is but forgetfulness, injustice, indifference, and disdain.

And this public neglect, often aggravated by the selfishness and severity of the ungrateful employer, produces a deplorable condition for the workmen.

Some, in spite of incessant labour, live in want, and die prematurely, cursing the society which forsakes them. Others seek a temporary oblivion of their woes in ruinous intoxication.

A great number, having no interest, no advantage, no moral or material incitement to do more or better, confine themselves to doing just so much as will gain their pay. Nothing attaches them to their toil, because, in their eyes, nothing
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elevates, honours, or glorifies their toil—nothing protects them from the tempta
tion of indolence; and if by chance they find the means of living occasionally in
idleness, by degrees they yield to habits of indolence and debauchery; and some-
times the worst passions gain supreme control over dispositions originally honest
and well meaning, for want of some just and protecting superintendence, which
would have sustained, encouraged, and recompensed their upright and laborious
inclinations.

We will now follow La Mayeux, who, after having gone to seek work from
the person who usually employed her, went to the Rue de Babylone, to the pa-
vilion occupied by Adrienne de Cardoville.
PART X.
THE CONVENT.

CHAPTER I.

FLORINE.

Recisely at the moment when the Queen Bacchanal and Couche-tout-Nu terminated the most joyous phase of their existence so mournfully, La Mayeux reached the door of the pavilion in the Rue de Babylone.

Before she rang, the young workgirl wiped her eyes—a fresh trouble had befallen her. On leaving the tavern she had gone to the person who usually employed her; but this woman gave her no work, being able, as she said, to get her work made up in the prisons for women at a saving of one third. La Mayeux, rather than lose this last resource, offered to submit to this reduction; but the pieces of linen had been already given out, and the young workwoman could not hope for employment before at least a fortnight, even at this scanty rate of pay. We may imagine the poor creature's anguish, for, under a compulsory cessation of work, there is only left the choice of begging, dying of hunger, or stealing.

Her visit to the pavilion in the Rue de Babylone will be explained as we proceed.

La Mayeux rang timidly at the small gate, and in a few moments Florine opened the door. The waiting-maid was no longer attired according to the charming taste of Adrienne, but, on the contrary, was dressed with an affectation of austere simplicity. She wore a high gown of dark colour, sufficiently full to conceal the graceful elegance of her form, and her bandeaux of jet black hair were scarcely visible under the flat border of a small white and stiffly-starched cap, resembling that worn by nuns; but, in spite of this plain costume, the brunette face of Florine was still very handsome.

We have said that Florine, placed by former criminality of life in absolute subjection to Rodin and M. d'Aigrigny, had, up to this time, served as a spy on Adrienne, notwithstanding the confidence and kindness bestowed upon her by her young mistress. Florine was not utterly perverted, and, consequently, often experienced painful, but vain feelings of remorse, when she reflected upon the shameful course she pursued toward Adrienne de Cardoville.

At the sight of La Mayeux, whom she recognised, Florine, who had told her the night before of Agricola's arrest and the sudden insanity of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, recoiled a step, so much was she struck with interest and pity by the countenance of the workgirl. The forced cessation of work, in the midst of such painful circumstances, was a terrible blow for the poor needle-woman; the
traces of recent tears left their furrows in her cheeks, her features expressed a deep anguish, and she appeared so exhausted, so weak, so overcome, that Florine went to her hastily, offered her arm, and said to her, kindly, while supporting her,

"Come in, mademoiselle, come in. Rest yourself awhile, for you are very pale, and appear to be suffering and fatigued."

As she spoke, Florine led La Mayeux into a small room with a fireplace, and seated her before a good fire in a cushioned chair.

Georgette and Hobe had been dismissed, and Florine alone was left in charge of the pavilion.

When La Mayeux was seated, Florine said to her, kindly,

"Mademoiselle, may I offer you anything? a little sugared water, warm, with some orange-flower water in it?"

"Thank you, mademoiselle," said La Mayeux, with emotion; for the least token of kindness filled her with gratitude, and she saw, with some surprise, that her poor garments did not cause either contempt or disgust in Florine. "I only want a little rest, for I have walked a long way," she replied; "and if you will allow me—"

"Rest as long as you please, mademoiselle; I am alone in the pavilion since the departure of my poor mistress." (Here Florine blushed and sighed.) "So make yourself at home, and come near the fire. Stay—place yourself there, you will be warmer. Dear me, how wet your feet are! Place them on this stool."

The kind reception of Florine, her handsome face, and her cordial manners, which were not those of an ordinary waiting-maid, struck La Mayeux greatly, who was more sensible than any one else, spite of her humble station, of all that was gracious, delicate, and well bred; and, yielding to this attraction, the young workgirl, usually so retiring and timid, felt herself almost on terms of intimacy with Florine.

"How very kind you are, mademoiselle," she said, in a tone of gratitude; "I do not know how to thank you for your attentions."

"I assure you, mademoiselle, I should be delighted to do more than offer you a place by the fire, you are so gentle, and interest me so much!"

"Ah, mademoiselle, how nice it is to warm one's self at a good fire!" said La Mayeux, in the simplicity of her heart. Then, fearing (such was her delicacy) that she might be guilty of an abuse of hospitality in lengthening her visit, she added,

"I will tell you, mademoiselle, why I return here; yesterday you told me that a young smith, M. Agricola Baudoin, had been arrested in this pavilion."

"Alas, mademoiselle, yes; and at the very moment, too, when my poor mistress was about to give him the assistance he required."

"M. Agricola—I am his adopted sister," resumed La Mayeux, slightly blushing—"wrote to me last night from his prison, and begged me to tell his father to come here as soon as he could, and inform Mademoiselle de Cardoville that he, Agricola, had some very important particulars to communicate to the young lady, or to such person as she might send, but that he did not dare to trust them in a letter, not knowing if the correspondence of the prisoners was not read by the director of the prison."

"What! M. Agricola wished to make an important disclosure to my mistress!" said Florine, much surprised.

"Yes, mademoiselle; for up to this time Agricola is ignorant of the frightful malady of Mademoiselle de Cardoville."

"True; and this attack of insanity came on so suddenly," said Florine, lowering her eyes, "that it could not have been anticipated."

"It must have been so, indeed," said La Mayeux; "for when Agricola saw Mademoiselle de Cardoville for the first time, he was enchanted with her grace, kindness, and delicacy."
"Like everybody who approaches my mistress," said Florine, sorrowfully.

"This morning," resumed La Mayeux, "following the directions of Agricola, I went to his father: he had already left home, for he is full of the deepest anxiety; but the letter of my adopted brother appeared to me so pressing, and of such importance to Mademoiselle de Cardoville, who had acted so generously toward him, that I came myself."

"Unfortunately, my young lady is no longer here, as you know."

"But is there none of her family to whom, if I cannot speak, I can at least make known through you, mademoiselle, that Agricola is anxious to communicate something of the utmost importance to this young lady?"

"It is strange!" replied Florine, reflecting, and without making any answer to La Mayeux; then, turning to her, she said,

"And you are ignorant of the subject of this disclosure?"

"Perfectly, mademoiselle; but I know Agricola, and he is honour and honesty itself: he has a heart just and upright, and may be believed in all he says. Besides, what interest can he have in—"

"Heavens!" exclaimed Florine, hastily, struck by a sudden light, and interrupting La Mayeux, "I remember now; when he was apprehended in a secret room, where mademoiselle had him placed, I chanced to be present, and he said to me, in a quick and low voice,

"'Pray say to your generous mistress that her kindness to me will have its reward, and my concealment in this closet may perhaps not be without its utility.'",

"That was all he could say, for they took him off instantly. I confess that in these words I had but remarked the expression of his gratitude, and his hope of proving it one day to mademoiselle; but when I connect those words with the letter which he has written to you," said Florine, with a meditative air—

"'Yes,' interposed La Mayeux, "there is certainly some connexion between his concealment in the closet and the important revelations he desires to make to your lady or some one of her family."

"The closet had not been entered for a long time," said Florine, with a thoughtful air: "perhaps M. Agricola found or saw something there which might be of importance to my young lady."

"If Agricola's letter had not seemed to me so pressing," said La Mayeux, "I should not have come, and he would present himself here on leaving his prison, which, thanks to the generosity of one of his old companions, will be soon; but not knowing whether, even after the caution is deposited, they would set him at liberty to-day, I was anxious to fulfil his request. The generous kindness of your mistress to him made it a duty."

Like all persons in whom good instincts still develop themselves at times, Florine experienced a sort of consolation in doing good, when she could do it with impunity, that is, without exposing herself to the inexorable resentment of those on whom she was dependant.

Thanks to La Mayeux, an occasion offered on which she might probably render her mistress an important service; and knowing enough of the hatred of the Princess de Saint-Dizier for her niece to be certain of the danger which Agricola's disclosure might produce if made to any one but Mademoiselle de Cardoville herself, Florine said to La Mayeux, in a serious and emphatic tone,

"Listen, mademoiselle, while I give you what I believe to be most serviceable advice with respect to my poor lady; but this step on my part may have very serious consequences for me, if you do not attend to my injunctions."

"How, mademoiselle!" said La Mayeux, looking at Florine with extreme surprise.

"For the interest of my mistress, M. Agricola should not tell any one but herself the important matters which he is desirous of communicating."

"But, unable to see Mademoiselle Adrienne, why should he not address himself to her family!"
"Above all, he must keep it from her family. Mademoiselle Adrienne may recover, and then M. Agricola can speak to herself; and if she never recovers, tell your adopted brother that it is better he should preserve the secret than see it serve the enemies of my young lady, which, be assured, would certainly be the case."

"I understand you, mademoiselle," said La Mayeux, sorrowfully; "the family of your generous mistress do not love her— persecute her, perhaps?"

"I cannot answer you on that subject now; but, so far as I am concerned, I entreat you to promise me that you will prevail on M. Agricola not to say one word to any person of the step you have taken in coming to me on this subject, and the advice I have given you; the happiness—no, not the happiness," said Florine, with bitterness, as if she had long since renounced all hope of being happy—"not the happiness, but the repose of my life depends on your discretion!"

"Make yourself easy," said La Mayeux, as much affected as surprised at the painful expression of Florine's features; "I will never be ungrateful no one but Agricola shall know that I have seen you."

"Thanks! oh, thanks, mademoiselle!" said Florine, warmly.

"You thank me!" said La Mayeux, astonished at seeing big tears coursing down Florine's face.

"Yes, I owe you a moment of happiness, pure and unmixed; for, perhaps, I may render my dear mistress a service without the risk of increasing the troubles which already overwhelm me."

"You unhappy?"

"Does that surprise you? Oh, believe me, whatever may be your lot, I would take it in exchange for mine!" exclaimed Florine, almost involuntarily.

"Alas, mademoiselle," said La Mayeux, "you appear to have too kind a heart for such a wish, particularly to-day—"

"And why to-day?"

"Ah, I sincerely hope, for your sake, mademoiselle," replied La Mayeux,
with bitterness, "that you may never know how frightful it is to see yourself deprived of work, when work is your only resource!"

"And are you reduced to that?" exclaimed Florine, looking anxiously at La Mayeux.

The young workgirl bowed her head without speaking. Her extreme pride almost reproached her for this confidence, which seemed like a complaint, and which had escaped her when thinking of the horror of her position.

"If this be so," said Florine, "I pity you from the bottom of my heart; and yet I do not know if my misfortune is not still greater than yours." Then, after a moment's reflection, Florine suddenly exclaimed, "But, now I think of it, if you want work, if you are destitute, I think I can procure some for you."

"Is it possible, mademoiselle?" exclaimed La Mayeux. "I never should have dared to ask you such a service, which would, however, save me; but now your generous offer commands my confidence, and I will confess to you that this very morning they have taken from me my very humble work, though it only brought me in four francs a week."

"Four francs a week!" cried Florine, who could scarcely believe what she heard.

"It is certainly very little," said La Mayeux, "but it was enough for me. Unfortunately, the person who employed me found a way to have the work done for a still less price."

"Four francs a week!" repeated Florine, deeply moved at such poverty and resignation. "Well, I will put you in the way of earning at least two francs a day."

"Is it possible I could earn two francs a day?"

"Certainly; only you would be obliged to go and work out by the day, unless, indeed, you preferred taking a servant's place."

"In my situation," said La Mayeux, with a timid pride, "I know one has no right to be guided by like or dislike; still I should greatly prefer working by the day, and, though I gained less, doing the work at home."

"Unfortunately," answered Florine, "performing your work at the place itself is indispensable."

"Then," replied La Mayeux, "I must give up the hope. Not that I refuse to work at the house of my employer, for one must live; but workwomen are expected to be dressed creditably, if not smartly; and I confess to you without shame—for mine is an honest poverty—that it is out of my power to be better dressed than I am now."

"Do not let that be any objection," cried Florine, eagerly; "means will be furnished to provide you with suitable attire."

La Mayeux regarded Florine with increasing surprise; such offers were so beyond her utmost hopes, and the earnings of needle-women, that she could scarcely believe that she heard aright.

"But," she replied, after some hesitation, "may I venture to ask the motive of this generosity? How can I earn such wages?"

Florine started. The impulse of a naturally good heart, with a desire to serve La Mayeux, whose gentleness and resignation deeply affected Florine, had led her on to make a somewhat thoughtless proposal. She knew the price La Mayeux must pay for the advantages promised her; and now, for the first time, she asked herself whether the young seamstress would accept them upon such terms. Unfortunately, Florine had gone too far to recede: yet she could not bring herself to confess the whole truth to La Mayeux; she therefore determined to leave the future to the scruples of La Mayeux; and besides, as those who have yielded to temptation are apt to believe others as vulnerable as themselves, Florine thought that, in La Mayeux's distressed situation, it was possible her delicacy might be less rigid than she had imagined. She therefore resumed: "I can well understand your being surprised at offers so much beyond what you have hitherto gained; but I must explain to you, that what I have been saying refers
to a charitable institution, established for the purpose of giving employment to deserving and distressed females; it undertakes to place them as servants, or to supply them with work at the institution, which is called Sainte Marie's Charity. Now this charity is conducted by persons so benevolent, that they even provide a sort of outfit for the females they take under their protection, when they do not possess a suitable supply of clothes for their destined situations.

This plausible explanation of the magnificent offer Florine had made could not but satisfy La Mayeux, since, after all, they proceeded from a charitable institution.

"Now I understand the high rate of wages you mentioned," said La Mayeux, "but I have no claim upon the benevolent persons who have the control of such institutions."

"You are honest, industrious, and distressed, and this is claim enough. There is one thing I must tell you; you will be questioned as to the strictness with which you perform your religious duties."

"Ah, mademoiselle, no one in the world loves or worships God more truly than myself," replied La Mayeux, with gentle firmness; "but the practice of certain religious duties is a matter of conscience, and I must renounce the patronage you speak of, if anything of this kind is exacted."

"Not the slightest," I assure you; but, as the charity in question is directed by extremely pious persons, you must not be astonished at their questioning you on this head: besides, try it; you incur no risk: if the conditions they propose to you suit, you can accept them; if, on the contrary, they offend your liberty of conscience, you can refuse them. Your position will not be made worse."

La Mayeux had nothing to say against this conclusion, which, leaving her at perfect liberty, offered no cause for suspicion: she said, therefore,

"I accept your offer, mademoiselle, and thank you for it from the bottom of my heart. But who will introduce me?"

"I will. To-morrow, if you like."

"But these charitable persons may wish to make some inquiries respecting me."

"The holy mother Sainte Perpétue, superior of the convent of Sainte Marie, where the charity is established, will, I doubt not, be satisfied without making any farther investigations; if not, she will say so, and you can easily satisfy her. So, then, it is agreed. To-morrow."

"Shall I call here for you, mademoiselle?"

"No; because, as I told you, nobody must know of your having been here from M. Agricola; and another visit might excite suspicion. I will come with a coach for you. Where do you live?"

"In the Rue Brise-Miche, No. 3; and since you will take so much trouble, mademoiselle, all you need do will be to ask the dyer, who acts as porter, to come and let La Mayeux know you are there."

"La Mayeux!" exclaimed Florine, with surprise.

"Yes, mademoiselle," said the poor girl, with a mournful smile, "it is a nickname which everybody gives me; and it was because of my unfortunate infirmity," continued La Mayeux, unable to suppress a tear, "which obtained for me this name, that I wished to avoid going to work among strangers—there are so many who joke at such things, without recollecting how it hurts the feelings; but," added La Mayeux, wiping away the tears, "I have no choice, and therefore I submit."

Deeply affected, Florine took La Mayeux's hand, saying,

"Do not distress yourself; there are some misfortunes more fitted to inspire compassion than mockery. Then you do not wish me to ask for you by your real name?"

"My name is Madeleine Soliveau, but I am very little known by any other than La Mayeux."

"Well, then, to-morrow, at twelve o'clock, I will come to the Rue Brise-Miche."
"Oh, mademoiselle, how can I ever repay your kindness?"

"Do not speak of that. My only desire is, that my intervention may prove serviceable to you, of which you alone can judge. As for M. Agricola, do not reply to his letter; wait till he gets out of prison, and then, let me repeat, tell him he must on no account divulge what he knows until he can see my poor mistress."

"Where is this dear young lady now?"

"I do not know. I am ignorant where she was taken when her madness broke out. Expect me to-morrow."

"To-morrow," said La Mayeux.

The reader has not forgotten that the convent of Sainte Marie, whither Flo- rine had promised to conduct La Mayeux, was the place where the daughters of General Simon were confined, and adjoined the madhouse of Doctor Baleinier, to which Adrienne de Cardoville had been taken.

CHAPTER II.

THE ABBESS SAINTE PERPÉTUE.

ER us return now to the convent of Sainte Marie, whither the daughters of Marshal Simon had been conducted—an ancient and large edifice, the extensive gardens of which abutted on the Boulevard de l'Hôpital, at this time one of the most deserted quarters of Paris.

The events now to be described took place on the 12th of February, the eve of the fatal day on which the members of the Rennepont family, the last descendants of the sister of the Wandering Jew, were to assemble in the Rue Saint François.

The convent of Sainte Marie was governed with the strictest regularity. A superior council, composed of influential ecclesiastics, presided over by Father d'Aigrigny, and females of deep piety, at the head of whom was the Princess de Saint-Dizier, frequently assembled for the purpose of consulting as to the best means of extending and confirming the vast influence of this establishment, which was making remarkable advances.

Skilful combinations, very sagaciously planned, had presided over the institution of the Charity of Sainte Marie, which, aided by numerous donations, possessed very large estates, and other riches, daily augmenting.

The religious community was only a pretext; but, thanks to numberless ramifications with the provinces, and the intervention of the highest members of the ultramontane party, a considerable number of richly-endowed orphans were sent to this establishment, who were there to receive a solid, serious, pious education; much preferable, as they asserted, to the frivolous bringing up which they would have in fashionable boarding-schools infected with the corruptions of the age. To widows and lone females, who were wealthy, the Charity of Sainte Marie offered a secure asylum against the dangers and temptations of the world. In this peaceable retreat they would enjoy a heavenly calm, and, while they consulted their eternal salvation, they were surrounded by the tenderest and most affectionate care.

This was not all; the Mother Sainte Perpétue, the superior of the convent, undertook also, in the name of the charity, to procure for the truly faithful, who were desirous of preserving the interior of their houses from the corruptions of the age, either companions for solitary or aged females, or servants for house-
holds, or workwomen by the day, all being persons whose pious morality was guarantied by the charity.

Nothing could appear more worthy of interest, sympathy, and encouragement than such an establishment; but we shall anon unveil the capacious and dangerous net of intrigues of all sorts that was covered by these charitable and holy appearances.

The superior of the convent, Mother Sainte Perpétue, was a tall woman, about forty years of age, dressed in a woollen gown of sober hue, and having a long rosary at her girdle; a white cap, tied under the chin, and a black veil enclosed her lean, pale countenance; deep and intersecting wrinkles furrowed her forehead, of the colour of yellow ivory; her sharp and projecting nose was curved slightly like the beak of a bird of prey; her black eye, sagacious and piercing, combined to complete a physiognomy intelligent, cold, and firm.

As regarded her ability and management of the tangible interests of the community, Mother Sainte Perpétue was equal to the most skilful and wily lawyer. When women possess what is called a mind for business, and will apply to it their depth of penetration, indefatigable perseverance, prudent dissimulation, and, above all, that correctness and quickness of perception so natural to them, they attain prodigious results.

As to Mother Sainte Perpétue, to her masculine and powerful brain the management of the community was but child’s play. No one knew better than she how to purchase depreciated properties, enhance their value, and sell them again advantageously: the variations of the funds, exchange, the current value of shares in different undertakings, were perfectly familiar to her. She had never instructed her agents unfortunately, when investment was required for the sums which pious souls daily bestowed in alms on the Charity of Sainte Marie. She established in the house order, discipline, and above all, an extreme economy; the constant end and aim of her efforts being to enrich, not herself, but the community which she ruled; for the spirit of association, when directed to the purposes of collective egotism, gives to bodies the faults and vices of an individual.

Thus a body will love power and money, as an ambitious man loves power for the sake of power, as the avaricious man loves money for the sake of money. But it is always on the subject of real property that congregations act like individuals. Real property is their dream, their fixed idea, their fructifying monomania, and they pursue their object with most earnest and indefatigable zeal.

The first acquisition of real property is to a poor and small rising community what her wedding presents are to a young bride—his first horse to a young man—his first success to a poet—her first Cashmere shawl to a dressmaker’s girl; for, in this material age, a piece of fixed property makes a community known as substantial, to a certain extent, in the religious Exchange, and gives it the more influence over the simple-minded, inasmuch as all these associations for assumed charitable purposes, which end by acquiring immense possessions, commence invariably with an air of modest poverty as its social introduction, and charity to its neighbour as its guarantee and object.

Thus it is hardly to be credited how much fierce and bitter rivalry exists between different congregations of men and women, on the subject of the real property which each can acquire, and with what ineffable complacency an opulent congregation will rush, under the inventory of its own houses, farms, investments, one that is poorer.

Envy and jealous hatred, rendered still more fierce by the indolence of the cloister, produce these comparisons; and yet nothing can be less Christian, in the heavenly acceptance of this Divine word, nothing can be less in unison with the real spirit of the Gospel, a spirit so essentially and religiously inculcating community, than this insatiable ardour for acquiring and monopolizing by every possible mode: a dangerous passion, and far from excusable in the eyes of public opinion, by some miserable almsgiving, which is governed by an inexorable spirit of exclusion and intolerance.
Mother Sainte Perpétue was seated before a large bureau, placed in the centre of a small apartment, plainly, but very comfortably furnished. An excellent fire burned in the marble fireplace, and a soft carpet covered the floor.

The superior, who every day had brought to her all letters addressed either to the sisters or the boarders of the convent, was occupied in opening the letters of the sisters, according to right, and in unsealing very skilfully the letters of the boarders, according to a right which she assumed, without their privity, but, be it understood, always for the benefit of the dear girls' salvation, and a little that she might be well informed of their correspondence, for the superior took upon herself also the duty of taking cognizance of all the letters which were written from the convent before they were despatched to the postoffice.

The traces of this pious and innocent investigation easily disappeared, for the holy and good mother possessed a complete arsenal of charming little steel tools, some of which, very pointed, served to cut imperceptibly the paper round the seal, and then the letter opened: read, and replaced in its envelope, she took another pretty little rounded tool, and this, being lightly warmed, was quickly applied about the circumference of the wax, which thereby softened, expanded a little, and covered the first incision. Then, through a sentiment of justice and benevolence highly praiseworthy, there was in the arsenal of the good mother a small and most ingenious fumigatory, to whose moist and dissolving vapour were submitted letters modestly closed with wafers, which thus moistened, yielded to the slightest effort, and without the smallest tear.

According to the importance of the indiscretions in which the writers of these letters were occasionally detected, the superior made notes, more or less ample. She was, at this moment, in her interesting investigation, when two knocks were gently given on her bolted door.

Mother Sainte Perpétue instantly lowered the large semicircular flap of her desk, and covered her arsenal; then rising, she opened the door with a grave and solemn air.

A lay-sister came in and announced that the Princess de Saint-Dizier was in the saloon, and that Mademoiselle Florine, accompanied by a young, deformed, and ill-clad girl, had arrived a short time after the princess, and was waiting at the door of the little corridor.

"Introduce the princess first," said Mother Sainte Perpétue.

And with delightful consideration she moved an arm-chair to the fire.

Madame de Saint-Dizier entered.

[See cut, on page 430.]

Although free from coquettish or juvenile pretensions, the princess was dressed with taste and elegance. She wore a black velvet hat of fashionable make, a large blue Cashmere shawl, a black satin gown, trimmed with sable, and a muff of the same fur.

"To what good fortune shall I ascribe the honour of your visit to-day, my dear daughter?" said the superior, graciously.

"A most important matter, my dear mother; and I am in great haste, for his eminence is waiting for me, and unfortunately I have but a few minutes to spare.
My business concerns the two orphan girls, about whom we had so long a conversation yesterday."

"They are still separated, as you desired; and the separation has distressed them so much, that this morning I have been obliged to send for Doctor Baille- nier at his Maison de Santé. He found them suffering from fever and great debility; and, strange to say, the same symptoms precisely developed themselves at the same time in both sisters. I have again questioned the two unhappy creatures, and I have been amazed, thunder-struck: they are idolaters!"

"The greater the necessity of intrusting them to you. But to the subject of my visit, my dear mother: we have learned the unexpected return of the soldier who brought these young girls into France, and whom we believed absent for several days. He is in Paris, and, spite of his age, is a bold and daring man, with uncommon energy. If he should discover that the young girls are here (which, fortunately, is all but impossible), in his anxiety to have them under his own impious influence, he would go to any extremity. Therefore, from this moment, my dear mother, redouble your vigilance; let no one be admitted during the night: this quarter is so lonely!"

"Make yourself easy, my dear daughter, we are sufficiently protected. Our porter and gardeners, well armed, take their rounds every night on the side of the Boulevard de l'Hôpital; the walls are high, and thickly studded with points
of iron in the parts most easy of access. Still I thank you, my dear daughter, for having thus warned me: we will redouble our precautions."

"Especially to-night, my dear mother!"

"And why to-night?"

"Because, if this infernal soldier has the unheard-of audacity to attempt anything, it will be this night."

"And how do you know that, my dear daughter?"

"Our information assures us of it," replied the princess, with a slight embarrassment, which did not escape the superior, who was, however, too self-possessed and cautious to appear to observe it. She had her suspicions, however, that there were certain things concealed from her.

"To-night, then," replied Mother Sainte Perpétue, "we will redouble our vigilance. But since I have the pleasure of seeing you, my dear daughter, I will avail myself of the occasion to say two words as to the marriage in question."

"Yes, pray do, my dear mother!" said the princess, eagerly, "for it is very important. The young Baron de Brisville is a man full of ardent devotion in this time of revolutionary impiety: he takes the sacrament openly, and may be of great service to us; he has influence in the house, and is not deficient in a kind of aggressive and provoking eloquence. I know of no one who gives to his belief a more forward air, or to his faith a more showy insolence. He is a shrewd calculator, for his cavalier and off-hand manner of talking of holy things piques and excites the curiosity of the indifferent. Fortunately, circumstances are such, that he may show a bold violence against our opponents without the least danger, and that redoubles his zeal as a professing martyr. In a word, he is with us; and, in return, this marriage is his due, and must take place. Besides, you know, dear mother, that he intends to bestow a hundred thousand francs on the Charity of Sainte Marie the day when he comes into possession of Mademoiselle Baudricourt's fortune."
“I never had the slightest doubt of M. de Brisville’s excellent intentions on
the subject of a charity which claims the sympathy of all pious persons,” re-
plied the superior, discreetly; “but I did not anticipate so many obstacles on the
part of the young lady.”
“What do you mean?”
“This young lady, whom I had hitherto believed timidity, submission, sub-
jection—let me use the full phrase—idiosyncrasy itself, instead of being, as I expected,
overjoyed at this proposition of marriage, asks time for reflection.”
“Incredible!”
“She opposes a passive resistance. In vain I tell her, with much severity, that,
being without parents or friends, and confided absolutely to my care, she ought
to see with my eyes, hear with my ears, and, when I assure her that this union
is suitable to her in every respect, she ought to comply without the slightest ob-
jection or reflection.”
“Of course. It is impossible to think in a manner more sensible.”
“She replies that she should like to see M. de Brisville, and know his charac-
ter before she enters into any engagement.”
“How ridiculous, since you are responsible for his morality, and think the
match eligible!”
“Well, this morning I observed to Mademoiselle Baudricourt that up to this
time I had not used toward her any means but mildness and persuasion; but that,
if she drove me to it, I should be compelled, in spite of myself, and for her sake,
to act with severity, in order to overcome her obstinacy; should separate her
from her companions, put her in a cell, and keep her in the most rigorous seclu-
sion until she resolved, after all, to be happy, and marry an honourable man.”
“Well, these threats, my dear mother?”
“I hope they will have a good effect. She had in her country a friend with
whom she corresponded: I suppressed the correspondence, as I thought it dan-
gerous; now she is under my sole influence, and I hope we shall gain our end.
But you see, my dear daughter, it is not without trouble and crosses that we at-
tain the good we desire.”
“I am sure of M. de Brisville, and will answer for it, if he marries Mademoi-
selle Baudricourt, that—”
“You know, my dear daughter,” said the superior, interrupting the princess,
“that if it concerned me individually, I should refuse; but to give to the charity
is to give to God, and I cannot prevent M. de Brisville from increasing the sum
of his good works. But something most distressing has occurred.”
“What is that, my dear mother?”
“The Sacred Heart overbids us in the purchase of an estate every way advan-
tageous and desirable for us. Some persons are never satisfied. However, I
have spoken my mind very sharply to the abbess.”
“She told me so,” replied Madame de Saint-Dizier, “but throws the blame
on the directors.”
“What! you visit her, then, do you, my dear daughter?” demanded the super-
ior, with undisguised astonishment.
“I met her at the bishop’s,” replied Madame de Saint-Dizier, with a slight
hesitation, which Mother Sainte Perpétue appeared not to notice, but resumed:
“I really cannot account for our establishment having so incurred the jealousy
of the Sacred Heart. There is no end to the ill-natured reports it has spread
respecting the ‘Charity of Sainte Marie’; but some persons are always chagrined
at the success of their neighbours.”
“Well, my dear mother,” said the princess, in a conciliating tone, “let us
hope that the donation of M. de Brisville may enable you to overbid the Sacred
Heart. This marriage would then be doubly advantageous, my dear mother;
for it would place a large fortune in the hands of one of our own party, who
would employ it properly. With an income of one hundred thousand fances per
annum, the power of our ally would be greatly increased; we should then pos-
THE MOTHER SAINTE PERPETUE.
sess an organ worthy of our cause, and be no longer under the necessity of leaving our defence to such men as this M. Dumoulin."

"There is, nevertheless, much tact and power in his writings; his style is that of Saint Bernard, reproving the impiety of the age."

"Ah, my dear mother, if you only knew what a strange Saint Bernard M. Dumoulin is! but I will not offend your ears: all I can say is, that such defenders would peril any cause, however holy. Adieu, my dear mother; pray be careful about doubling your watchfulness to night. The return of the old soldier is vexatious."

"Nay, my daughter, be under no alarm. Oh, I forgot! Mademoiselle Florine has been here to ask a favour of me; to request that you will take her into your service. You know the fidelity with which she obeyed your orders respecting her supervision of your unfortunate niece. Now it seems to me that by rewarding her in this way you would bind her to your interests, and I should be greatly indebted to you."

"My dear mother, since you are interested for the girl, the thing is settled at once, and I will take her into my service; and now I think of it, she may be of more utility to me than I at first thought."

"A thousand thanks, dear daughter, for your compliance with my wishes. I shall soon see you again, I trust. We shall have a long conference, at two o'clock the day after to-morrow, with his eminence and the bishop. Do not forget it."

"No, dear mother; rely on my punctuality; but use every precaution to-night, lest a great scandal arise."

After respectfully kissing the superior's hand, Madame de Saint-Dizier went out by a large door leading from the private apartment to a saloon which opened upon the principal staircase. A few seconds had elapsed, when a side-door opened, and Florine stood before the Abbess of Sainte Marie. The superior was sitting, and Florine approached with an air of timid humility.

"Did you meet the Princess de Saint-Dizier?" inquired Sainte Perpétue.

"No, mother, I was waiting in the gallery, whose windows look into the gardens."

"The princess takes you into her service from this day," said the superior. A movement of vexation and surprise escaped Florine as she said, "Me, holy mother? Nay, I—"

"I requested her to do so in your name, and you accept," replied the superior, in an imperious tone.

"But, holy mother, I begged of you not to—"

"I have said that you accept the situation," answered the superior, in a voice so firm and positive that Florine cast down her eyes, and said, in a low voice, "I accept."

"I order you to do so, in the name of M. Rodin."

"I thought so, holy mother," replied Florine, mournfully. "And what are the conditions attached to my entering the princess's service?"

"The same as those which accompanied your employment with her niece."

Florine shuddered, and said, "Then I shall be required to make frequent secret reports concerning the princess?"

"You will observe all, remember all, and inform of all."

"Yes, mother."

"You will take particular heed of the visits the princess may henceforward receive from the superior of the Sacred Heart; you must watch and try to hear: this is necessary to preserve the princess from dangerous influences."

"I will obey, mother."

"You will endeavour to find out the reason why two young orphan girls were brought hither by Madame Grivois, the princess's confidential attendant, with orders to treat them with the utmost severity."
"Yes, mother."

"Added to which, you will keep an accurate account of all that may appear to be worthy of remark. To-morrow I shall have some particular instructions to give you on another subject."

"I shall attend, mother, to what you have said."

"If you faithfully discharge the duties appointed you, and conduct yourself satisfactorily, you will quit the princess's service to become head-woman to a young, newly-married lady, which will be for you an excellent and permanent situation—always upon the same conditions. And it is understood that you enter the household of Madame de Saint-Dizier in consequence of having solicited me to procure that place for you."

"I will remember, mother."

"Who is the deformed young person by whom you are accompanied?"

"A poor, destitute creature, but very intelligent, and of an education above her lot. She is a needle-woman, but, work having failed, she is reduced to the utmost indigence. I made inquiries respecting her this morning when I went to fetch her, and every one spoke in the highest terms of her."

"Is she plain and deformed?"

"Her features are interesting, but she is deformed."

It appeared to fall in with the views of the superior that the person thus brought before her notice was gentle and of unprepossessing exterior. After reflecting a few minutes, she added,

"Intelligent, you say?"

"Very much so."

"And absolutely destitute?"

"Perfectly."

"Is she pious?"

"She does not communicate."

"That matters little," said the superior, mentally, "if she is intelligent; that will answer my purpose." Then, speaking aloud, she said, "Can you answer for her being an expert needle-woman?"

"I think I can, mother."

The superior rose, went to a bookcase, took out a register, and appeared for some time to be attentively examining its contents; then, replacing the book, she said,

"Let the young person come in, and do you await me in the workroom."

"Deformed, intelligent, and a skilful needle-woman," said the superior, thoughtfully; "she would excite no suspicions—we must see—"

Florine soon returned with La Mayeux, whom she introduced to the superior, and then withdrew.

The poor seamstress was agitated, trembling, and much troubled, for she could scarcely believe the discovery she had made while awaiting the return of Florine. It was not without a vague terror that La Mayeux found herself alone with the abbess of the convent of Sainte Marie.
CHAPTER III.

THE TEMPTATION.

The origin of La Mayeux's emotion was as follows:

Florine, when summoned to the presence of the superior, had left the young girl in a vestibule, furnished with benches, and forming a sort of antechamber on the first floor of the building.

Finding herself alone, La Mayeux had mechanically approached a window opening on the garden of the convent, bounded on this side by a half-demolished wall, and terminated at one end by a paling of wood: this wall, which served as a partition line between the convent garden and that of an adjacent house, abutted on a chapel in progress of erection.

The attention of La Mayeux was suddenly attracted by the appearance of a young female at one of the grated windows of the ground floor, who, gazing on the opposite building of the convent, made signs with her hand at once affectionate and encouraging.

From the window at which she stood, La Mayeux could not discern to whom these signals of intelligence were addressed; but she could see the extreme loveliness of the person who made them, the brilliancy of her complexion, the lustre of her full, dark eye, and the gentle, benevolent smile which played on her lips. Her pantomime was no doubt responded to, for, placing her left hand on her heart, with a gesture at once graceful and expressive, she intimated, by a motion of her right hand, that her heart would faint to the spot on which her eyes so earnestly gazed.

A ray of sunlight, piercing the clouds, cast a gleam of brightness on the hair of the young girl, who stood closely pressed against the iron bars of her window, and whose fair complexion seemed, as it were, illuminated by the dazzling reflection of the light from her glorious golden locks.

At the sight of this beauteous countenance, encircled by rich auburn curls, La Mayeux started; involuntarily she thought of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, and she felt assured (with justice, too) that the protectress of Agricola was before her.

At finding this young and lovely being the occupant of a madhouse, recollecting as she did the kindness and delicacy with which she had received Agricola, a pang shot through the heart of La Mayeux, who, while believing the report of her madness, could not help fancying she had never seen features apparently more illumined with graceful intelligence than were those of Mademoiselle Cardoville at that moment.

All at once Mademoiselle de Cardoville made an expressive gesture, placed her finger on her lips, blew two kisses in the direction which her eyes had taken, and quickly disappeared.
Remembering the important revelations which Agricola had to make to Mademoiselle de Cardoville, La Mayeux regretted so much the more severely the impossibility of gaining access to her, as she felt convinced that, if she was really out of her senses, at least she was now in a lucid interval.

The young seamstress remained plunged in these uneasy reflections, when she was aroused by the return of Florine, accompanied by one of the sisters of the convent.

La Mayeux was, therefore, constrained to preserve silence as to the discovery she had just made, and quickly found herself in the presence of the superior, who, after casting a rapid and scrutinizing glance over the physiognomy of the young needle-woman, was so entirely satisfied with the gentle goodness and timid amiability of its expression, that she hesitated not to give entire credence to all Florine had advanced in her favour.

"My dear daughter," said Mother Perpétue, in an affectionate tone, "I have heard from Florine the painful circumstances in which you are placed. Is it true that you are destitute of employment?"

"Yes, madame, I am sorry to say it is true."

"Call me mother, my dear child; that name sounds more pleasantly, and it is, besides, the rule of this house. I need scarcely ask what are your principles?"

"I have always maintained myself honestly by my labour, mother," replied La Mayeux, with a simplicity at once dignified and modest.

"I doubt it not, my child; indeed, I have many reasons for believing you. You should bless the Lord, who has placed you out of reach of many temptations. Tell me, are you skilful at your business?"

"I have always done my best, and have given satisfaction. But if you would set me to work, you could judge of my abilities."

"Your word is sufficient, my dear daughter. You prefer, I think, going out to work by the day?"

"Mademoiselle Florine told me, mother, that I must not hope to take work home with me."

"Not at present, my child; hereafter, perhaps, should an opportunity occur, I will think of it. I can offer you this for the present. I have been asked by a most respectable old lady to recommend to her a daily workwoman; introduced by me, you will be engaged; the charity will take upon itself to provide you with suitable attire, and you will repay the sum advanced by little and little from what you earn, for you will receive your pay through our hands; your remuneration will be two francs a day; does that seem to be enough?"

"Enough! mother, it exceeds my utmost hopes!"
"You will only be occupied from nine in the morning till six in the evening, so that you will have some hours at your own disposal. You see the place is very easy, is it not?"

"Oh, very easy, mother!"

"I must, in the first place, tell you where it is the charity proposes to place you; it is in the family of a widow named Madame de Brémon, a person of extreme piety, and in whose house I hope you will have only the best examples; if it should turn out otherwise, you would let me know."

"I do not quite understand, my mother," said La Mayeux, with surprise.

"Listen to me, my dear daughter," said Mother Sainte Perpétue, with an increasingly affectionate manner: "Sainte Marie's Charity has a holy and a double aim in view; you can understand, can you not, that if it is our duty to afford the heads of families every requisite guarantee for the morality of those persons who are placed through our recommendation in their household, it is equally an obligation upon us to satisfy those whom we introduce into an establishment as to the propriety of those to whom we send them?"

"Nothing can be more fair and prudent, mother."

"Certainly, daughter; for, as an ill-conducted servant might cause serious annoyance in a respectable family, so masters or mistresses of improper habits might exercise a dangerous influence over their domestics, or those who go to work in their houses. Now it is to offer a mutual guarantee to virtuous servants and employers that our charity has been instituted."

"Ah, madame," said La Mayeux, innocently, "those who devised such a scheme deserve the blessings of all."

"And blessings are not withheld, my dear daughter, for the charity fulfils its design. Now, for example: a young and interesting person—like yourself—is placed with persons whom we believe to be irreproachable; but should she perceive, either in her employers, or in those who habitually frequent the house, any irregularity of manners, any irreligious tendency which offends her modesty or principles, she would come to us and give us a confidential account of what had alarmed her. Nothing can be more just than that, can it?"

"No, mother," timidly answered La Mayeux, who began to think these arrangements somewhat singular.

"Then," continued the superior, "should the case appear serious, we would advise our protégées to observe more closely still, in order to be convinced that their alarms were well founded. More information is brought to us; and should our apprehensions be confirmed, then, faithful to our pious charge, we immediately withdraw our protégées from the place. But as most persons in humble life, spite of their virtue and candour, are not gifted with sufficient discrimination to know what is hurtful to their souls, we prefer, for their own good, that every eighth day they should relate to us (as a child would to its parent), either verbally or in writing, everything that has passed during the week in the houses in which they are placed, so that we can decide for them—whether to allow them to continue, or to withdraw them. We have at this time nearly a hundred individuals companions to ladies, shopwomen, servants, and daily workwomen, placed according to these conditions in a great number of families, and, for the interest of all, we have daily reason to rejoice in the good effects of the plan. You comprehend, my dear daughter, do you not?"

"Quite—quite, mother," answered La Mayeux, more and more embarrassed. She possessed too much uprightness and sagacity not to perceive that this system of mutually assuring the morality of masters and servants resembled a species of familiar espionage—an espial of the domestic hearth, organized upon a vast scale, and executed, by the objects of the charity's patronage, almost unknown to themselves; for it was scarcely possible to disguise more speciously the practice of delation assigned to them, without their perceiving its nature.

"If I have entered into these long details, my dear daughter," said the superior, taking the silence of La Mayeux for consent, "it is to show you that you
would not be obliged to remain against your inclination in a house where, I re-
peat, contrary to your expectations, you would not at all times be surrounded
with good and pious examples. Now the family of Madame de Brémont, where
I propose to establish you, is indeed a godly one. Only I have been told (though
I am far from giving credit to it) that the daughter of Madame Brémont, Madame
de Noisy, who has recently come to live with her, is not altogether exemplary in
her conduct—that she does not perform her religious duties with regularity,
and that, during the absence of her husband, who is now in America, she receives
the unfortunately too assiduous visits of a rich manufacturer, M. Hardy."

At the name of Agricola's employer, La Mayeux could not restrain a move-
ment of surprise, and blushed slightly.

The superior, however, construing the start and the blush as a proof of the
sensitive modesty of the young seamstress, proceeded to say,

"I thought it right, my daughter, to tell you all this, in order that you might
be on your guard; and, for the same reason, I have mentioned the rumours afloat
concerning Madame de Noisy, though I entirely disbelieve them, because the
daughter of Madame de Brémont has had too good examples constantly before
her, to be capable of forgetting them; besides, being in the house from morning
till evening, no one could have a better opportunity than yourself of judging if
these reports are true or false. If, unhappily, you should suppose the former to
be the case, why, then, my child, you would come and lay before me all your
reasons for coming to that conclusion; and if I concurred in your opinion, I
should instantly withdraw you from that house, because the sanctity of the
mother would not sufficiently compensate for the deplorable example the con-
duct of the daughter would afford; for, as soon as you become a member of our
charity, I hold myself responsible for your safety, and in the event of your ten-
derness of conscience obliging you to quit Madame de Brémont, should you re-
main any length of time unemployed, the charity, if satisfied with your zeal and
conduct, will allow you a franc a day until another situation can be procured for
you. Thus, you perceive, my dear daughter, you have everything to gain with
us. It is therefore settled that you go to Madame de Brémont the day after to-
morrow."

La Mayeux found herself in a difficult position. Sometimes she believed her
first suspicions correct; and, spite of her natural timidity, her pride revolted at
the idea that, because she was destitute, she was supposed capable of selling her-
self as a spy for a liberal salary. Then her mind refused to admit the belief that
a woman of the age and calling of the superior would descend to address to her a
proposition alike disgraceful to the proposer and the accepter. At last, while
blaming herself for the injurious suspicions she had entertained, it occurred to
her that, before employing her, the superior was desirous of testing her integrity,
to see if it would resist an offer so dazzling.

With that natural desire to think well of everyone, which formed part of La
Mayeux's character, she adopted this last idea, in which she was strengthened
by reflecting that, even if wrong, it would be the least offensive way of refusing
the unworthy offers of the superior.

With a movement wholly devoid of pride, but which spoke the sense she en-
tertained of what was due to herself, the young workwoman, raising her head,
which she had hitherto kept modestly bent downward, looked the superior full
in the face, that the sincerity of her words might be seen in her countenance, and
said, in a slightly tremulous voice, forgetting this time the prescribed "mother,"

"Madame, it is not for me to blame you for having subjected me to such a
proof as this. You see in me a poor, distressed creature, who as yet has had no
means of proving myself deserving of your confidence; but, poor as I am, be as-
sured that no temptation should ever induce me to disgrace myself by the per-
formance of such an action as that you were, no doubt, obliged to propose to me,
that my refusal might convince you I am worthy of your assistance. No, madame,
not all the wealth in the world should ever induce me to become a spy."
La Mayeux pronounced these last words with so much animation, that a slight degree of colour suffused her countenance.

The superior had too much tact and experience not to feel the sincerity of La Mayeux; and, glad to see the light in which the young girl placed her motives, she smiled blandly on her, and, extending her arms, said,

"Excellent, my child—most excellent! Let me embrace you!"

"My mother, so much goodness on your part quite confuses me! I—"

"Nay, my daughter, your words are upright; but dismiss from your mind the idea that I have been putting your principles to any test, because nothing can be less like treachery than those marks of filial confidence which we require of our protégées, solely with a view to preserve their morality uninjured. Yet some there are, and I perceive that you, my dear daughter, are of the number, whose principles are so thoroughly established, and their intelligence so great, that they can dispense with our superintendence and counsels, and judge for themselves what is inimical to their welfare; thus, then, I leave the whole responsibility to you, requiring no further confidence from you than such as you shall consider it your duty voluntarily to give me."

"Ah, madame, how kind— how good you are!" exclaimed poor La Mayeux, ignorant of the thousand turnings and windings, the countless resources, of the monkish school, and believing herself sure of gaining an honourable subsistence.

"Nay, talk not of kindness, my daughter, it is but justice," said Mother Sainte Perpétue, while her manner became more and more affectionate. "Too much tenderness and confidence can scarcely be manifested toward heavenly-minded children such as you, who have been purified by trials, and because they have faithfully and steadfastly observed the commands of the Lord."

"My mother!"

"One last question, my dear daughter: how often in the month do you approach the sacred table?"

"Madame," replied La Mayeux, "I have never done so since my first communion, at the age of eight years. Scarcely, by working every day, and all day long, could I earn sufficient to procure the humblest food and raiment; I have not found time for——"

"Mother of God!" exclaimed the superior, interrupting La Mayeux, and clasping her hands with every appearance of painful astonishment, "can this be true? Do you not go to confession?"

"Alas, madame, I told you but now that I had no leisure for such duties!" replied La Mayeux, looking at Mother Sainte Perpétue with an alarmed gaze.

A short silence prevailed, when the superior said, in a voice of grief.

"You distress me greatly, my daughter. As I told you before, for the same reasons that we avoid placing our protégées in any but pious establishments, we recommend only persons of pious habits, and regular communicants, to our friends; this is one of the indispensable conditions of the charity. Thus, to my great regret, it will be out of my power to give you the employment I proposed; still, should you hereafter amend this inexcusable indifference to your religious duties, then, perhaps, I may be able to do something."

"Madame," said La Mayeux, her heart swelling at being thus obliged to renounce the flattering hope, "I beg you to pardon me for having detained you so long—for nothing."

"Be assured, my dear daughter, I greatly regret being unable to take you into the charity; still I do not altogether resign the hope, especially because I would fain see one, already so worthy of interest, merit the assistance and regard of pious persons. Adieu, my dear daughter, go in peace; and may God be merciful to you, and bring you wholly back to him!"

So saying, the superior rose, and conducted La Mayeux to the door, still wearing the kindest and most maternal air; then, just as La Mayeux was passing the threshold, she said,

"Proceed along the corridor, descend a few steps; knock at the second door K k k
on the right—it is the workroom: you will find Florine there, and she will take you back to your home. Adieu, my daughter."

As soon as La Mayeux left the superior, her tears, which she had restrained till then, flowed rapidly; and not liking to appear in this condition before Florine and any of the nuns who might be assembled in the workroom, she stopped for a moment near one of the windows of the corridor to dry her eyes. Mechanically she looked toward the window of the opposite house, at which she had seen the female whom she conjectured to be Adrienne de Cardoville, when she perceived the same individual issue from a side door, and proceed rapidly toward the paling which divided the two gardens.

At the same instant, to the unutterable amazement of La Mayeux, she saw one of the two sisters whose disappearance had so distressed Dagobert, Rose Simon, pale, exhausted, and scarcely able to support herself, approach with timid caution the lattice-work which separated her from Mademoiselle de Cardoville, as though fearful of being perceived.
CHAPTER IV.

LA MAYEUX AND MADEMOISELLE DE CARDOVILLE.

La Mayeux, agitated, watchful, and uneasy, leaned against the window, and followed with her eyes the movements of Mademoiselle de Cardoville and Rose Simon, whom she so little expected to see together in this place.

The orphan, approaching close to the palings which separated the garden of the community from that of the house of Doctor Baleinier, said a few words to Adrienne, whose countenance expressed at once astonishment, indignation, and pity.

At this moment a nun approached, looking about her as if she were anxiously seeking for some one; then, perceiving Rose, who, timid and alarmed, was standing close against the palings, she took her by the arm, seemed to chide her, and, in spite of some words which mademoiselle appeared to address to her with much emphasis, the sister led the orphan quickly away, who, weeping, turned two or three times toward Adrienne; the latter, after having evinced her interest and sympathy by expressive gestures, turned suddenly away as if to conceal her tears.

The corridor whence La Mayeux beheld this affecting scene was on the first floor; and the thought struck her that she would descend to the ground floor and try to enter the garden in order to speak with this lovely girl with the golden hair, and make sure that she was Mademoiselle de Cardoville, and then, if she had a lucid interval, to tell her that Agricola had matters of the deepest importance to relate to her, but had no means of conveying them to her.

The day was advancing, and the sun was nearly setting: La Mayeux, fearing that Florine would be tired of waiting for her, hastened to act. Walking with a light step, and listening with intense anxiety, she reached the extremity of the corridor, where a small flight of steps led to the landing-place of the workroom, whence, by a spiral course, it led to the lower floor.

The workgirl, hearing voices, descended quickly, and found herself in a long corridor of the ground floor, in the middle of which was a glazed door which opened upon a part of the garden reserved for the superior.

An alley, bordered by a high hedge of box, concealed La Mayeux from all eyes as she glided along it and reached the palings, which, at this spot, separated the convent garden from that of Dr. Baleinier's house.

A few steps from her the workgirl saw Mademoiselle de Cardoville seated on a rustic bench.

The firmness of Adrienne's character had been for a moment shaken by fatigue, surprise, despair, and terror on that fearful night when she had been inveigled into the madhouse of Dr. Baleinier, who, profiting with fiendish cunning by the state of weakness and prostration to which the young lady was reduced, had induced her for a moment to entertain doubts of her own reason.

But the calm which succeeds painful emotions, reflection, and the reasoning of a just and penetrating mind, soon dissipated the fears which Dr. Baleinier had for the moment excited. She did not even give the learned doctor credit for a mistake, but read plainly the man's conduct—conduct in which a detestable hypocrisy and a singular boldness were aided by a no less remarkable skill and cunning, and, though too late, she detected in M. Baleinier an instrument of Madame de Saint-Dizier.
Thenceforward she maintained silence, a composure replete with dignity. Not a complaint, not a reproach, escaped her lips; she bided her time. Meanwhile, though she was allowed a large extent of liberty in her walks and conduct (always excepting permission to communicate with any person beyond the walls), the position of Adrienne was irksome and most painful, especially to her so fond of all that was cheering and harmonious. Still she felt that this could not last long. She was unacquainted with the operation of the laws, but her good sense told her that a confinement of some days, skilfully attributed to pretences of derangement, more or less plausible, might be attempted, and even effected with impunity, but with the condition of not being protracted beyond certain limits; because, after all, a young lady of her rank could not suddenly disappear from the world without, after a certain time, being inquired after, and then an asserted attack of lunacy would give rise to serious investigations. True or false, this conviction had sufficed to restore to Adrienne's mind its usual tone and energy.

Yet from time to time she vainly tried to fathom the motive of her sequestration. She knew Madame de Saint-Dizier too well to believe that she was acting without some definite purpose, and merely for the sake of giving her a momentary annoyance; and in this Mademoiselle de Cardoville was not wrong. Father d'Aigrigny and the princess were persuaded that Adrienne, better informed than she chose to let them know, knew how important it was for her to appear on the 13th of February in the Rue Saint François, and that she was resolved on maintaining her rights. By immuring Adrienne as a lunatic, they threw a serious obstacle in the way of her future prospects. But we may say here, that this precaution was useless, for Adrienne, although on the road to the family secret, which they desired to conceal from her, and of which they believed her fully cognizant, had not, in fact, entirely developed it for want of certain documents that had been lost or concealed.

Whatever was the motive for the abominable conduct of her enemies, she was nevertheless outraged by it.

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surprise as emotion that she approached very softly to the paling which separated her from Adrienne, reflecting that, perchance, this unfortunate lady was really out of her senses, but had a lucid interval.

Then with a timid voice, but loud enough to be heard, La Mayeux, to assure herself of Adrienne's identity, said, with a beating heart, "Mademoiselle de Cardoville!"

"Who calls me?" said Adrienne; then lifting her head quickly, and perceiving La Mayeux, she could not restrain a slight cry of surprise and almost alarm. In truth, this poor, pale, deformed, wretchedly clad creature, appearing before her so suddenly, was fitted to inspire Mademoiselle de Cardoville, so attached to grace and beauty, with a sort of repugnance and affright. And those two feelings were displayed in her expressive countenance.

La Mayeux did not perceive the impression she had caused, as motionless, her eyes fixed, her hands clasped, with a sort of admiration, or, rather, adoration, she gazed on the dazzling beauty of Adrienne, whom she had only seen through the grating of her window; and what Agricola had told her of the charms of his protectress appeared to her a thousand times less than the reality. La Mayeux never, even in her secret poetic aspirations, had dreamed of such rare perfection.

By a singular coincidence, the presence of the beau-idéal threw into a sort of divine ecstasy these two young girls so wholly dissimilar— these extreme types of ugliness and beauty, wealth and misery.

After this involuntary homage rendered to Adrienne, La Mayeux advanced a step closer to the paling.

"What is it you seek?" exclaimed Mademoiselle de Cardoville, rising with a feeling of repulsion which did not escape La Mayeux, who, lowering her eyes timidly, said, in a gentle voice.

"I crave pardon, mademoiselle, for thus presenting myself before you; but the moments are precious—I come from Agricola."

Saying these words, the young workgirl raised her eyes uneasily, fearing that Mademoiselle de Cardoville had forgotten the name of the smith; but to her great surprise, and still greater joy, Adrienne's alarm seemed to decrease at the mention of Agricola's name.

She approached and looked at La Mayeux with benevolent curiosity.

"You come from M. Agricola Baudoin?" she inquired; "and who are you?"

"His adopted sister, mademoiselle; a poor workgirl who lives in the same house with him."

Adrienne seemed to call up her recollection, and, as if suddenly reassured, said, smiling kindly, after a moment's pause,

"It was you who persuaded M. Agricola to apply to me for his caution, was it not?"

"What, mademoiselle! do you recollect that?"

"I never forget anything that is generous and noble. M. Agricola told me of your zeal for him, and I remember it perfectly. But how is it that you are here in this convent?"

"I was told that, perhaps, I might obtain employment here, for I am out of work; unfortunately, I have been refused by the superior."

"And how did you recognise me?"

"By your great beauty, mademoiselle, of which Agricola told me."

"Did you not rather recognise me by this?" said Adrienne, smiling, and passing through her taper fingers one of her long and silken tresses of golden hair.

"You must forgive Agricola, mademoiselle," said La Mayeux, with one of those half smiles which so seldom appeared on her lips; "he is a poet, and when with respectful admiration he drew the portrait of his protectress, he did not omit one of her rare perfections."

"And who gave you the idea of coming and speaking to me?"

"The hope of being able to serve you, mademoiselle. You received Agricola with so much kindness that I have dared to share his gratitude toward you."
"Dared! dared! my dear child," said Adrienne, with consummate graciousness, "my recompense will be doubled, although as yet I have been useful to your worthy adopted brother in intention alone."

During the interchange of these words Adrienne and La Mayeux had, in turn, looked at each other with increasing surprise.

At first La Mayeux could not comprehend how a woman who was declared a lunatic could express herself as Adrienne did, and then she was astonished at herself for the freedom, or, rather, the want of embarrassment, with which she was able to reply to Mademoiselle de Cardoville, not knowing that that lady possessed the precious privilege of elevated and benevolent natures, that of putting at ease all who approached them with sympathy.

On her side, Mademoiselle de Cardoville was both moved and astonished to hear this young girl of the lower order, clothed like a beggar, express herself in such appropriate language.

The longer she looked at La Mayeux, the more the unpleasant sensation which she had experienced changed into a sentiment of the opposite nature. With that tact of quick and penetrating observation so natural to women, she remarked, beneath the wretched black crape cap which La Mayeux wore, a head of hair soft, lustrous, and of deep chestnut. She also observed that her white, long, and thin hands, though appearing from beneath the sleeves of a tattered gown, were perfectly clean—a proof that care and self-respect struggled against dire distress. Adrienne detected in the wan hue of her saddened countenance, in the expression of her blue eyes, intelligent, gentle, and timid, a charm at once touching and mournful, and a modest dignity, that banished remembrance of her deformity.

Adrienne was passionately fond of physical beauty, but she had a mind too elevated, a soul too noble, a heart too sensitive, not to appreciate the moral beauty which often beams forth in an humble and suffering countenance; but until now this appreciation was quite new to Mademoiselle Adrienne, whose high fortune and aristocratic habits had kept her from contact with persons of La Mayeux's class.

After a moment's silence, during which the lovely patrician and the lowly needle-woman were examining each other with increasing surprise, Adrienne said to La Mayeux,

"The cause of our mutual astonishment is, I think, easily explained. You find, no doubt, that I speak rationally enough for a mad woman, if you have been told I am one; and I," added Mademoiselle de Cardoville, with a tone of commiseration which might be termed respectful, "I find that the delicacy of your language and manner contrasts so strangely with the position in which you seem to be, that my surprise must be even greater than your own."

"Ah, mademoiselle!" exclaimed La Mayeux, with an expression of so much happiness that tears of joy stood in her eyes, "can it be true? I had been told the falsehood, yet in seeing you just now so lovely, so kind, and hearing your sweet voice, I could not believe that such a misfortune had befallen you. But, alas! how is it, then, mademoiselle, that you are here?"

"Poor child!" said Adrienne, deeply moved at the sympathy which the worthy creature testified for her; "and how is it that with so much heart, with a mind so elevated, you, too, are so unhappy! But take comfort, I shall not be here forever; you and I will both soon assume the position to which we are entitled. Believe me, I will never forget that, notwithstanding the distress in which you must be at finding yourself deprived of work, which is your only resource, you have thought of coming to try and serve me; and, indeed, you may serve me essentially, and that gives me an additional pleasure, because I shall owe you so much, and you shall see what advantages I will take of my gratitude!" said Adrienne, with a lovely smile. "But," she added, "before you think of me, let us think a little of others. Is not your adopted brother in prison?"

"Not at this moment, mademoiselle, I think; for, thanks to the generosity of a comrade, his father went yesterday to deposit the caution, and they promised..."
that he should be at liberty to-day; but he wrote to me from his prison that he had most important disclosures to reveal to you."

"To me!"

"Yes, mademoiselle. Agricola will, I hope, be free to-day. How can he convey this information to you?"

"He has important disclosures for me!" repeated Mademoiselle de Cardoville, with a thoughtful air. "I cannot imagine what they can be; but, while I am shut up in this house, and precluded from any communication out of it, M. Agricola must not address me here, directly or indirectly; he must wait until I get out. And that is not all; he must also remove from this convent two poor children, much more to be pitied than I am, the daughters of Marshal Simon, who are confined here against their will."

"Do you, then, know their names, mademoiselle?"

"M. Agricola told me, when he informed me of their being in Paris, of their surprising resemblance to each other, so that, when, during my walk the day before yesterday, I remarked two young creatures, weeping bitterly, presenting themselves from time to time against the bars of their separate cells, one on the ground floor, the other on the story above, a secret presentiment whispered to me that I beheld the orphans of whom M. Agricola had spoken, and in whose fate (as my own relations) I take so lively an interest."

"Is it possible, mademoiselle, they are related to you?"

"Indeed they are; unable to do more, I endeavoured by signs to express how deeply I felt for them: their tears, and the distress depicted on their countenances, convinced me that they were imprisoned in the convent as I am in the house adjoining."

"Ah, mademoiselle, I understand—perhaps a victim to the animosity of your family!"

"Whatever may be the evils of my lot, I am less to be pitied than these two children, whose despair is heart-rending; their separation from each other is evidently their greatest affliction, and, from a few words I exchanged with one of them just now, I perceive that they, like myself, are the victims of a vile conspiracy; but, thanks to you, we may save them. Since I have been placed here, as I told you, I have found it impossible to hold any communication with persons beyond its walls. I am allowed neither pens nor paper. But now listen to me attentively, and we may be able to overthrow this odious persecution."

"Oh, speak, mademoiselle!"

"Is the father of M. Agricola, the old soldier who brought these orphans to France, nigh at hand?"

"Yes, mademoiselle. Ah, if you only knew what a state of rage and despair he was in when, upon his return, he missed the children an expiring mother had bequeathed to his care!"

"You must enjoin him, above all things, to proceed quietly; the least violence, and all would be ruined. Here," said Adrienne, drawing a ring from her finger, "give him this—he must go instantly; but are you sure that you can recollect a name and address?"

"Oh, yes, mademoiselle; Agricola only told me your name, but I never forgot it—the heart never forgets."

"So I perceive, my good girl; then remember the name of Count de Montbron."

"Count de Montbron; I shall not forget it."

"He is one of my best and oldest friends, and lives in the Place Vendôme, No. 7."

"No. 7, Place Vendôme; I shall recollect the address."

"Let M. Agricola's father go to him this evening, and if the count be not at home, wait his return; then let him ask to see M. de Montbron in my name, sending him this ring as a token; once in the presence of the count, bid him relate all he knows—the abduction of the orphans, the name of the convent where
they are confined; also, the fact that I am shut up, under a charge of madness, in the asylum of Doctor Baleinier. M. de Montbron will not refuse credence, for truth has a powerful voice; he is a man of great talent and experience, and possesses powerful influence; he will lose not an instant in taking the necessary steps, so that, I doubt not, by to-morrow or the following day, both myself and the poor girls will be liberated, thanks to you; but the moments are precious; we may be surprised: hasten then, my dear child."

Then, as she was about to withdraw, Adrienne said, with a smile so winning, and an accent so filled with affectionate sincerity, that it thrilled to the heart of the seamstress,

"M. Agricola told me that the goodness of my heart equalled yours. Now I can appreciate the value of the comparison, and the flattering compliment it implied. I pray you give me your hand quickly," continued Mademoiselle de Cardoville, while tears suffused her eyes. Then passing her beautiful hand through the paling, she extended it to La Mayeux.

The words and action of the lovely patrician were impressed with so sincere and genuine a warmth, that the seamstress hesitated not to place her thin fingers in the rosy palm of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, who, with a movement of pious respect, lifted the meager hand to her lips, saying,

"Since I cannot embrace you as a sister, you who have saved me, let me at least kiss this hand emblazoned by honest labour."

At this instant steps were heard in the garden of Doctor Baleinier; Adrienne started suddenly, and, gliding behind the thick shrubs, said, as she disappeared,

"Courage, Memory, and Hope!"

All this had passed so rapidly that the young workwoman had not time to move while tears of joy flowed abundantly down her pale cheeks.

That a creature like Adrienne de Cardoville had called her by the endearing name of sister, had kissed her hand, and declared herself flattered by a comparison with one dwelling in the very abyss of misery and wretchedness, bespoke a feeling of equality almost as divine as the words of Holy Writ.

There are words and impressions capable of atoning to pure minds for years of suffering, and seeming by a glance, rapid as the lightning's flash, to reveal its own greatness to the soul. So was it with La Mayeux, who, thanks to the generous expression addressed to her, had for a moment a consciousness of her own worth; and, although this consciousness was as fleeting as delightful, she raised her eyes and hands to heaven with an expression of unutterable gratitude; for, if the young seamstress did not communicate, no one was more deeply imbued with that feeling of deep and reverential religion, which is to the mere dogma as the immensity of the blue vault of heaven to the ceiling of a church.

Five minutes after her interview with Mademoiselle de Cardoville, La Mayeux had quitted the garden unperceived, remounted the stairs to the workroom, and gently knocked at the door, which was opened by one of the sisters.

"Is not Mademoiselle Florine here, with whom I came, good sister," she asked,

"No; she could not wait any longer. You come, doubtless, from our mother the superior, do you not?"

"Yes—yes, good sister," replied the seamstress, casting down her eyes.

"Will you have the kindness to tell me by which way I can go out?"

"Come with me."

La Mayeux followed the sister in trembling apprehension of meeting the superior, who might with reason be surprised at her being still within the convent, and inquire the reason of it. At length the outer door of the convent closed upon her. Rapidly crossing the large court, she was hurrying to the porter's lodge, with the intention of asking him to open the gate, when she heard a rough voice say,
"It seems we are to keep double watch to-night—eh, Jerome? For my part, I mean to double load my gun. Madame the superior has given orders to go twice round the premises instead of once."

"As for me, Nicolas," replied a second voice, "I have no need of a gun. I have sharpened my scythe—it would cut through a stone wall—and turned the sharp edge outward; that is a gardener's weapon, and not a bad one either."

Feeling an involuntary terror at words she had not sought to hear, La Mayeux approached the porter's lodge and asked to be let out.

"Where do you come from?" said the porter, putting his head out of the lodge, and busily employed in loading a double-barrelled gun, while he surveyed the seamstress with a suspicious glance.

"I have been speaking with the superior," replied La Mayeux, timidly.

"Are you sure of that?" said Nicolas, roughly; "because you look to me very like a queer customer; however, that'll do, now be off with you, and be quick about it."

The gate was opened, and La Mayeux passed into the street; but scarcely had she emerged before she saw Killjoy running to her, while behind was Dagobert, also hurrying to meet her.

La Mayeux was hastening to him, when a full, clear voice exclaimed from a distance, "Ah, my good La Mayeux!"

The young needle-woman turned hastily round and beheld Agricola running in the opposite direction to that in which his father was advancing.

CHAPTER V.

THE RENCONTRES.

The appearance of Dagobert and Agricola, La Mayeux remained standing a few steps from the gate of the convent in utter amazement.

The soldier had not yet perceived her; he was hurrying after Killjoy, who, although thin, gaunt, rough, and muddy, seemed to bound with delight as, turning his intelligent head from time to time to see whether his master was in sight, he returned to meet him, after having caressed La Mayeux.

"Yes, yes, my old fellow!" cried the soldier, with emotion, "I understand you; you have been more faithful to your trust than I, you have not abandoned the poor things for an instant; you have followed them, kept watch here night and day, without food, and, wearied at last with expecting them, have come to
fetch me! Yes, while I was furious with rage and despair, you did what I ought to have done—you discovered their hiding-place! and that proves what every one knows, that beasts are worth more than men. Ah! my old Killjoy! we shall soon see the dear children again! And when I remember that to-morrow will be the 13th, and that without you all would be lost, I tremble from head to foot. Now, then, my boy, are we almost there? What a lonely spot! and night coming on, too!"

Dagobert had continued to hold this discourse with Killjoy, while attentively observing every motion of the animal, which trotted on at a rapid pace; when, seeing the faithful beast bound away from him, he raised his head, and perceived Killjoy loading with caresses both La Mayeux and Agricola, who had just met at a short distance from the gate of the convent.

"La Mayeux!" exclaimed both father and son at the sight of the young girl, and gazing at her with surprise.

"Good news, M. Dagobert," she said, with a glow of indescribable happiness; "Rose and Blanche are found!" Then turning to the smith, she added, "Ah! and good news for you, too, Agricola; Mademoiselle de Cardoville is not mad. I have just seen her!"

"Not mad!" cried the smith; "thank Heaven!"

"But the children," interrupted Dagobert, pressing in his trembling hands the thin fingers of La Mayeux, "have you seen them?"

"Yes! a little while ago; very sad and disconsolate; but I was not able to speak to them."

"Ah!" murmured Dagobert, as though choking, and pressing both hands on his breast; "I did not think my old heart could beat so hard. And yet, thanks to my dog. I felt almost sure they were not far off; but, for all that, the joy—the delight—it overcomes me."

"Huzza, father! you see all goes well," said Agricola, looking gratefully at La Mayeux.

"Come to my arms! my dear, my excellent child!" cried the soldier, embracing La Mayeux with vehement fondness; then, as though unable to restrain his impatience, he added, "but come, let us go for the children."

"My good Mayeux!" exclaimed Agricola, much excited, "you restore peace and perhaps life, to my father. And Mademoiselle de Cardoville, how did you find her?"

"By the merest chance! And what brought you here?"

"Look!" said Dagobert, who had precipitately advanced a few steps, "Killjoy stops and barks!"

And, in fact, the dog, as impatient as his master to see the orphans again, but better informed as to the place of their retreat, had stationed himself at the gate of the convent, barking loudly to attract the notice of Dagobert, who, perfectly comprehending the dog's meaning, made a significant sign to La Mayeux, saying, "The children are there!"

"Yes, M. Dagobert!"

"I was sure of it! good dog! Oh, yes, animals are worth more than men; always excepting you, my good Mayeux, who are worth more than all the men and beasts in the world. Now, my darlings, I shall soon see you again—soon have you!"

So saying, spite of his age, Dagobert hastened toward Killjoy.

"Agricola!" cried La Mayeux, "prevent your father from knocking at this gate; all is lost if he does."

At two bounds the smith was beside his father, at the instant he had extended his hand to grasp the knocker.

"Father!" he exclaimed, seizing the old man's arm, "do not knock!"

"In the devil's name, what do you mean?"

"La Mayeux says that if you knock all is lost."

"But how?"
"She will explain."

At this moment the girl, less agile than Agricola, came up, and said, "M. Dagobert, we must not stand by this gate; some one might open it, and we should be seen; that would excite suspicion; let us rather go along by this wall."

"Suspicion!" said the veteran, much surprised, but without moving from the gate; "what suspicion?"

"I implore you not to remain there!" persisted La Mayeux, with so much earnestness that Agricola joined in the request, saying, "My dear father, be assured La Mayeux has good reasons for what she says; let us do as she wishes. The Boulevard de l'Hôpital is not two steps from here; no one is likely to be there, and we can converse without fear of interruption."

"May the devil take me, if I understand one word of all this!" cried Dagobert, still maintaining his post by the gate. "The girls are there—I will bring them out, and take them away; that is not an affair of ten minutes."

"Do not think so, M. Dagobert!" returned La Mayeux; "it is more difficult than you expect. But come away—pray do! There, do you hear? some one is speaking in the courtyard!" And, in truth, a loud voice was heard.

"Come, father, come!" exclaimed Agricola, almost dragging the old man away.

Meanwhile Killjoy, as though surprised at such hesitation, gave two or three barks, as if to protest against so cowardly a retreat, all the time keeping his post by the gate; but, upon a signal from Dagobert, he joined the main body.

It was now five o'clock in the afternoon; the wind blew violently, and thick, dark clouds, betokening rain, were drifting across the firmament. As we have said, the Boulevard de l'Hôpital, which bounded this side of the convent garden, was little frequented. Dagobert, Agricola, and La Mayeux were therefore at liberty to hold their council of war in undisturbed tranquillity.

The soldier, who could ill brook these temporizing measures, had scarcely turned the corner, when he impatiently addressed La Mayeux, saying,
THE WANDERING JEW.

"Now, then, my good girl, explain yourself; I seem treading on live coals."

"M. Dagobert, the place where the daughters of Marshal Simon are confined is a convent."

"A convent!" exclaimed the soldier; "I might have thought as much. Well, I can take them out of a convent as well as any other place, can't I? I shall only go once, you know—and once is nothing."

"But, M. Dagobert, they are confined there against their will, and against yours also; they will not be given up to you."

"Not given up to me! ah! we shall see about that!" and the soldier turned, as though going back to the convent.

"Father!" cried Agricola, detaining him, "one moment's patience. Hear what La Mayeux has to say."

"I will hear nothing; the children are there—two steps from me; I know it, and yet you think that, by fair means or foul, I will not have them. Pardieu! that is somewhat too much. Let me go, I say!"

"M. Dagobert, I beseech you to listen to me!" said La Mayeux, taking Dagobert by the hand; "there is another way of releasing these young ladies, and that, too, without violence; Mademoiselle Cardoville told me that violence would ruin everything."

"Well, if there is any other way, with all my heart; only make haste and tell us what it is."

"Here is a ring that Mademoiselle de Cardoville—"

"Who is Mademoiselle de Cardoville?"

"Father, she is that generous young lady who was to be my guarantee, and to whom I have such important things to reveal."

"That'll do!" interrupted Dagobert, impatiently; "we can talk about that by-and-by. But now, my dear Mayeux, what about this ring?"

"You are to take it, M. Dagobert, and go directly with it to the Count de Montbron, No. 7 Place Vendôme; it seems he is a man of great power, and the friend of Mademoiselle de Cardoville; by showing him this ring, the count will be satisfied you come from her. You will tell him that she is confined, under a false accusation of madness, in a private madhouse adjoining this convent, in which are imprisoned the daughters of Marshal Simon against their will."

"Well, and then? what then?"

"Why, then the Count de Montbron will lay the matter before influential people, who will take the necessary steps to restore Mademoiselle de Cardoville and the daughters of General Simon to liberty; and probably either to-morrow or the day after—"
"To-morrow, or the day after! and only perhaps!" cried Dagobert. "But I tell you that I must have them out this very day—this instant. The day after to-morrow, indeed! and then only a perhaps! Yes, that would be a nice time, truly! Much obliged to you, my dear Mayeux; but here, take back your ring. I prefer managing matters myself. Wait there for me, my boy."

"Father!" exclaimed Agricola, still restraining the old man, "what are you going to do? It is a convent. Consider."

"Pshaw! you are a mere recruit. I have the whole system of convent tactics at the end of my fingers. In Spain I have practised the thing a hundred times. This is what will happen. I knock at the door, a woman opens it, asks me what I want. I make no answer, she tries to stop me, but on I go. Once inside the convent, I call my children as loud as I can, and run all over the building."

"But the nuns, M. Dagobert," said La Mayeux, still striving to detain Dagobert.

"Oh, the nuns! of course, they will run after me, screaming like so many magpies routed out of their nests. I know all about it. At Seville I went through just that sort of thing, when I was fishing out a young Andalusian girl the beguines had got into their clutches. I shall let the good sisters scream, and continue to hunt in every hole and corner, calling Rose and Blanche. They will hear me and answer me; and then, if they are locked up, I take the first thing I can find, and break open the door."

"But the nuns, M. Dagobert—the nuns!"

"Their screaming will not hinder me from bursting open the door, taking my children up in my arms, and making off with them. If they refuse to let me out, why, I shall have to break a second door open; that's all. So now," continued Dagobert, disengaging his hands from those of La Mayeux, "just wait for me here, and in ten minutes you will see me back again. And you, my lad, go and fetch a coach."

More calm than Dagobert, and better informed as to the penal code, Agricola perceived with alarm the consequences which might arise from this strange mode of proceeding on the part of the veteran; throwing himself before him, he again remonstrated, saying,

"One more word, I beseech you!"

"Thunder and Mars! make sharp work of it, then."

"If you attempt to enter the convent by force, you will ruin everything!"

"How?"

"Because, M. Dagobert, for one reason, there are men in the convent. I saw the porter, when I came out just now, loading a gun, and the gardener was talking of having sharpened his scythe, and of the rounds they were to take during the night."

"What do you think I care for a porter's gun or a gardener's scythe?"

"Never mind whether you care for them or not, father; but listen to me. You mean to knock at the gate, you say. Well, and when the porter opens it he asks you what you want."

"And I make answer that I wish to speak to the superior, and away I go into the convent."

"But, M. Dagobert," said La Mayeux, "after you have crossed the outer court you come to a second door with a wicket, and, when any person rings, a nun always examines the stranger through the wicket, which is never opened until the business has been disclosed."

"Well, then, I should say I came to speak to the superior."

"Then, father, as you are a stranger, they would go and apprise the superior."

"And then?"

"Of course she would come."

"And then?"

"She would ask you what you wanted, M. Dagobert."

“Just one minute’s patience, father. You cannot doubt, after all the precautions taken, that it is the intention to keep Mademoiselles Simon, in spite of anything either they or you can do.”

“I don’t doubt it. I am sure of it; and it was for that purpose they made such a tool of your poor mother!”

“Then, of course, father, the superior will say she does not know what you mean, and that there are no such persons in the convent.”

“And I shall insist that they are, and bring forward La Mayeux and my dog.”

“The superior will then cut short the conversation by ordering the wicket to be shut in your face.”

“Oh! will she! Then I shall kick the door in. You see it comes to that, after all. But now let me go. Agricola! I say, let me go!”

“And the porter, hearing all this noise and violence, would go for the guard, which would not be long coming, and you would be taken to prison!”

“And what would become of your poor children then, M. Dagobert?” said La Mayeux.

The father of Agricola had too much good sense not to see the force of the reasons adduced by his son and La Mayeux, but he equally well knew that, at all risks, the orphans must be set free before the next day. This alternative was so fearful, so overwhelming, that, pressing both hands on his burning temples, Dagobert sank upon one of the stone benches as though paralyzed by the inexorable fatality of his situation.

Agricola and La Mayeux, profoundly touched by this mute despair, looked at each other in sorrow. The smith, seating himself beside the soldier, said,

“Come, father, take courage. Remember what La Mayeux has just told you. By going with the ring to this influential gentleman, these young ladies may be set at liberty to-morrow; or, even supposing the very worst, by the day after to-morrow.”

“Blood and thunder!” exclaimed Dagobert, springing up from the bench and glaring at his son and La Mayeux with a look so wild, so desperate, as to make them draw back with equal surprise and alarm, “do you want to drive me mad?”

Then, recovering himself a little, the old man said, after a long silence, “Forgive me, my children. I know how wrong it is for me to break out so, for we cannot understand each other. What you say is reasonable; but I also have right on my side. Hearken, Agricola, you are an honest lad; and you, Mayeux, may safely be trusted. What I am about to say must never be breathed to any one. For what, do you suppose, have I brought these girls from the wilds of Siberia! That they might be to-morrow morning in the Rue Saint François. If they are not there, then have I broken the last command of a dying mother.”

“No. 3 Rue Saint François!” cried Agricola, interrupting his father.

“Yes,” answered Dagobert; “how did you know the number?”

“Was it not marked on a bronze medal?”

“It was,” replied Dagobert, more and more astonished; “but who told you so?”

“Father!” exclaimed Agricola, “one instant. Let me reflect a little. I think I can guess now. Yes; and you told me, my dear Mayeux, did you not, that Mademoiselle de Cardoville was not mad?”

“Yes; she is kept in confinement without being allowed to communicate with any one, and she told me that she believed she was, equally with the daughters of General Simon, the victim of a vile conspiracy.”

“No doubt of it,” exclaimed the smith. “Now I understand it all. Mademoiselle de Cardoville has an equal interest with the Mademoiselles Simon in being to-morrow in the Rue Saint François, and is, perhaps, ignorant of it herself.”

“What do you mean?”

“One word more, my good Mayeux; did Mademoiselle de Cardoville say that it was important for her to be at liberty to-morrow?”
"No; for when she gave me the ring for the Count de Montbron, she said, 'Thanks to him, to-morrow or next day I and General Simon's daughters will be free.'"

"But explain to me," said Dagobert to his son, impatiently.

"Presently," replied the smith. "When you came to release me from the prison, father, I told you that I had a sacred duty to perform, and would rejoins you at home."

"Yes, and I went to make an attempt, of which I will tell you by-and-by."

"I ran to the pavilion in the Rue de Babylone, not knowing that Mademoiselle de Cardoville was mad, or, at least, said to be so. A servant opened the door and told me that this young lady had been suddenly attacked with lunacy. You may suppose, father, what a blow that was to me. I asked where she was, and was told they did not know. I inquired if I could speak to any of her relations. As my blouse did not inspire much confidence, I was informed that none of the family were in the house. I was much disconcerted, when an idea came across me, and I said to myself, 'She is mad, and her medical man is sure to know where they have taken her; if she is in a condition to understand me, he will take me to her; if not, in the absence of her relatives, I will speak to her doctor—a doctor is often a friend.' So I asked the servant if he could tell me who was Mademoiselle de Cardoville's medical attendant, and he gave me the address without the slightest objection—'Dr. Baleinier, No. 12 Rue Taranne.' I went there, but he had gone out, and they told me I should find him about five o'clock at his asylum, which is close to the convent. This will account for my meeting you here."

"But this medal—this medal," said M. Dagobert, impatiently; "where did you see it?"

"It was in consequence of this, and other things besides, that I wrote to La Mayeux that I was anxious to make some important disclosures to Mademoiselle de Cardoville."

"And these disclosures?"

"Listen, father. I was going to her house the day you left us, to ask her to furnish me with security. I was followed; she learned the fact from one of her waiting-women, and, to save me from arrest, she had me taken to a secret place in her pavilion, a sort of small vaulted chamber, which was only lighted by a pipe like a chimney. After a few moments I began to see clearing. Having nothing better to do, I began to look about me, and I saw the walls were covered with wainscoting. The entrance was a sliding panel in iron grooves, which, by means of counter-weights and wheels, worked admirably. This was in my line of business, and interested me greatly; I began to examine the springs with curiosity, in spite of my uneasiness. I soon discovered their contrivance, but there was a brass knob whose use I could not detect. I pulled it to me, then tried to push it right and left in vain; it had no effect on any of the springs. I said to myself, this knob, no doubt, belongs to some other piece of mechanism, and then the idea struck me that, perhaps, instead of drawing it out, I ought to push it forcibly. I did so, and heard a sort of grinding noise, and suddenly, above the entrance to the hiding-place, a panel about two feet square dropped forward from the wainscot, like the flap of a writing-table. This panel was made something like a box, and, as I had pushed the spring very sharply, the shake made a small bronze medal with a chain fall to the ground."

"On which you saw the address, Rue Saint François," said Dagobert.

"Yes, father, and with the medal also fell a large sealed packet; when I took it up, I read, for I could not help doing so, in large characters, 'For Mademoiselle de Cardoville. She must attend to these papers the instant they are placed in her hands.' Then, under these words, I saw the initials R. and C., with a postscript and this date, 'Paris, 12th November, 1830.' I turned the envelope, and saw it was sealed with two seals bearing the same initials, R. and C., surmounted by a coronet."
"And were these seals unbroken?" asked La Mayeux.

"Yes, unbroken."

"Then there is no doubt that Mademoiselle de Cardoville is ignorant of the existence of these papers," said the workwoman.

"That was my first idea, for it was directed that the envelope should be opened without delay; yet, in spite of that command, which was dated nearly two years ago, the seals were unbroken."

"That is evident," said Dagobert; "and what did you then"

"I replaced all in their concealment, intending to inform Mademoiselle de Cardoville; but a few minutes afterward they entered the hiding-place, which had been discovered. As I did not see Mademoiselle de Cardoville again, I only had time to say to one of her waiting-women some words of ambiguous meaning with respect to my discovery, hoping that they would excite the curiosity of their mistress. Then as soon as I was able to write to you, my dear Mayeux, I did so, begging you to go and find Mademoiselle de Cardoville."

"But this medal," said Dagobert, "is like that which General Simon's daughters possess; how can that be?"

"Nothing is more simple, father, for I remember now that Mademoiselle de Cardoville is their relation; she told me so."

"She the relation of Rose and Blanche?"

"Yes, certainly," added La Mayeux; "she told me so just now."

"Well, then, now," said Dagobert, looking at his son with anguish, "cannot you understand why I must have my children this very day? Do you not see, as their poor mother said to me with her dying breath, that a day's delay will ruin all? Do you not see, in fact, that I cannot quiet myself with a 'perhaps to-morrow,' when I have come from the extremity of Siberia in order to take them to-morrow to the Rue Saint Franchis? Do you not see, indeed, that I must have them to-day, even if I should set the convent in flames?"

"But, father, I must again say that any violence—"

"But do you know the commissary of police told me this morning, when I went to him to repeat my complaint against your poor mother's confessor, that there was no proof, and they could do nothing farther?"

"But now there are proofs, father, or, at least, we know where the young girls are, and with this certainty we are stronger. Be easy; the law is more powerful than all the superiors of all the convents in the world."

"And the Count de Montbron, to whom Mademoiselle de Cardoville begs you to apply," said La Mayeux, "must be a powerful man. You will tell him why it is so important these young ladies should be at liberty this night, as well as Mademoiselle de Cardoville, who, you see, has as great an interest in being at liberty to-morrow; and then, certainly, the Count de Montbron will hasten the march of justice, and this evening your children will be restored to you."

"La Mayeux is right, father. Go to the count, while I run to the commissary and tell him that we now know where the girls are detained. You, Mayeux, had better go home, and we will meet you there."

Dagobert was lost in reflection; at length he said to Agricola,

"Agreed; I will follow your advice; but suppose the commissary says, 'We can do nothing before to-morrow,' suppose the Count de Montbron says the same thing to me; do you think I will remain with my arms folded until to-morrow morning?"

"Father—"

"Enough," replied the soldier, abruptly; "I know what I am about. You, my boy, go to the commissary; you, Mayeux, wait for us at home. I will go to the count—give me the ring. What's the address?"

"Place Vendôme, No. 7, Count de Montbron. You come from Mademoiselle de Cardoville," said La Mayeux.

"I have a good memory," said the soldier; "and now go as quickly as you can to Rue Brise-Miche."
"Yes, father, and take courage. You will see that the law defends and protects honest people."

"So much the better," said the soldier; "because without that honest people would be obliged to defend and protect themselves. So now, my children, away, and we meet in the Rue Brise-Miche."

When Dagobert, Agricola, and La Mayeux separated, night had completely set in.
CHAPTER VI.

THE RENDEZVOUS.

It was eight o'clock in the evening; the rain was driving heavily against the casements in the chamber of Françoise Baudoin, Rue Brise-Miche, while violent gusts of wind shook the door and ill-fitting window-frames. The disorder and neglect apparent in a place once so neatly and carefully kept proved the painful nature of those occurrences which had brought confusion to a household hitherto so peaceful and contented, even in its obscurity.

Patches of mud were trampled into the floor, while a thick coat of dust covered the furniture, once shining in all the pride of housewifery. The bed had not been made since Franchise had been taken away by the commissary. Dagobert had merely thrown himself on it without undressing, when returning, exhausted with fatigue and weariness of spirit, from his ineffectual attempts to discover the hiding-place of Rose and Blanche. A bottle and glass, with some morsels of dry bread, standing on the small table, bore testimony to the frugality of the soldier, his only resource now being the money raised on pledges at the Mont de Piété. Beside the iron stove, now cold as marble—for the little stock of wood had been long since exhausted—sat La Mayeux sleeping, with a pale, flickering candle placed near her; her head was drooping on her breast, her feet resting on the lower rail of the chair, and her hands wrapped in her little cotton apron, while ever and anon the frame of the poor girl shivered in her damp garments. Throughout the whole of this day, so fatiguing and harassing both to body and mind, La Mayeux had not tasted food; had she even thought of it, she had no bread; and it was while awaiting the return of Dagobert and Agricola that she had fallen into that troubled sleep, so different from peaceful, refreshing slumber. From time to time La Mayeux half opened her eyes and looked about her; then again yielding to an irresistible desire for repose, her head fell to its drooping position.
At the end of some minutes' silence, broken only by the noise of the wind and rain, a slow, heavy tread was heard on the landing-place, the door opened, and Dagobert entered, followed by Killjoy.

Awakening with a start, La Mayeux suddenly sprang up, and, hurrying to the father of Agricola, said,

"Well, M. Dagobert, have you brought good news? have you—"

La Mayeux could not go on, so painfully was she struck with the deep gloom impressed on the features of the soldier, who, as though too much occupied with his own thoughts to be aware of her presence, threw himself with an air of despondency into a chair, and covered his face with his hands. After a long continuance in this meditative attitude, he rose and muttered,

"It must be so! it must be so!" then walking about the room, he seemed busily in search of something. After a brief examination, he spied a bar of iron about two feet in length, used to lift off the top of the stove when the heat became too great, seized it, carefully examined it, weighed it, and then, as if satisfied with the result of his scrutiny, laid it on the table.

La Mayeux, surprised at the silence of Dagobert, had followed his movements with anxious and timid curiosity, which quickly gave place to terror, when she saw the soldier take up his haversack from a chair on which it was lying, open it, and draw forth a pair of pocket pistols, the action of whose triggers he carefully tried.

Unable any longer to control her fears, the seamstress exclaimed,

"Oh, M. Dagobert! what are you going to do?"

The soldier looked at her as though he only then became aware of her presence, and said to her, in a voice kind though abrupt,

"Good-evening, my child! What is the time?"

"Saint Merry's clock has just struck eight, M. Dagobert."

"Eight o'clock!" murmured the soldier, speaking to himself; "only eight o'clock!" then, placing his pistols beside the bar of iron, he seemed again lost in reflection, still gazng about the room.

At length La Mayeux ventured to interrupt him by saying,

"I am afraid, M. Dagobert, you have no very good news for us!"

"No!" answered the soldier; and the monosyllable was uttered in a tone so dry, that La Mayeux dared not proceed with her inquiries, but silently resumed her seat, while Killjoy, leaning his head on the young girl's lap, seemed to watch as curiously as she did the movements of Dagobert, who, after another pause of meditation, approached the bed, took off one of the sheets, and appeared to calculate its length; then, turning to La Mayeux, he said,

"A pair of scissors."

"But, M. Dagobert—"

"Come, my good girl, no talking—the scissors," said Dagobert, in a tone which, although kind, implied that he required obedience.

The seamstress took a pair of scissors from the workbasket of Françoise, and presented them to the soldier.

"Now, then, my good girl, hold the other end of this sheet, and be sure to hold it tight." [See cut, on page 462.]

In a few minutes Dagobert had divided the linen into four strips, which he twisted very tightly, so as to form a kind of rope, tying it at intervals with some tape supplied him by the workwoman, so as to preserve the twist; then, by fastening these four pieces securely together, Dagobert made a rope of at least twenty feet in length; but this did not appear to suffice him, for he said, talking to himself,

"Now I must have a hook!" and again he began to look about.

More and more terrified as the object of Dagobert's labours became apparent, La Mayeux said,

"But, M. Dagobert, Agricola has not returned yet; and I doubt not, by his delay, he will bring us good tidings."

[The text continues with descriptions of Dagobert's actions and the reactions of La Mayeux and Killjoy.]
"Yes," replied the soldier, with bitterness, and still seeking what he wanted; "no doubt much after the fashion of mine; but," he added, "I want a stout grappling-hook!" And rummaging about in all directions, he found one of the coarse gray cloth bags Franchis was usually employed in making; taking it up, he opened it, and said to La Mayeux,

"Now, my girl, put the piece of iron and the rope in; it will be more convenient to carry yonder."

"Surely, M. Dagobert," cried La Mayeux, as she obeyed, "you will not go before Agricola returns? Perhaps he will have good news for you."

"Make yourself easy, my child, I shall wait for my boy; I cannot go before ten o'clock, so there will be plenty of time."

"Ah! M. Dagobert, have you, then, lost all hope?"

"On the contrary, I am full of hope; but it is in myself!" So saying, the soldier twisted the neck of the bag so as to close it securely, and then laid it down beside his pistols.

"At least, M. Dagobert, you will await the arrival of Agricola?"

"Yes, if he comes before ten o'clock."

"Then you are quite resolved?"

"Quite so—still, if I were simple enough to believe in omens—"

"Sometimes, M. Dagobert, omens are not to be disregarded," answered La Mayeux, anxious to divert the old man from his dangerous undertaking.

"Yes," replied Dagobert, "so say the old women; and though I am not an old woman, I have seen that to-night which has cut me to the heart; but, after all, what I took for a presentiment was, perhaps, only an impulse of rage."

"What did you see, then?"

"I can tell you, my girl, what it was; it will serve to pass the time away, and time goes slowly just now." Then, breaking off, he said, "Was not that the half hour struck just now?"

"Yes, M. Dagobert; it is half past eight o'clock."

"Still another hour and a half!" murmured the soldier, in a gloomy tone. Then added, "Well, I saw while passing down some street, I forget which, an enormous red placard; at the top of it was represented a black panther devouring a white horse. At this sight my blood boiled in my veins; for you must know, my good Mayeux, that a black panther destroyed a poor old white horse I had, the companion of Killjoy there, whose name was Jovial."

At this once familiar name, Killjoy, lying at the feet of La Mayeux, hastily lifted up his head, and gazed at Dagobert.

"There!" said the soldier, sighing at the recollection of his faithful old steed, "brutes have good memories." Then addressing his dog, he said, "You remember Jovial, then?"
As the name of his old comrade again reached the ear of Killjoy, sadly pronounced by his master, Killjoy whined, and then by a low bark intimated that he had not forgotten his old travelling companion.

"Indeed, M. Dagobert," said La Mayeux, "it was a very sad coincidence to find at the head of the placard a black panther devouring a horse."

"Coincidence indeed, as you shall hear. I approached this placard, and read that Morok, just arrived from Germany, would exhibit in a theatre several animals he had tamed, and among them a superb lion, a tiger, and a black panther from Java, called La Mort."

"What a dreadful name!" said La Mayeux.

"And it will appear still more dreadful to you, my child, when I tell you that this was the very panther which strangled my horse near Leipsic, four months ago."

"Oh, how shocking!" said La Mayeux; "then, indeed, you had cause to shudder at the sight of the placard."

"Wait a little," exclaimed Dagobert, whose features became still more gloomy, "that is not all! It was through this Morok, the owner of this very panther, that I and my poor children were thrown into prison at Leipsic."

"And this evil man, who bears you ill-will, is in Paris!" cried La Mayeux.

"Oh, you were right—you must be careful—it is indeed a bad omen!"

"Yes, for that wretch, if he falls in my way," replied Dagobert, "for we have some old scores to settle."

"Monsieur Dagobert," cried La Mayeux, listening, "some one is hastening up stairs; it is Agricola's step, and he brings news, I am sure."

"That will do my business nicely," rejoined the soldier, quickly, without making any reply to La Mayeux. "Agricola, being a smith, can supply me with the iron hook I want."

A few moments after, Agricola entered; but, alas! La Mayeux discovered, by the first glance at the dejected countenance of the young man, the ruin of the hopes with which she had been flattering herself.

"Well," said Dagobert to his son, in a tone which clearly proved how little faith he had in the success of the measures pursued by Agricola; "well, what news do you bring?"

"Oh, father!" exclaimed the smith, impetuously, "it is enough to drive a man out of his senses—to make one knock his brains out against a wall!"

Turning to La Mayeux, Dagobert said, calmly,

"There, my girl, you see; I knew it."

"But you, father," cried Agricola, "have doubtless seen the Count de Montbron?"

"The Count de Montbron left Paris three days ago for Lorraine; so there are my good news," replied the soldier, with bitter irony. "Now let us hear yours; tell me all that has happened. I want to be well assured that the justice which you but a little while ago said protected and defended honest men sometimes leaves them in the clutches of rascally oppressors—yes, first I want to be convinced of that; and then I want an iron hook, and I depend on you for both."

"I do not understand you, father!"

"Tell me what you have been doing; we have plenty of time; it only struck half past eight just now. Now, then, when you left me where did you go?"

"To the commissary who took down your deposition."

"And what said he?"

"After having listened very politely to all I had to say, he replied, 'Why, then, after all, these young persons are placed in a respectable house—a convent; there is, therefore, no immediate need for removing them, and, if there were, I cannot take upon myself to violate the sanctity of a religious establishment merely upon your statement; to-morrow I will make my report in the proper quarter, and the affair will be taken into consideration.'"

"You see!" interrupted the soldier; "more puttings off!"
“But, sir,” I replied, “this case admits not of an hour’s delay; for if these girls are not in the Rue Saint François to-morrow morning, incalculable injury to themselves will arise.” ‘It is unfortunate,’ answered the commissary, ‘but I repeat that it is out of my power, on your simple declaration, or on that of your father, who, no more than yourself, stands in any degree of relationship to these young persons, to transcend the laws, no infraction of which would be permitted even upon the application of relatives. Justice has its delays and formalities, and to these you must submit.’”

“To be sure,” said Dagobert; “submission is the word, at the risk of being a traitor, a coward, an ungrateful wretch!”

“Did you speak of Mademoiselle de Cardoville!” inquired La Mayeux.

“Yes; but his answer was much the same. ‘It was a very serious affair,’ he remarked; true, I made a deposition, but I brought no proof. ‘You see,’ he said, ‘a third person has assured you that Mademoiselle de Cardoville is not mad; that is not enough; all insane persons assert that they are in their right minds; I cannot invade the establishment of a respectable medical gentleman merely on your declaration; nevertheless, I will receive it and lay it before the proper authority, but the law must take its course.’”

“And when, just now, I wanted to go to work at once,” said Dagobert, “did I not foresee all this? yet I was fool enough to be dissuaded.”

“Father, what you meant to do was impossible, and would have exposed you to dangerous consequences; you admitted that yourself.”

“So then,” resumed the soldier, without replying to his son, “he formally and positively told you it was useless to think of obtaining, in a legal way, the release of Rose and Blanche to-night, or even to-morrow morning.”

“He told me that the law could not be hurried, and that the question could not be decided in less than several days.”

“That is all I wanted to know!” cried Dagobert, rising and pacing the chamber.

“Still,” continued the son, “I would not admit myself conquered. Almost in despair, yet believing that justice could not be deaf to such equitable claims, I hastened to the Palais de Justice, hoping that, perhaps, I might find there some judge or magistrate who would listen to my complaint, and attend to it forthwith.”

“Well—” said the soldier, stopping short.

“There I was told that the court closed every day at five o’clock, and opened at ten in the morning. Remembering the cruel anxiety both you and Mademoiselle de Cardoville were enduring, I resolved to make a third attempt, and entered a guardhouse, commanded by an officer, to whom I related the whole story. He saw how much I was excited, and the warmth with which I expressed myself seemed to touch his feelings.

‘Lieutenant,’ said I, ‘grant me one favour. Let a subaltern and two of your men go with me to the convent, in order to obtain legal admittance. Let them demand to see the daughters of General Simon, and give them their choice whether to remain or return to my father, who brought them from Russia. It will be seen then whether they are in the convent by their own free will or not.’”

“And what answer did he make, Agricola?” asked La Mayeux, while Dagobert, with a shrug of the shoulders, resumed his walk.

‘My lad,’ said he, ‘you ask an impossibility, I can enter into your feelings, but entering by force into a convent might strip me of my commission.’

‘But what is to be done?’ asked I; ‘it is enough to drive one mad.’

‘Really I don’t know. Perhaps the best way will be to wait.’

“So, believing I had now done all that human means could effect, I came to rejoin you, hoping that you might have been more successful. Unhappily, I was mistaken!” And with these words the smith, overcome with fatigue, threw himself into a chair.

There were some moments of profound silence. Agricola’s words had destroy-
ed the last hopes of those three persons, who remained speechless, borne down by an inexorable fatality.

A fresh incident came to heighten the painful character of the scene.

CHAPTER VII.

DISCOVERIES.

EFT unfastened by the smith when he entered, the door was timidly opened, and Françoise Baudoin, Dagobert's wife, pale, and almost fainting, tottered into the room.

The soldier, Agricola, and La Mayeux were plunged in so deep a revery, that the entrance of Françoise was not perceived by either; but scarcely had she crossed the threshold before she threw herself on her knees, clasped her hands, and said, in a weak and humble voice, "My poor husband, pardon!"

At these words Agricola and La Mayeux, whose backs were toward the door, turned, and Dagobert hastily looked up.

"Mother!" cried Agricola, running to Françoise.

"My wife!" exclaimed Dagobert, rising, and taking a few steps toward the poor woman.

"Dear mother!" said Agricola, stooping toward Françoise, and tenderly embracing her; "you on your knees! Rise, mother!"

"No, my child!" replied Françoise, in a tone firm, though gentle, "I will not rise till your father has pardoned me. My conduct to him has been very bad; I am now aware of it."

"Forgive you, my poor wife," said the soldier, much affected, and approaching Françoise; "did I ever lay anything to your charge, except during my first burst of despair? No, no; it was those bad priests I accused, and I was right. Now that you are again here," he added, assisting his son to raise Françoise, "there is one grief the less. And so they have set you at liberty? Yesterday I could not learn where you were taken. I was so beset with troubles that I had not leisure to do more than think of you. But come, now, dear wife, sit down here."

"My dearest mother! how weak you are, and how cold and pale!" said Agricola, while tears of anguish filled his eyes. "Why did you not let us know," he added, "that we might have come for you? But how you shiver! My dear mother, your hands are cold as death!" continued the young man, kneeling before Françoise; then turning to La Mayeux, "Light the fire as quickly as you can!"

"I was thinking of it when your father came home, Agricola; but there is neither charcoal nor wood."

"Then run down, my good Mayeux, to old Loriot, and ask him to lend us some: he is too good to refuse us. My poor mother may be taken ill; see how she shivers!"

Ere the words were well uttered, La Mayeux had disappeared; the smith rose, brought one of the blankets from the bed, and, returning, wrapped it carefully round the feet and knees of his mother; then, again kneeling, he said, "Give me your hands, dear mother!" and, taking the thin hands in his own, Agricola tried to warm them with his breath.

A more affecting picture could not be presented than the athletic form of the son, the personification of health and vigour, gazing with intense love on his feeble,
THE WANDERING JEW.

pale, and trembling parent, and lavishing upon her ev-
ery delicate attention.

Dagobert, kind as his son, brought a pillow.

"Lean forward a little, and I will place this pillow
behind you; it will give you ease, and warm you
too."

"How you are both spoil-
ing me!" said Françoise,
trying to reward their exert-
tions with a smile. "And
you especially," she said to
Dagobert, "to whom I have
behaved so ill."

And disengaging one of
her hands from those of her
son, she took the hand of
the soldier, on which she
pressed her eyes, brimming
with tears; then murmured,
in a low voice,

"Ah! in my prison I
deeply repented what I had
done, believe me!"

The heart of Agricola
was wrung with pain at the
idea of his mother having
been even temporarily made the companion of such degraded beings as are found
within the walls of a prison. She, so good, so free from sinful thoughts, so pure
and single-minded! He was about to attempt some consolatory words, when he
remembered that anything he might say would have the effect of paining his fa-
ther; he therefore contented himself with saying,

"And how is my good brother Gabriel, mother? Tell us about him, since
you have seen him."

"Ever since his return," said Françoise, drying her eyes, "he has been se-
cluded, his superiors having peremptorily forbidden him to go out. Fortunately
they had not denied his seeing me, for his words and counsels have opened my
eyes, and taught me how ill I have behaved, though without knowing it, to you,
my poor husband!"

"What do you mean?" asked Dagobert.

"Nay, you never could believe me capable of acting as I did for the sake of
giving you pain. Oh, no! When I saw your grief and despair I suffered equally
with yourself, but I feared to own it, lest I should break my oath; and I desired
to keep it, believing it right, and my duty. Still something whispered that it
could never be my duty to distress you so much. 'Alas!' I cried, weeping and
praying in my prison, spite of the jests of the other women, 'how is it that an
act, dictated by a man so justly esteemed as my confessor, and pronounced by
him a deed of holy and virtuous necessity, has brought so much misery on my-
self and all belonging to me? Pity and guide me, God of mercy! Teach me
to discover if I have unknowingly done wrong!' The cry of the sinner was
heard, and Divine mercy suggested the idea of consulting Gabriel. 'Thanks,
my God!' I exclaimed; 'the suggestion shall not be thrown away. Gabriel is
to me as a second son; he is a priest, a holy martyr. If there be on earth a
creature worthy of imitation, by the practice of love and charity, it is Gabriel;
when I am liberated from prison I will go and consult him, for he will clear up all my doubts!"

"My dearest mother," cried Agricola, "you are right; that blessed idea must have come to you from on high. Gabriel is indeed an angel of goodness—the purest, noblest creature in the world, and the most courageous. He is a model of what a priest should be."

"Ah! my poor Françoise," said Dagobert, with bitter emphasis, "happy would it have been if you had never had any other confessor than Gabriel."

"Indeed," she replied, with much simplicity, "I often thought of it before he went upon his missions. I should have so loved to confess before him; but I feared to break with Father Dubois, and that Gabriel might be too lenient to my sins."

"Your sins, my poor, dear mother!" exclaimed Agricola; "why, you never committed one in your life!"

"And what did Gabriel say to you?" inquired the soldier.

"Ah! my dear husband, why did I not sooner open my mind to him? What I told him respecting the Abbé Dubois roused his suspicions. He questioned me, the dear child did, on many points he had never named to me before. I opened my heart to him, and he did the same to me; and we made some cruel discoveries of persons we had hitherto held in high respect, but who had wickedly deceived us, unknown to each other."

"In what manner?"

"Gabriel, under the seal of secrecy, was told many things as from me; while I, also under the seal of secrecy, was informed of things as coming from him. He confessed that originally he never had felt any desire to be a priest, but he had been assured that I considered my peace, both in this world and the next, to depend on his taking the vows, because I felt certain that the Lord would recompense me for having given Him so excellent a servant, but that I could never bring myself to ask such a proof of attachment, though I had rescued him when a helpless infant, and brought him up as my own child by privations and labour. The poor boy, thinking to gratify my wishes, sacrificed himself, and entered the seminary."

"Horrible!" cried Agricola; "what an infamous scheme! and for priests to practise it, adds the guilt of sacrilege to falsehood!"

"All this time a different language was held to me," continued Françoise. "I was told that Gabriel had a vocation for a holy life; but feared to confess it to me, lest I should be jealous on Agricola's account, who, being destined to earn his living as a mere workman, could not share the advantages the priesthood would ensure to Gabriel. Thus when the dear boy, stifling his own regrets, and thinking only of affording me happiness, asked my permission to enter the seminary, instead of trying to dissuade him from it, I, on the contrary, did all in my power to make him persevere, assuring him that he was acting wisely, and that he made me happy; nay, I even exaggerated the delight he afforded me, so fearful was I of his believing me jealous on Agricola's account."

"What an infamous machination!" exclaimed Agricola. "They practised on your mutual affection, and made Gabriel see, in the encouragement you were entrapped into giving his purpose, the expression of a deeply cherished wish."

"Still, however, by degrees Gabriel began really to love the profession he had embraced. To a heart so good, what could be more delightful than to comfort the afflicted? Nor would he ever have referred to the past but for our conversation this morning; but then he, always so gentle, so timid, burst into angry reproaches and invectives against a M. Rodin and some other person he accused. He had already, he told me, serious causes of complaint against them, but the discovery of the deception practised upon us completed the measure of their offences."

As Françoise uttered these last words, Dagobert started and pressed his hand to his forehead, as though trying to collect his ideas; for several minutes he had
been listening with profound attention to this disclosure of dark machinations, conducted with so skilful and deep a villany.

Françoise continued:

"When at length I confessed to Gabriel that, under the advice of the Abbé Dubois, my confessor, I had given to a stranger's keeping the children intrusted to me by my husband, the daughters of General Simon, the poor boy sorrowfully blamed me, not for seeking to make these orphans acquainted with our holy religion, but for not having consulted my husband, who was alone answerable before God and men for the charge intrusted to him. Gabriel strongly censured the conduct of M. Dubois in giving me, as he said, such improper and perfidious advice; after which the dear child, with all the sweetness of an angel, tried to console me, urging me to return home and relate everything to you. Seeing how much I dreaded venturing in your presence, Gabriel would have come with me, but, unhappily, he was under positive orders from his superiors not to quit the seminary, so it was out of his power to—"

Here Dagobert, who was deeply agitated, interrupted his wife, saying,

"Tell me one thing, Françoise—for, in truth, I lose both memory and reason in the midst of all these infamous plots and heavy cares—did you not tell me, that day the children were taken away, that when you found Gabriel he had about his neck a bronze medal, and in a pocket a quantity of papers written in a foreign language?"

"Yes—he had!"

"And that you gave this medal and these papers to your confessor?"

"Yes, husband, I said so."

"And has Gabriel never spoken to you respecting either the medal or the papers?"

"Never!"

As Agricola listened with wonder to his mother's replies, he exclaimed,

"Then Gabriel has the same interest as the daughters of General Simon and Mademoiselle de Cardoville in being in the Rue Saint Franchis to-morrow?"

"Certainly," said Dagobert; "and don't you remember, he told us, upon my arrival, that he should, in a few days, require our aid and support in a matter of great consequence?"

"So he did, father."

"And now, you see, he is kept a prisoner in the seminary, and he told your mother he had cause of complaint against his superiors; and when he spoke of needing our support, he said it in so grave and sad a tone, that I told him—"

"He could not speak more seriously if he had a duel on hand," interrupted Agricola. "True, father; and you, who know what courage is, said that Gabriel's was equal to your own; then, if he is in such fear of his superiors, the danger must be great."

"Now that I have heard your mother's story," said Dagobert, "I understand all about it. Gabriel, like Rose and Blanche, Mademoiselle de Cardoville, your mother, and possibly ourselves, is the victim of a dark conspiracy among these priests; and now that I see the unprincipled means they employ, and their infernal perseverance," added the soldier, lowering his voice, "I feel that it requires no ordinary strength to contend with them. No, I never had an idea of their power—"

"You are right, father; the wicked and hypocritical among them may do as much harm as faithful servants of the Church like Gabriel do good. There is no enemy so implacable as a wicked priest."

"No doubt; and it is that which terrifies me, for are not my poor children in their hands? and shall I abandon them without a struggle? Are all the chances so completely against me? Oh, no, no! let me shake off this weakness. Yet since your mother has laid open their diabolical contrivances, I know not how it is, but I feel less bold, less resolute; all this seems to strike terror to my mind. The carrying off of these orphans is not a solitary act, but a ramification
of some vast plot which surrounds and threatens us all. It seems as though we
were walking in the dark in the midst of venomous serpents, making our way
through enemies and pitfalls—dangers we could neither combat nor perceive.
I cannot tell you why, but I, who never feared death, who am no coward, now
am afraid—yes, I confess it—afraid of these black-robed villains."

These words were uttered with such earnestness that Agricola shuddered, for
he felt that they spoke also his own feelings.

And nothing could be more natural than for natures so frank, energetic, and
resolute as those of Dagobert and his son, accustomed to act and endeavour with-
out disguise, to shrink from encountering invisible foes, whose blows were aimed
behind the veil of darkness and mystery. Many a time had Dagobert faced
death in the battle-field, yet, when he heard his wife developing this dark tissue
of falsehood, deceit, and treachery, a vague apprehension seized upon the old
soldier; and though he meditated no change in his nocturnal enterprise against
the convent, he now beheld it in a more gloomy and alarming point of view.

The silence which ensued was interrupted by the return of La Mayeux, who,
aware that the conversation between Dagobert and his family should have no
superfluous listener, tapped gently at the door, remaining at the outside with
Father Loriot.

"May I come in, Madame Françoise?" said the young girl. "Here is Father
Loriot, with some wood for you."

"Yes, yes; come in," said Agricola, while his father wiped the cold sweat
from his forehead.

The door opened and
admitted old Loriot with
hands and arms dyed
amaranth colour, carry-
ing in one hand a shovel-
ful of lighted charcoal,
and in the other a basket
of wood.

"Good-evening, all!" said Loriot; "I am
obliged to you, Madame
Françoise, for thinking
of me. You know that
my shop, with all in it,
is heartily at your ser-
vice; neighbours should
help each other, and I
have not forgotten your
goodness to my wife
when she was alive."

Then giving the coals
to Agricola, and placing
the wood in a corner,
the worthy dyer, guess-
ing, from the sorrowful
and anxious countenanc-
es of the persons in the
room, that his presence could be dispensed with, said,
"Is there anything else I can do for you, Madame Françoise?"

"No, thank you, Father Loriot."

"Then good-night, all." Then addressing La Mayeux, he said, "Do not for-
get to give M. Dagobert his letter. I did not dare touch it myself, for I should
have left the mark of four fingers and a thumb in amaranth. Good-evening,
ladies and gentlemen." And the dyer bowed himself out.
THE WANDERING JEW.

"Here, M. Dagobert," said La Mayeux, "here is the letter." And she began to occupy herself with the fire, while Agricola brought the old arm-chair of his mother and placed it before the stove.

"See what it is about, my lad," said Dagobert to his son. "My head aches so I can scarcely see."

Agricola took the letter, which contained only a few lines, and read it without looking at the signature.

"At Sea, December 25, 1831.

"I avail myself of our having fallen in with and spoken a vessel going direct to Europe, to write you, my worthy old friend, a few hasty lines, which I trust may reach you from Havre, probably before the arrival of my last letters from India. You are now, I hope, in Paris, with my wife and child. Tell them—I cannot say what I had intended, the boat is leaving. One word: I shall soon be in France. Forget not the 13th of February; the future welfare of my wife and child depends upon it. Adieu, my friend; rely upon the unfading gratitude of Simon."

"Agricola!" exclaimed La Mayeux, "quick! look to your father!"

At the first words of this letter, rendered by circumstances so cruelly apropos, Dagobert turned deadly pale, and, overcome by emotion, fatigue, and utter exhaustion of body and mind, was about to fall, when his son ran to him, caught him in his arms, and supported him for a few moments, when, the sudden vertigo which had seized the old man passing away, he raised his hand to his head, drew himself up to his full height, his eyes sparkled, and his weather-beaten countenance assumed an expression of unalterable resolution, while he exclaimed, in a voice of fierce defiance,

"No! I will be neither a coward nor a traitor. The black frocks shall not affright me, and this night Rose and Blanche Simon shall be set free!"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PENAL CODE.

AGOBERT, intimidated by the dark and sinister machinations so dangerously prosecuted by the black frocks, as he called them, against the persons he loved, had, for an instant, hesitated in his attempt to deliver Rose and Blanche; but his indecision ended as soon as he had heard the letter of Marshal Simon, which had come so unexpectedly to remind him of his sacred duties.

The momentary depression of the soldier had been succeeded by the resolution of a calm and collected energy.

"Agricola, what is the hour?" inquired he of his son.

"Nine o'clock has just struck, father."

"Make me, as quickly as you can, an iron hook, strong enough to bear my weight, and bent so as to fit the coping of a wall. This stove will serve for forge and anvil, and you will find a hammer in the house. As to the iron," said the soldier, hesitating, and looking about him, "as to the iron—here, this will do."

So saying, the soldier took a pair of stout tongs from the hearth, and gave them to his son, adding,

"Come, my lad, blow the fire, heat the iron, and forge me this hook."
At these words Françoise and Agricola looked at each other with surprise. The smith remained silent and astonished, not knowing his father's intentions, or the preparations which he had already commenced with the aid of La Mayeux.

"Don't you hear what I say, Agricola?" repeated Dagobert, holding the tongs still in his hand; "you must make me a hook out of these."

"A hook, father! and for what?"

"To fasten to the end of a rope which I have there. You must finish it at one end with an eye large enough for me to fasten it to the cord securely."

"But what are the cord and hook for?"

"For scaling the walls of this convent, if I cannot get in by the door."

"What convent?" asked Françoise of her son.

"What, father!" said Agricola, rising hastily, "do you still think of that?"

"What else would you have me think of?"

"But, father, it is impossible! you will not surely undertake such an enterprise!"

"What is it, my dear?" inquired Françoise, anxiously. "Where does your father want to go?"

"He wants to get into the convent in which the daughters of General Simon are shut up, and carry them off.""

"Oh! my poor husband! why, it is sacrilege!" said Françoise, still clinging to her pious belief; and, clasping her hands, she made an effort to rise and draw near Dagobert.

The soldier, perceiving that he should be assailed with remonstrances and prayers of all sorts, and resolved not to give way, determined at once to cut short these useless supplications, which would only make him lose precious time; assuming a grave, severe, and almost solemn air, which bespoke the inflexibility of his purpose:

"Listen, wife, and you, also, my son! When, at my time of life, a man resolves on a thing, he knows what he is about; and, once decided, neither wife nor son can turn him, do what they can. I am thus resolved, so spare me useless words. It is your duty to expostulate, and, having fulfilled that duty, say no more about it. This evening I will be master."

Françoise, fearful and distressed, dared not hazard a word, but she turned her suppliant look to her son.

"Father," said he, "one word only; but one."

"Say that one, then," said Dagobert, impatiently.

"I will not attempt to overcome your resolution, but I will prove to you that you do not know to what you are exposing yourself."

"I am not ignorant of anything," said the soldier, sharply. "What I am going to attempt is a serious matter, but it shall never be said that I neglected any means by which it was possible to accomplish what I promised to effect."

"Take care, father; I tell you once more you do not know the danger to which you expose yourself," said the smith, with an air of alarm.

"Ah! let us talk of danger—let us talk of the porter's gun and the gardener's scythe!" said Dagobert, shrugging his shoulders disdainfully, "and so end that matter. Well, what next? Suppose I leave my skin in this convent, are you left to take care of your mother? For twenty years you have done without me, and so you will have the less to grieve for."

"And it is I—oh! Heaven!—it is I who am the cause of all these misfortunes!" exclaimed the poor mother. "Oh! Gabriel was right to blame me."

"Madame Françoise, take comfort," whispered La Mayeux, going close to Dagobert's wife; "Agricola will not allow his father to expose himself in this manner."

The smith, after a moment's pause, said, in an agitated voice,

"I know you too well, father, to suppose that I shall stop you by any fear of risking your life."

"What danger do you mean, then?"
"A danger before which you will recoil—yes, brave as you are!" said the young man, in a tone which had its effect on his father.

"Agricola," said the soldier, severely and sternly, "you speak offensively—you insult me!"

"Father!"

"It is offensive," resumed the angry soldier, "for it is base to seek to turn a man from his duty by frightening him; an insult, because you think me capable of being intimidated."

"Ah, M. Dagobert," said La Mayeux, "you do not understand Agricola."

"I understand him too well," replied the soldier, sternly.

Painfully moved by the severity of his father, but firm in his resolution, which was the dictate of love and respect, Agricola replied, not without a beating heart,

"Pardon me if I disobey you, father; but if you hate me for it, you shall know to what you expose yourself by scaling the walls of a convent in the night."

"Son, dare you?" said Dagobert, his face flushing with anger.

"Agricola!" exclaimed Françoise, in an agony. "My husband!"

"Monsieur Dagobert, pray hear Agricola, who is only speaking for your good," exclaimed La Mayeux.

"Not another word!" replied the soldier, stamping with rage.

"I tell you, father, that you are running an almost certain risk of the galleys!" exclaimed the smith, turning frightfully pale.

"Unhappy boy!" said Dagobert, seizing his son by the arm. "Could you not have concealed that from me, rather than expose me to be a traitor and a coward!" Then the soldier muttered to himself, trembling, "The galleys!" and he bent his head, silent and thoughtful, as though crushed by these appalling words.

"Yes, to enter an inhabited dwelling in the night by escalade and violence—the law is precise—is punishable with the galleys!" cried Agricola, at the same time rejoiced and pained at the distress of his father. "Yes, father, the galleys, if you are taken in the fact; and there are ten chances to one that you will be, for Mayeux has told you the convent is guarded. This morning, had you tried to carry off the two young ladies in open day, you must have been apprehended, but the attempt made so openly would have had the character of frank boldness, which might have gained your pardon; but to introduce yourself at night by escalade,
I repeat, is punished with the galleys. Now then, father, decide; what you will do I will do, for you shall not go alone. Say one word, and I will make your hook. I have a hammer in the closet, and pincers, and in an hour we will go."

A profound silence followed the words of the smith, a silence only interrupted by the stifled sobs of Françoise, who murmured, despairingly, "Alas! all this has happened because I listened to the Abbé Dubois."

In vain did La Mayeux attempt to console Françoise, for she herself felt alarmed, knowing that the old soldier was capable of braving even infamy, and that Agricola would share his father's dangers.

Dagobert, in spite of his energetic and determined character, was deeply overcome. According to his military habits, he had seen in his nocturnal enterprise only a sort of ruse de guerre, authorized, in the first instance, by his rights, and, in the next, by the fatality of his position. But the fearful words of his son had revealed the truth to him, the terrible alternative; he must either betray the confidence of Marshal Simon and the last wishes of the mother of the orphan girls, or expose himself, and more particularly his son, to frightful disgrace. His son! and even then without the certainty of rescuing the two girls.

Suddenly Françoise, drying her eyes, which were overflowing with tears, exclaimed, as though struck with sudden inspiration, "But, now I reflect, there is a mode by which we may get the children out of the convent without violence."

"How, mother?" asked Agricola, quickly.

"It was the Abbé Dubois who took them there, but, as Gabriel thinks, it is probable that my confessor acted under the instruction of M. Rodin."

"And if it were so, my dear mother, it would be useless to address M. Rodin; you could get nothing from him."

"No, not from him; but, perhaps, from that powerful abbé who is Gabriel's superior, and has always protected him since he entered the seminary."

"What abbé, mother?"

"The Abbé d'Aigrigny."

"Who, before he was a priest, my dear mother, was a soldier, and might, therefore, be more accessible. But yet—"

"D'Aigrigny!" exclaimed Dagobert, with an expression of horror and detestation. "Is there mixed up in all this treachery a man who, before he was a priest, was a soldier, and whose name is d'Aigrigny?"

"Yes, father, the Marquis d'Aigrigny, who, before the Restoration, served in Russia, and in 1815 the Bourbons gave him a regiment."

"Tis he!" muttered Dagobert. "Still he! always he! like an evil demon, whether it concerns the mother, the father, or the children!"

"What do you mean, father?"

"The Marquis d'Aigrigny!" exclaimed Dagobert. "Do you know who the man is? Before he was a priest, he was the persecutor of the mother of Rose and Blanche, who despised his love. Before he was a priest, he fought against his country, and twice he met General Simon face to face in battle. Yes, when the general was a prisoner at Leipsic and severely wounded at Waterloo, the other, the renegade marquis, was triumphing with the Russians and English. Under the Bourbons, the renegade, covered with honours, again found himself confronted by the persecuted soldier of the empire. Then there was a deadly duel between them, and the marquis was wounded; but General Simon, proscribed and sentenced to death, was exiled. Now the renegade has turned priest, you tell me. Well, now I am certain that it is he who has carried off Rose and Blanche, that he may vent on them the hatred which he has always entertained against their mother and father. This wretch, d'Aigrigny, holds them in his power; it is not only the fortune, but the lives, of these children that I have to defend. Their lives, I tell you—their lives!"

"Father, do you think this man capable of—"

"A traitor to his country, who becomes a base priest, is capable of anything!
I tell you that, perhaps, at this very hour they are killing these children by inches!" said the soldier, in agonized tones; "for the separation of one from the other is the first step toward killing them!" Then Dagobert continued, with an exasperation impossible to describe, "The daughters of Marshal Simon are in the power of the Marquis d'Aigrigny and his gang, and shall I hesitate to save them for fear of the galleys—the galleys?" he added, with a burst of convulsive laughter. "What is that to me? what care I for the galleys? do they put one's dead body there? And if I fail in this last attempt, shall I not have a right to blow out my brains? Put the iron in the fire, my lad. Quick! time presses! forge—forge the iron!"

"But your son will go with you!" exclaimed Françoise, with a cry of maternal despair. Then rising, she threw herself at Dagobert's feet, saying, "If you are apprehended, so will he be also—"

"To save himself from the galleys, he will do as I do. I have two pistols!"

"But I," exclaimed the unhappy mother, clasping her hands in an attitude of entreaty, "without you, without him, what will become of me?"

"You are right—I am selfish—I will go alone!" said Dagobert.

"You shall not go alone, father!" replied Agricola.

"But your mother?"

"La Mayeux knows what is going on, and will go and seek M. Hardy, my employer, and tell him all; he is the most generous of men, and will give my mother bread and a shelter for the rest of her days."

"And it is I—I who am the cause of all this!" exclaimed Françoise, wringing her hands in despair. "Punish me, oh my God! punish me! It is my fault; I gave up the children, and shall be punished by the death of my own child!"

"Agricola, you shall not follow me! I forbid it!" said Dagobert, pressing his son to his heart with fervour.

"What, I! after pointing out the danger to you, shall I recoil from it? Do not think of it, father! Have I not also some one to free? Mademoiselle de Cardoville, so good, so generous, who would have saved me from prison, is she not a prisoner? I will follow you, father; it is my right, my duty, my determination!"

So saying, Agricola put into the burning coals the tongs to be forged into a hook.

"Alas! Heaven have pity on us!" said the unhappy mother, sobbing, and still kneeling, while the soldier seemed to be shaken by a violent internal struggle.

"Do not weep so, dear mother!" said Agricola, raising Françoise, with the help of La Mayeux; "you break my heart. Come, take courage, I have exaggerated the dangers of the enterprise; if we work well together, I really think we may succeed with very little risk—eh, father?" continued Agricola, making a sign to Dagobert. "Look up and be of good heart; I promise you all will end well: both Mademoiselle de Cardoville and the daughters of General Simon shall be restored to liberty. Here, La Mayeux, give me the hammer and pincers out of that closet."

The poor girl, drying her tears, obeyed the orders of Agricola, while he, taking the bellows, got up the fire, in which the tongs were heating.
"Here they are, Agricola," said La Mayeux, in a voice trembling with emotion, while she gave, with unsteady hands, the objects demanded to the smith, who, by the aid of the pincers, drew from the fire the tonge, brought to a white heat, which he began forming into a species of hook, using the top of the stove for an anvil, Dagobert looking on in silence. All at once he took the hands of Françoise, saying,

"Wife, you know our son; you cannot turn him from his purpose of accompanying me; but be comforted, I hope we shall succeed; but if we fail, should Agricola and myself be arrested, why, then— But no, we will be no cowardly suicides, the father and son will walk arm-in-arm to prison, with calm aspect, and all the pride of men who have done their duty to the last; and when the day of our trial comes, we will frankly and fearlessly tell the truth; we will declare the fearful emergency which impelled us to obtain that by violence which we had vainly supplicated from the law. Work, work, my boy!" continued Dagobert to his son, who was hammering the hot iron; "work on without fear; we shall have honest men for our judges, and they will acquit honest men."

"You are right, my brave father! so comfort yourself, dearest mother; the judges will see the difference between robbers who scale walls in the night for the sake of plunder, and an old soldier and his son who, at the peril of their lives, their liberty, and reputation, seek only to deliver innocent victims."

"And should they not see the truth of our defence," resumed Dagobert, "so much the worse for them. In the eyes of all just men your husband and child will not be dishonoured. If we are sentenced to the galleys, and have courage to live, the old and the young convict will wear their chains proudly, while the renegade marquis, the base priest, will have more to blush for than ourselves. On with your work, then, my good lad; galley slavery cannot deprive us of our clear conscience or our honour. A word or two with you, my good Mayeux, for time is hastening on, and we must be quick. When you were in the convent garden, did you remark if the stories of the building were very high from the ground?"

"No, M. Dagobert, they were not, especially on that side of the convent which faces the madhouse, where Mademoiselle de Cardoville is confined."

"How did you contrive to speak to the young lady?"

"She was on the other side of a paling which divides the two gardens."

"Excellent!" said Agricola, continuing to hammer the iron. "Nothing can be easier than to pass from one garden to the other; and, perhaps, we shall find it safer and easier to return through the madhouse; unfortunately, though, you cannot tell us which is Mademoiselle de Cardoville's chamber."

"Yes, I can," exclaimed La Mayeux, trying to recollect. "She is in a square pavilion, and there is over the window where I first saw her a sort of veranda, painted slate colour and white."

"Good; I will not forget it."

"And cannot you give me some idea where the rooms in which my poor children are confined are situated?" said Dagobert.

After a moment's consideration, La Mayeux said, "They are opposite the apartment of Mademoiselle de Cardoville, for she has made signs to them from the windows; and now I remember, she told me that their rooms were on different stories, one on the ground floor, the other just over it on the first floor."

"And are there bars to their windows?" inquired Agricola.

"That I cannot tell you."

"It matters not, my good girl. With these directions we shall be able to make them out," answered Dagobert; "I have my plans for the rest."

"Give me some water, Mayeux," said Agricola, "that I may cool my iron;" and then addressing his father, he said, "Will this hook do?"

"Yes, my boy; as soon as it is cold enough we will fasten it to the rope."

For some time Françoise Baudoin had been kneeling, and fervently imploring Heaven to pardon her husband and son, who, in their blindness and ignorance,
were about to commit a great sin; and earnestly did she beseech the Almighty
to visit on her alone the punishment of their crime, since she only was the cause
of their fatal resolution.

The rest of the preparations were completed by Dagobert and his son in si-
lence. They were pale and serious, as men knowing the perilous nature of their
undertaking.

In a few minutes ten o'clock sounded from the church of Saint Merry; but
the sounds were deadened by the violent gusts of wind and the pattering of
heavy rain, which still continued.

"Ten o'clock!" said Dagobert, starting; "then there is not a minute to be
lost. Now, Agricola, take up the bag."

"Yes, father."

As the smith moved toward the bag, he whispered quickly to La Mayeux, who
could scarcely support herself, "Should we not return by to-morrow morning,
I commit my mother to your care. Go to M. Hardy; he has probably returned
by this time. Come, sister, courage, and give me one kiss. I leave my poor
mother to you."

So saying, the young man, deeply affected, tenderly embraced La Mayeux,
whose strength seemed to forsake her.

"Come, old Killjoy," said Dagobert, "let's be off; you will act as sentinel.
Then, approaching his wife, who had risen from her knees, and was pressing her
son to her bosom, while she bedewed him with her tears, the old soldier, feign-
ing calmness, said,

"Now, then, good wife, dry up your tears; make a good fire, and put every-
thing in order; in two or three hours we shall bring you our two girls and a
beautiful young lady. Come, give me a kiss, and wish me good luck!"

Françoise threw herself on her husband's neck without uttering a word. This
mute despair, interrupted only by deep and convulsive sobs, was dreadful.
Dagobert was obliged to tear himself from her arms; and, endeavouring to con-
ceal his emotion, said to his son, in an unsteady voice,

"Come, Agricola; she breaks my heart. Watch over her, Mayeux. Come,
my son!"

And the soldier, having slipped his pistols into the pocket of his great-coat,
got to the door, followed by Killjoy.

"My son, let me embrace you once more, perhaps for the last time!" cried
the unhappy mother, incapable of rising from her chair; "forgive me! this is all
my doing."

The smith turned back, and embracing his mother, while his tears mingled with
hers, whispered, "Adieu, my beloved mother. Comfort yourself; we shall
soon return." Then tearing himself from her arms, he hastened to rejoin his
father on the staircase.

Françoise Baudoin, with a deep groan, fell almost lifeless in the arms of La
Mayeux.

Meanwhile, Dagobert and Agricola left the Rue Brise-Miche in the midst
of the storm, and proceeded with rapid steps toward the Boulevard de l'Hôpital,
followed by Killjoy.
CHAPTER IX.

ESCALADE AND FORCIBLE ENTRY.

In the stroke of half past eleven Dagobert and his son reached the Boulevard de l'Hôpital.

The wind was high, and the rain fell heavily, but, notwithstanding the thickness of the clouds, the night was not dark, owing to the late-rising moon. The tall trees and the white walls of the convent garden were plainly distinguishable. At a distance was a lamp, swayed to and fro by the wind, whose dim light was hardly visible through the rain and fog, as it hung over the muddy carriage-way of the solitary boulevard. From time to time was heard in the distance the heavy roll of some late vehicle, and then a dead silence followed.

Dagobert and his son had scarcely exchanged a word since their departure from the Rue Brise-Miche. The intentions of these two fine-hearted men were noble and generous, yet they were thoughtful, as they glided along in the shadow, like robbers projecting nocturnal crimes.

Agricola bore on his shoulders the sack containing the cord, the hook, and the crowbar; Dagobert leaned on his son's arm, and Killjoy followed his master.

"The bench on which we sat cannot be far from here," said Dagobert, stopping.

"Here it is, father," said Agricola.

"It is only half past eleven, and we must wait till midnight," resumed Dagobert. "Let us sit down a little while to rest and arrange our plans."

After a moment's silence, the soldier said, in a tone of deep emotion, and pressing his son's hands between his own,

"Agricola, my boy, there is yet time, and I beseech you let me go alone. I shall manage the business very well; and the nearer the time comes, the more I fear to involve you in this dangerous enterprise."

"And I, father, the closer the time approaches, the more do I believe that I shall be useful to you—good or bad, I will share your fate. Our intention is praiseworthy. It is a debt of honour which you owe; I should like to pay the half of it, and I will not recede. So now, father, let us arrange our plan of proceeding."

"Then you will accompany me," said Dagobert, stifling a sigh.

"I must, my dear father," replied Agricola, "and you will see that we shall be successful. You saw the little door in the garden wall as we passed; that is in our favour."

"Yes, by that we shall get into the garden, and then we must find some buildings divided by a wall which terminates in a paling."

"Yes, and on one side is the pavilion where Mademoiselle de Cardoville is confined; on the other, that side of the convent in which the marshal's daughters are shut up."

At this moment Killjoy, crouched at Dagobert's feet, rose suddenly, pointing his ears, and listening attentively.

"It appears as if Killjoy heard something," said Agricola. "Listen!" Nothing was heard but the noise of the wind stirring the tall trees of the boulevard.

"But, father, when we have got the garden-gate open, shall we take Killjoy with us?"

"Yes, yes! if they have a watch-dog he'll settle his business, and then he'll warn us if the watchmen come; and, who knows? he is so sagacious, and so fond of Rose and Blanche, that he may help us, perhaps, to discover the place where they are. I have seen him scores of times find them out in the woods with extraordinary instinct."
A heavy, clear sound, heard above the whistling of the wind, began to strike the midnight hour.

This sound awakened painful feelings in the minds of Africola and his father; silent and startled, they sprang to their feet, and by a spontaneous movement grasped each other's hand. In spite of themselves, each throb of their hearts answered to each stroke of the clock, whose vibration was prolonged in the solemn silence of the night.

At the last stroke Dagobert said to his son, with a firm voice,

"It is midnight! embrace me, my boy; and now to work."

The father and son embraced. The moment was decisive and serious.

"Now, father," said Africola, "let us act with the boldness and cunning of robbers going to plunder a strong box."

So saying, the smith took from the sack the cord and the hook. Dagobert had the crowbar, and both of them going along the wall cautiously, reached the small door, which was close to the angle formed by the street and the boulevard, pausing from time to time to listen attentively, and trying to ascertain if there were noises not caused by the wind and rain.

The night continued still sufficiently clear for them to distinguish objects, and the smith and the soldier reached the little gate, the planks of which seemed to be weak and worm-eaten.

"All right," said Africola to his father; "one blow, and it will give way."

So saying, the smith was about to apply his shoulder vigorously to the door, when, at that instant, Killjoy growled as if to stop him.

Dagobert silenced the animal, and taking his son by the arm, said, in a whisper,

"Do not stir—Killjoy smells some one in the garden."

Africola and his father remained motionless for some minutes, listening attentively, and holding their breath. The dog, obedient to his master, ceased his growl, but his uneasiness was more and more apparent. Still nothing was heard.

"The dog was wrong, father," said Africola, in a low voice.

"No, I am sure he was not. Do not move."

After again waiting a few seconds, Killjoy lay down suddenly and stretched his muzzle as far as he could under the door, sniffing eagerly.

"Some one comes," said Dagobert, quickly, to his son.

"Let us retreat," replied Africola.

"No," said his father; "listen—it will be time to fly if they open the door. Here, Killjoy, here!" The obedient brute left the door, and came crouching to the feet of his master.

Some moments afterward they heard a sort of trampling noise on the ground, soaked by the rain, caused by heavy footsteps splashing through pools of water, and then a noise of talking, which, drowned by the wind, did not distinctly reach the soldier and his son.

"They are the people on watch that Mayeux told us of," said Africola to his father.

"So much the better; they will not go their next round for some time, and that will give us two hours; now we shall effect our purpose."

The noise became gradually less distinct, and was soon lost entirely.

"Come, quick, let us lose no time," said Dagobert to his son, after ten minutes had elapsed; "they have gone; now let us try and open this door."

Africola, applying his powerful shoulder, thrust vigorously; but the door, in spite of its decay, did not yield.

"Confound it!" said Africola, "it is barred on the inside, I am sure, or these rotten planks would not have held out."

"What's to be done?"

"I will get on the wall by the help of the cord and hook, and open it from the inside."

So saying, Africola took the cord and iron, and after several attempts the hook caught on the coping of the wall.
THE DEATH OF JOVIAL.
"Now, father, make me the short ladder, and I will pull myself up by the cord; once astride of the wall, I can easily drop into the garden."

The soldier placed his back against the wall, and joining his hands, his son put his foot in the hollow they formed, then mounting on the stout shoulders of his father, by the aid of the cord and some inequalities in the wall, he reached the top. Unfortunately the smith had not observed that the coping was garnished with broken glass bottles, which cut his hands and knees, but, for fear of alarming Dagobert, he repressed a cry of pain, turned the hook as he required it, and, sliding down the rope, reached the ground. The door was near, and he found that it was fastened by a strong bar of wood. The lock was in so bad a condition that it gave way to a violent blow from Agricola, and then, the door opening, Dagobert entered the garden with Killjoy.

"Now," said the old soldier to his son, "thanks to you, the worst is over. Here is a means of escape for my poor children and Mademoiselle de Cardoville. All we have to do now is to find them, without any unfortunate meeting with any other person. Killjoy, go first; go, go, good dog; and mind, be very quiet—mind," added Dagobert.

The sagacious animal advanced, sniffing, and listening, and searching, with all the care and attention of a bloodhound on the quest.

By the dim moonlight struggling through the clouds, Dagobert and his son perceived about them a thicket of very large trees, whence diverged various paths. Undecided which to choose, Agricola said to his father,

"Let us take the path which runs along the wall; that must lead us to the building."

"Right; and let us walk on the turf instead of on these muddy paths—we shall make less noise."

The father and son, preceded by Killjoy, traversed for some time a winding path which ran not far from the wall. They stopped, from time to time, to listen and look carefully about them before they went on, to make out the various appearances presented by the trees and shrubs which, shaken by the wind, and lighted by the pale moonlight, assumed fantastic shapes.

Half past twelve o'clock struck as Agricola and his father reached a large iron gate, closing the private garden of the superior, into which Mayeux had obtained access in the morning, after having seen Rose Simon conversing with Adrienne de Cardoville.

Through the bars of this gate Agricola and his father saw, at a short distance, an open paling, which ended at a chapel, and beyond a small square pavilion.

"No doubt that is the pavilion belonging to the madhouse, occupied by Mademoiselle de Cardoville," said Agricola.

"And the building in which are the chambers of Rose and Blanche, but which
THE WANDERING JEW.

we cannot see from here, no doubt faces it," said Dagobert. "Poor, dear children, they are there, no doubt, in tears and despair," he added, in a tone of deep feeling.

"If this gate should be open—" said Agricola.
"It probably is, as it is inside the walls."
"Let us advance gently."

A few paces, and they reached the gate, which was only closed by a latch. Dagobert was about to open it, when Agricola said,
"Take care that the hinges do not make a noise."
"Must I push slowly or quickly?"
"Let me do it," said Agricola.
And he opened the gate so quickly that it made but a very slight noise; still, it was so audible that it might be heard in the silence of the night, during one of the quiet intervals of the storm.

Agricola and his father remained for a moment motionless, uneasy and listening, not daring to cross the threshold of the gate, lest they should not have the means of retreat.

Nothing stirred—all remained calm and silent. Agricola and his father, taking heart, went into the private garden.

Scarcely had the dog entered this place when he gave every sign of joy; pricking up his ears, wagging his tail, and bounding rather than running, he soon reached the paling where, in the morning, Rose Simon had for an instant spoken to Mademoiselle de Cardoville; then he paused a moment at that spot, uneasy and anxious, turning like a dog that seeks and discovers a scent. Dagobert and his son, leaving Killjoy to his instinct, followed his every movement with indescribable interest and suspense, hoping the best from his sagacity and attachment to the orphans.

"It was, no doubt, close to this paling that Mayeux saw Rose," said Dagobert.
"Killjoy is on the track—let him alone."

At the end of a few seconds the dog turned his head to Dagobert, and darted off toward a door on the ground floor of the building in front of the pavilion occupied by Adrienne; then, having reached that door, the animal lay down as though to wait for Dagobert.

"There can be no more doubt! This is the building in which the children are," said Dagobert, going to Killjoy; "it was there they shut Rose up lately."
"We must see if the windows have bars or not," said Agricola, following his father.

They both reached the spot where Killjoy was.
"Well, old fellow," said the soldier, in a low voice, pointing to the building,
"are Rose and Blanchet there?"

The dog lifted up his head, and replied by a howl of joy and two or three low barks.

Dagobert had only time to seize the dog by the throat.
"He will ruin all!" exclaimed the smith. "He has been heard, perhaps—"
"No!" replied Dagobert. "But, doubtless, the children are there."

At this moment the iron gate, by which the soldier and his son had entered the private garden, closed violently.
"We are shut in," said Agricola, quickly; "and there is no other way to get out."

For a moment the father and son looked at each other in dismay, but Agricola said,
"Perhaps the iron gate has closed by its own weight. I will run and see, and open it if I can."
"Go quickly, while I examine the windows."

Agricola ran to the iron gate, while Dagobert, going cautiously along the wall, reached the windows of the ground floor, which were four in number; two of them had no bars. He looked at the first floor, which was not very high,
and none of the windows were barred, so that the young girl who was in that story could, when warned, fasten a sheet, and slide down, as the orphans did when they escaped from the inn of the White Falcon; but it was necessary, though difficult, to ascertain which was the chamber she occupied. Dagobert thought that the sister who was in the ground floor would inform him, but then there was also the difficulty of knowing at which of the four windows below he ought to knock.

Agricola returned with speed.

"It was the wind, no doubt," he said, "that closed the iron gate. I have opened it again, and fastened it back with a stone; but we must be quick."

"How can we discover the rooms in which the poor children are?" said Dagobert, anxiously.

"True," said Agricola. "What shall we do?"

"To call out, and take the chance," said Dagobert, "would give the alarm, if we mistook the room."

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" replied Agricola, with extreme uneasiness; "to come under the very window, and yet not know which—"

"Time presses," said Dagobert, quickly, and interrupting his son; "we must risk all, for the sake of all."

"What do you mean, father?"

"I will call with a loud voice, 'Rose!' 'Blanche!' In despair, as they are, I am sure they are not asleep, but will jump up at the first sound. By means of her sheet, fastened to the window, in less than five minutes the one who is above will be in our arms. As to her on the ground floor, if her window is not barred, she will be with us in a second; if it is, we will soon wrench out one of those iron bars."

"But, father, if you call to them in a loud voice—"

"I may not, perhaps, be heard."

"But if you are, all is lost."

"I don't know that. Before they could call their watching-men, and open the doors, we shall be off; and if once we can regain the Boulevard, the dear children are free, and ourselves beyond pursuit."

"It is a dangerous expedient, but I see no other way."

"If there be only two men, Killjoy and I will take good care of them; in the mean time you must get the girls out, and hurry away with them as quickly as you can."

"Father," said Agricola, suddenly, "there is one sure mode of learning what we want to know. According to what La Mayeux told us, Mademoiselle de Cardoville has been in the habit of communicating by signs with Rose and Blanche."

"Yes."

"She must know, then, where the chambers of the poor girls are, since they answered from their windows."

"You are right; there is nothing else to be done. Let us go at once to the pavilion; but there, again, how are we to distinguish it from the rest of the building?"
"La Mayeux explained all that. She told me I should recognise the apartment occupied by Mademoiselle de Cardoville by its having a sort of awning over the window."

"Then hasten. You will have only to break through the paling. Have you got the iron bar?"

"Yes, here it is."

"Let us be off, then."

Proceeding with rapid pace to the slight division between the gardens, Agricola tore out two or three of the pales, which afforded an easy passage.

"Do you stay there, father, and keep watch," said Agricola, entering into the garden of Dr. Baleinier.

The window indicated by La Mayeux was easily recognised. It was high and large, surmounted by a sort of awning; it had once been a door, walled up at an after period to nearly a third of its height, and was defended by bars of iron not very near together. The rain had now ceased, and the moon, breaking from the clouds which had obscured it, lighted the whole pavilion. As Agricola approached the window, he found the chamber plunged in darkness, but a light was visible through a half-closed door at the extremity of the apartment.

Trusting that Mademoiselle de Cardoville had not yet retired to rest, the smith tapped lightly against the window-panes. In an instant the door was thrown wide open, and Mademoiselle de Cardoville, who was yet up, entered the apartment, dressed as she had been during her conversation with La Mayeux. The light which Adrienne carried in her hand revealed at once the enchanting sweetness of her countenance, and the surprise and alarm depicted on it. Placing her candle on the table, Adrienne appeared to listen attentively while she slowly advanced to the window, when, suddenly perceiving the indistinct outline of a man looking through the bars, she started and stood still.

Fearing lest, in her terror, Mademoiselle de Cardoville might seek refuge in the inner chamber, Agricola again tapped on the glass, and, at the risk of being heard from without, exclaimed,

"Tis I—Agricola Baudoin!"

As Adrienne caught these sounds, she recollected her conversation with La Mayeux, and concluded that Agricola and his father had made their way into the convent for the purpose of carrying off Rose and Blanche. Hastening to the window, she easily recognised the features of Agricola by the bright moonlight, and opened the casement with as little noise as possible.

"Mademoiselle," said the smith, hastily, "there is not an instant to lose; the Count de Montbron is not in Paris, and my father and myself are here to deliver you."

"Thanks, thanks! M. Agricola," said Mademoiselle de Cardoville, in a voice of the most touching gratitude, "but first think of the daughters of General Simon."

"We are thinking of them, mademoiselle, but we are unable to determine which is their window."

"The chamber of one of them is on the ground floor, the last on the side of the garden; the other is on the first floor, directly over it."

"Then we shall be able to save them!" exclaimed the smith.

"But now I remember," said Adrienne, "the first floor is high; you will find, near the chapel now in progress, some long poles for scaffoldings, which may be serviceable to you."

"That will answer as well as a ladder to enable me to reach the first floor; but now to provide for your escape, mademoiselle."

"Think only of these poor orphans, for time presses. So that they can be liberated to-night, it matters little to me whether I remain a day or two longer in this house."

"Not so, mademoiselle; it is, on the contrary, of the utmost importance for you to be freed this night. Matters of the utmost importance, of which you are ignorant, make it necessary."
"What do you mean?

"I have not time to explain myself more fully; but I beseech you, mademoiselle, come away this instant. I can wrench away a couple of bars from this window. I will fetch my crowbar."

"There is no need; the door of this pavilion is merely locked and bolted on the outside. You can easily knock off the lock and undo the bolt."

"And in ten minutes after we shall be on the Boulevard," said the smith. "Hasten, then, mademoiselle. Wrap yourself up as well as you can, for the night is very cold, and I will return directly."

"M. Agricola," said Adrienne, with tears in her eyes, "I know all the risk you are running to serve me; and I hope it may be in my power to prove to you that my memory is as good as yours. Ah! you and your adopted sister are noble, excellent creatures; and I feel pleasure in owing you both so vast a debt. But do not think of returning hither till you have effected the release of the daughters of General Simon."

"Thanks to the directions you have given me, mademoiselle, that will soon be done; I will now hasten back to my father, and return to you immediately."

In pursuance of the excellent advice given by Mademoiselle de Cardoville, Agricola proceeded to the chapel, and taking up one of those long and stout poles employed in building, threw it over his powerful shoulders, and with a light and agile step proceeded to rejoin his father.

Scarce1y had Agricola got beyond the paling, in his way to the chapel, which was in shadow, when Adrienne fancied she saw a human form issue from a clump of trees in the convent garden, rapidly dart across the walk, and disappear behind a high hedge of box. Much alarmed for Agricola's safety, Mademoiselle de Cardoville ventured to call him several times in a low voice, to put him on his guard; but the smith was out of hearing; he had already rejoined his father, who, burning with impatience, kept listening first at one window, then at another, with increasing anxiety.

"All is right," said Agricola, in a low voice; "here are the windows, one on the ground floor, the other just over it, on the first story."

"Now, then!" said Dagobert, with a burst of rapture impossible to describe, as he ran to examine the casements. "They are not grated!" he exclaimed.

"Let us first ascertain that one of the children is there," said Agricola; "then, by placing this pole against the wall, I can climb up to the window on the first floor, which is not very high."

"Right, my boy! once up, knock against the glass, and call either Rose or Blanche. When you are answered, come down; we will place the pole against the window-bar, and the poor child will slide down—they are light and active. Come! quick! to work at once!"

"And then, father, we will go and deliver Mademoiselle de Cardoville."

While Agricola, raising the pole and placing it securely against the window-frame, was preparing to ascend, Dagobert, tapping against the window of the apartment on the ground floor, said, in a loud voice,
"'Tis I! 'tis Dagobert!"

The chamber was, in fact, the one occupied by Rose Simon; but the poor girl, distracted by her separation from her sister, and consumed by a burning fever, was far from being able to sleep, while tears bedewed her pillow. At the sound made by Dagobert, as he knocked against the glass, the poor girl started with dread; but when she recognised the dear and well-known voice of the old soldier, she sprang up, passed her hands over her forehead, as though to assure herself she was not in a dream, then, wrapped in her long white dressing-gown, she rushed to the window, uttering a cry of joy.

But all at once, before she could open the window, two reports of a gun were heard, accompanied by loud and repeated cries of "Guard! guard! robbers!"

Petrified with horror, the orphan stood motionless, her eyes mechanically fixed on the window, through which, by the moonlight, she saw a confused mass of men struggling in deadly combat, while the furious barking of Killjoy almost drowned the repeated cries of "Guard! thieves! murder!"

CHAPTER X.

THE EVE OF AN IMPORTANT DAY.

Vents in their progress now lead us to the room in the Rue Milieu des Ursins, where, about two hours before the facts we have just narrated had passed in the convent of Sainte Marie, Rodin and Father d'Aigrigny were together. Since the revolution of July, Father d'Aigrigny had thought fit to remove into this temporary abode the secret archives and correspondence of his Order—a prudent precaution, for he had reason to fear that the reverend fathers would be expelled by the state from the magnificent establishment with which the restoration had liberally endowed them.*

Rodin, still clad meanly, still shabby and dirty, was writing quietly at his desk, faithful to his humble character of secretary, which concealed, as we have seen, a much more important function, that of socius—a function which, according to the constitutions of the Order, consists in never leaving the superior, in watching and spying his least movements, his lightest impressions, and sending a full account of them to Rome.

* This fear was vain; for we read in the "Constitutionel" of the 1st of February, 1832 (twelve years ago):

"When, in 1622, M. de Corbière rudely destroyed the brilliant normal school which, in its few years of existence, created or developed so much varied talent, it was decided that, in order to make compensation, the Hôtel de la Rue des Postes, in which it was situated, should be purchased and given to the congregation of the Sainte Espirit. The minister of the marine provided the funds for this purchase, and the residence was placed at the disposal of the society which then reigned in France. Since that period it has occupied this abode peacefully, which had become a sort of hotel where Jesuitism vegetated and petted its numerous allies, who came from all parts of the country to be refreshed by Father Ronsin. Things were so when the revolution of July arrived, which, it was supposed, would oust the congregation from this locality. Who would believe it? It was not so: the allowance was stopped, but the Jesuits were left in possession of the Hôtel de la Rue des Postes; and on the 31st of January, 1833, the men of the Sacred Heart are fed at the expense of the state, and during this time the normal school has no place of shelter, but, reorganized, occupies a dirty hole in a narrow corner of the college of Louis le Grand."

We read this in the "Constitutionel" of 1832, concerning the Hôtel des Postes. We are not aware what sort of transactions have been going on since that time between the reverend fathers and the government, but we find in an article recently published by a journal, on the organization of the Society of Jesus, that the Hôtel de la Rue des Postes forms part of the landed property of the congregation.

Let us quote a few fragments of the article in question:
In spite of his habitual passiveness, Rodin seemed disturbed and thoughtful, and replied in a manner much more curt than usual to the orders or questions of Father d'Aigrigny, who had just come in.

"Has anything new occurred while I was away?" he inquired of Rodin.

"Have the reports been favourable as they arrived?"

"Very favourable."

"Read them to me."

"Before I do so, I must inform your reverence," said Rodin, "that Morok has been here these two days."

"Morok!" said the Abbé d'Aigrigny, with surprise; "I thought that, when he left Germany and Switzerland, he received his orders from Fribourg to go toward the south. At Nismes or Avignon he might be a useful auxiliary at this moment, for the Protestants are busy, and there is fear of a reaction against the Catholics."

"I do not know," said Rodin, "if Morok has any particular motives for changing his route, but his apparent reasons, he has told me, are, that he is going to give some representations here."

"In what way?"

"A dramatic agent engaged him and his menagerie, while he was at Lyons, for the theatre of the Porte Saint Martin, on very high terms, and he added that he could not reject such an offer."

"Well, be it so!" said d'Aigrigny, shrugging his shoulders; "but by the spreading of his little books, the sale of chaplets and engravings, as well as by the influence which, to a certain extent, he might have exercised over the religious and ill-informed population, like those in the south and in Brittany, he might render services which he cannot in Paris."

"He is downstairs with a sort of giant who accompanies him; for, as an old servant of your reverence, Morok hopes to have the honour of kissing your hand this evening."

"Impossible—impossible! You know how this evening is occupied. Has any one been to the Rue Saint François?"

"Yes; and the old Jew guardian has had notice from the notary. To-morrow, at six o'clock in the morning, the masons will open the walled-up door, and, for the first time in 150 years, the house will be entered."

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{The house in the Rue de la Postes, worth, perhaps,} & 500,000 \\
\text{That in the Rue de Serres} & 300,000 \\
\text{An estate two leagues from Paris} & 150,000 \\
\text{House and church at Bourges} & 100,000 \\
\text{Notre Dame de Lieuse, a gift made in 1643} & 60,000 \\
\text{Saint Acheul, a novitiate house} & 400,000 \\
\text{Nantes, a house} & 100,000 \\
\text{Quimper, house, about} & 100,000 \\
\text{Laval, house and church} & 150,000 \\
\text{Rennes, house} & 80,000 \\
\text{Vannes, house} & 40,000 \\
\text{Metz, house} & 40,000 \\
\text{Strasbourg, house} & 60,000 \\
\text{Rouen, house} & 15,000 \\
\end{array}
\]

This is a list of the property which is known as belonging to the Society of Jesus.

"These various properties amount to nearly 2,000,000 francs. Teaching is, besides, a very important source of revenue to the Jesuits. The college of Bruges-late produces 300,000 francs. The two provinces of France (the general of the Jesuits at Rome has divided France into two conscriptions, that of Lyons and that of Paris) possess, besides, its funded property and shares in the mines of Austria, more than 500,000 francs a year. Every year the propagation of the faith supplies, at least, from 40,000 to 50,000 francs; the preachers collect after their sermons 150,000 francs; and to this income we must add the produce of the sale of works of the society, and the profit which is made by a trade in engravings.

"Each plate costs, drawing and engraving included, 600 francs, and they may be made to print 10,000 copies, which cost, for paper and working, 40 francs per 1000. They bring in to the responsible editor 350 francs, and thus on each 1000 is a nett profit of 210 francs. Is not this a profitable labour! and we may suppose how it extends. The fathers themselves travel for the business, and they could not have more zealious and indefatigable agents. They are always ready, and they always succeed. The editor, of course, is one of them. The first they selected for this post of intermediary was the coeius of the procrastus, N. V. J—; this coeius had some property of his own, but they were obliged to make him advances for the outset at starting. When they saw the prosperity of the undertaking assured, they suddenly called in their advances. The editor was unable at the moment to make them good, as they well knew, so they put a rich successor in his place, with whom they could treat on more advantageous conditions, and without remorse they ruined their coeius by destroying the position for whose permanence they had given him a moral guarantie."
Father d'Aigrigny was for a moment lost in thought. He then said to Rodin,
"On the eve of so decisive a moment, nothing must be neglected—everything
remembered. Read to me again the copy of the note inserted in the archives of
the Society, a century and a half ago, on the subject of M. de Rennepont."

The secretary took a memorandum from a packet, and read as follows:
"This day, 19th February, 1682, the R. P. Provincial Alexander Bourdon
sent the following information, with these words in the margin:
"'Extremely important for the future.'
"We have learned from the confession of a dying man, whom one of our Or-
der has shrived, a very secret matter.
"M. Marius de Rennepont, one of the most active and formidable leaders of
the reformed religion, and one of the bitterest enemies to our holy society,
had apparently returned to the bosom of our maternal church, with the sole
purpose of saving his property, threatened with confiscation, in consequence
of his irreligious and damnable behaviour. Proofs having been furn-
nished by different persons of our society that the conversion of the
Sieur de Rennepont was not sincere,
but only a mask for a sacrilegious de-
sign, the property of the said sieur,
henceforward considered as lapsed,
has, on this account, been confiscated
by H. M. our King Louis XIV., and
the said Sieur de Rennepont con-
demned to the galleys for life,*
whence he escaped by a voluntary
death, after which abominable crime
he was drawn on a hurdle, and his body given to the dogs of the highways.

"This premised, we come to the secret so excessively important to the inter-
est of our society.
"H. M. Louis XIV., in his paternal and Catholic bounty for the Church, and
especially for our Order, had awarded to us the proceeds of this confiscation, in
gratitude for our having exposed the Sieur de Rennepont as a relapsed Protest-
ant, infamous and sacrilegious.
"We have learned CERTAINLY that from this confiscation, and consequently
from our society, have been withdrawn a house, situated in Paris, No. 3 Rue
Saint François, and a sum of 50,000 crowns in gold. The house was made over
before the confiscation, by means of a pretended sale, to a friend of the Sieur de
Rennepont, who being a very good Catholic, we cannot, unfortunately, proceed
against him.
"This house, through the guilty connivance of this friend, has been walled up,
and is not to be opened for a century and a half, according to the will and last
wishes of the Sieur de Rennepont. As to the 50,000 crowns in gold, they were
placed in hands as yet, unfortunately, unknown, to be invested and to accumulate
for 150 years, then to be divided among the existing descendants of the Sieur de
Rennepont; a sum which, through so many accumulations, must become enor-
mous, and necessarily attain an amount of from 40,000,000 to 50,000,000 of
lives tournois.
"From motives as yet unknown, but which he has detailed in a will, the Sieur
de Rennepont has concealed from his family—whom the edicts against the Prot-

* Louis XIV., the great king, punished with the galleys for life those Protestants who, after having been converted,
then by force, returned to their original creed. As to the Protestants who remained in France, notwithstanding the
rumour of the edicts, they were deprived of sepulture, drawn on a hurdle, and then thrown to the dogs.
estants have driven from France—where he has placed the 50,000 crowns, impressing only on the parents to perpetuate in their line, from generation to generation, the recommendation to the last survivor to be in Paris 150 years hence, at the Rue Saint François, on the 13th of February, 1832; and that this request may not be forgotten, he has charged a man, whose condition is unknown, but whose description is given, to have made certain bronze medals, on which this desire and this date are engraved, and to transmit one to each person of his family; a precaution the more necessary, as, from another reason, equally unknown, but which it is presumed the will also explains, the heirs are commanded to present themselves on the day fixed, before noon, in person, and not by deputy, else they will be excluded from any participation.

The unknown man who went to distribute these medals to the members of the Rennepont family is from thirty to thirty-six years of age, of a bold but sorrowful demeanour, and tall; he has black eyebrows, thick, and singularly united. He is called Joseph; and it is suspected very strongly that he is an active and dangerous emissary of those reformed and republican madmen of the Seven United Provinces.

"It appears, from the foregoing, that this sum, confided by this heretic to an unknown hand in a surreptitious manner, has escaped the confiscation which was awarded to us by our well-beloved king; it is an immense injury, a monstrous fraud, which we must seek to recover, if not at this time, in a time to come.

"Our society being (to the greater glory of God and our Holy Father) imperishable, it will be easy—thanks to the relations we have established all over the earth by means of: missions and other foundations—to follow, from the present time, the filiation of this family Rennepont, from generation to generation, never to lose sight of it; so that, in 150 years, at the moment when the division of this immense accumulated fortune takes place, our company may enter into the property which has been so treacherously abstracted from them, and resume it per fas aut nefas, by any means whatsoever, even by stratagem or violence—our company not being compelled to act otherwise against the future holders of our rights, so maliciously taken from us by this infamous and sacrilegious heretic, because it is lawful to defend, preserve, and recover our property by all means which the Lord has placed in our hands.

"Until this restitution be completed, this Rennepont family shall be denounced and outcast as the accursed race of the Cain-like heretic, and it shall be good to keep rigid and unrelenting watch over it.

"For this end, it will be requisite every year, from this day forth, that there be established a sort of inquiry into the successive positions of the members of this family."

Rodin stopped here, and said to Father d’Aigrigny,

"Here follow the accounts, sent in year by year, of the position of this family from 1682 until this time. It is useless to read this to your reverence."

"Quite," said the Abbé d’Aigrigny. "This note clearly states the main facts." Then, after a moment’s silence, he added, with an expression of triumphant pride, "How great is the power of the association, founded on tradition and on perpetuity! Thanks to this note inserted in our archives for a century and a half, this family has been watched from generation to generation; our Order has always had its eyes fixed on them, following over every part of the globe whithersoever exile had cast them. At length, to-morrow we enter into this vast receipt, so small at first, but which 150 years have transformed into a princely fortune. Yes, we shall succeed, for I have foreseen every contingency. One thing, however, occupies my mind."

"What?" inquired Rodin.

"I was thinking of the efforts which have hitherto been made in vain to obtain farther particulars from the guardian of the house in the Rue Saint François. Has the attempt been once more made, according to my orders?"

"Yes, it has."

"Well?"
"This time, as before, the old Jew has been impenetrable; he is, moreover, almost in his dotage, and his wife is very little better."

"When I reflect," said Father d'Aigrigny, "that through the century and a half this house in the Rue Saint François has been walled and shut up, its ward has remained from generation to generation in this family of Samuels, I cannot believe they are as ignorant as they profess to be of the successive depositaries of the funds whose accumulation has become so immense."

"You have seen," said Rodin, "by the notes in the ledger on this matter, that the order has been carefully obeyed since 1682. At different periods attempts have been made to obtain information on this subject, which the note of Father Bourdon does not clear up. But this race of guardian Jews has remained mute, whence we may presume that they know nothing."

"Which has always appeared to me impossible, for the grandfather of all these Samuels was present at the closing of the house a hundred and fifty years ago. 'He was,' says the ledger, 'the man of business or domestic of M. de Rennepont,' and it is impossible that he was not instructed on many points which tradition has, doubtless, perpetuated in his family."

"If I were allowed to hazard a slight remark—" said Rodin, humbly.

"Speak!"

"It is but a few years since we acquired the certain knowledge, by a confidence of the confessional, that these funds existed, and that they had attained an enormous figure."

"True! and that recalled the attention of the R. F. General to the affair."

"We know, then, what probably all the descendants of the Rennepont family are ignorant of—the immense value of this inheritance."

"Yes," replied Father d'Aigrigny, "the person who certified this to his confessor is worthy of all belief. Lately, he renewed the declaration, but, notwithstanding all the persuasions of his director, he refused to confess in whose hands the funds were placed, always affirming that they could not be placed in hands more trustworthy."

"And who knows if the holder of this enormous sum will present himself tomorrow, spite of the honesty ascribed to him? In spite of myself, the nearer the moment approaches, the more my anxiety increases. Ah!" resumed Father d'Aigrigny, after a moment's silence, "what immense interests are at stake, and how incalculable will be the consequences of success! At least all has been done that could be done."

To these words, which Father d'Aigrigny addressed to Rodin, as if expecting his acquiescence, the novice did not reply.

The abbe, looking at him with surprise, said to him,

"Are you not of this opinion? Could more have been done? Have we not gone to the extreme limit of the possible?"

Rodin bowed respectfully, but remained mute.

"If you think that any precaution has been omitted," exclaimed D'Aigrigny, with a sort of uneasy impatience, "say so—there is still time! Once more, do you think that all it was possible to do has been done? All the descendants are put out of the way, and when Gabriel presents himself tomorrow at the Rue Saint François, will he not be the sole representative of the family, and, consequently, the sole possessor of this immense fortune? But after his renunciation, according to our statutes it is not he, but our Order, which will acquire this wealth. Could one act better, or otherwise? say frankly."

"I cannot allow myself to utter an opinion on the subject," replied Rodin, humbly; and again bowing, "The good or bad issue will reply to your reverence."

Father d'Aigrigny shrugged his shoulders, and reproached himself for having asked an opinion of this writing machine, who served him as secretary, and who had, as he declared, but three qualities—memory, discretion, and exactness.
CHAPTER XL

TH E STR ANGLER.

Af ter a moment's silence, Father d'Aigrigny said,
"Read me this day's reports touching the present situation of each of the persons concerned in the affair of to-morrow."

"Here is the account for this evening, which has just been brought."

"Proceed."

Rodin read as follows:

"Jacques Rennepons, called Couche-tout-Nu, has been seen confined in the debtor's prison at eight o'clock this evening."

"Then he will give us no trouble to-morrow; after which—but go on."

"The superior of the Convent de Sainte Marie, instructed by the Princess de Saint-Dizier, has placed the Meadoiselles Rose and Blanche Simon under still closer confinement; this evening, at nine o'clock, they were carefully locked in their separate cells, and armed guards will keep watch during the night in the convent garden."

"Nothing to apprehend in that quarter, thanks to the precautions taken," said D'Aigrigny. "Continue."

"Doctor Baleinier, acting also by the instructions of the Princess de Saint-Dizier, still observes the most rigorous surveillance over Mademoiselle de Cardoville; at a quarter to nine o'clock the door of the pavilion she occupies was locked and bolted."

"No need of inquietude there."

"As for M. Hardy," resumed Rodin, "I have to-day received from Toulouse a note from M. de Bressac, his intimate friend, to whose services we are indebted for getting M. Hardy out of the way. The letter contains a note addressed by M. Hardy to a person in whom he places confidence. M. de Bressac has thought it best to interrupt this letter, and send it to us as another proof of the successful exertions he has made, which, he hopes, we shall bear in mind; for he adds that, in order to serve us, he has betrayed his friend, by playing on his feelings in the most unworthy manner. M. de Bressac doubts not that, in consideration of his valuable services, you will give him up the papers which place him so absolutely in our power, since their contents may bring irreparable ruin on a woman he passionately adores with an adulterous love. He urges that we should pity the fearful predicament in which he was placed when he had to choose between betraying his bosom friend, or seeing the object of his fondest affections disgraced and ruined forever."

"These adulterous waitings deserve no pity," answered D'Aigrigny, disdainfully; "however, we will think of it; M. de Bressac may still be useful to us. But let me see the letter of M. Hardy, this impious and republican manufacturer, the right worthy descendant of the accursed race; this man it was so important to get rid of."

"Here is the letter," said Rodin. "To-morrow we will send it to the person for whom it is intended." He then read as follows:

"Toulouse, Feb. 10.

"At length, my dear sir, I find a few minutes' leisure to address you, and to explain the cause of my abrupt departure, which, if it did not excite your apprehensions, must, at least, have greatly surprised you. I have also to ask a favour..."
at your hands, and the facts are briefly these: I have often spoken to you of Félix de Bressac, a friend of my youth, although much younger than myself; our friendship has ever been warm and sincere, and we have mutually received sufficient proofs of regard to warrant the most unlimited confidence in each other. He is to me as a brother; and you well know all the signification I attach to those words. A few days ago he wrote me from Toulouse, where he had gone to pass some time, in the following terms:

"If you love me, hasten to me. I have urgent need of you. Set out instantly. Your consolations may, perhaps, inspire me with courage to live. Should you arrive too late, then pardon me, and think sometimes of one who, to the last, will be your faithful and attached friend."

"You can imagine the grief and alarm with which I perused this epistle. I sent instantly for post-horses. My managing overseer, an old and worthy man, whom I both esteem and respect, the father of General Simon, finding I was about to go to the south, begged me to take him with me, and leave him for a few days in the department of La Creuse, where he wished to inspect some improvements recently introduced. I agreed the more willingly, as I could then relieve my heart by discoursing with him on the painful intelligence contained in the letter of De Bressac.

"On my arrival at Toulouse, I found that he had left that city the evening previous, taking his weapons with him, and a prey to the most violent despair. At first I could obtain no indication of the route he had taken, but at length, after infinite trouble, I found traces of him, and with great difficulty found him in a wretched village. Never did I see such despair as that which possessed him. There was nothing in it of a violent character, but an utter rejection of all hope; a gloomy, sullen silence: at first he almost repulsed me. Then by degrees he seemed to recover himself, and at length threw himself into my arms, weeping bitterly. By his side were loaded pistols. Had I been one day later, perhaps, it was all over with him. I cannot tell you the cause of his overwhelming grief; the secret is not mine; but I no longer wondered at his deep anguish. All I can now say is, that his cure will be long and difficult. He must be tenderly watched and comforted. None but a friend can perform this delicate task. Yet I am not without hope. I have persuaded him to undertake a journey of some length, and to seek diversion and recreation in travelling. To-morrow we start for Nice. Should he find benefit from the excursion, we shall prolong it, for I have nothing to call me to Paris before the end of March.

"As for the favour I have to ask of you, it is optional with yourself whether you comply or not; but this is it:

"It appears, by some papers in my mother's family, that I have a certain interest in being in Paris on the 13th of February, at No. 3 Rue Saint François. I made some inquiries about this; but all I could learn was, that the house, which was of antique appearance, had been shut up for the last 150 years by some whim of one of my maternal ancestors, and that it was to be opened on the 13th of this month in the presence of all the co-heirs, if there are any. Being unable myself to be on the spot, I have written to my overseer, a man on whom I can safely rely, and who is father to General Simon, to set out for Paris, in order to be present at the opening of the old house. Not as my representative, for that would be useless, but merely for the curiosity of the thing, and that he might let me know what this romantic scheme of my progenitor would end in.
"As it is possible that my overseer may not arrive in time, I should esteem it a great favour if you would inquire at Plessy whether he has returned; and if he has not, may I ask you to go instead of him to the Rue Saint François, and be present at the opening."

"Although I do not suppose I have given up much in abstaining from Paris on the day indicated, had the sacrifice been ever so great, I should unhesitatingly have made it, knowing how necessary were my cares and attentions to the man I love as a brother.

"Let me, then, again express a hope that you will be present in the Rue Saint François, and add to the favour that of writing to me (Poste Restante), at Nice, the result of your visit. Yours, &c.,

FRANCIS HARDY."

"Although the presence of this father of General Simon could not in any way interfere with our plans," observed D'Aigrigny, "I think it would be desirable he should not be present. However, it is immaterial, since M. Hardy himself is safely at a distance."

"We have now only to get rid of the young Indian. And as for him," continued the marquis, with a thoughtful air, "it was wisely done to allow M. Norval to depart bearing the presents of Mademoiselle de Cardoville to the prince; the surgeon, who accompanied him, and who was selected by Dr. Baleinier, will escape all suspicion."

"Entirely," replied Rodin; "nothing could be more satisfactory than his letter of yesterday."

"Thus, then, there is nothing to dread from the Indian prince," said D'Aigrigny; "everything works as we would have it."

"As regards Gabriel," continued Rodin, "he has written again this morning, urgently pressing for the interview with your reverence he has been trying to obtain for the last three days. He seems to suffer from the punishment imposed on him, in confining him to the house for the last five days."

"To-morrow, when he is taken to the Rue Saint François, I will hear him. That will be time enough."

"Now, then," added D'Aigrigny, with an air of triumphant satisfaction, "we have placed all the descendants of the family, whose presence would ruin our projects, in such circumstances as to render it impossible for them to be present before twelve o'clock to-morrow in the Rue Saint François, while Gabriel alone will be there. At last we hold success within our grasp."

D'Aigrigny was interrupted by some one tapping twice gently against the door.

"Come in," he cried.

An old servant, dressed in black, appeared, saying,

"There is a person below desiring to speak with M. Rodin upon urgent business."

"What is his name?" inquired D'Aigrigny.

"He refused to tell me; but he bade me say he came from M. Josué, a merchant in the island of Java."

D'Aigrigny and Rodin exchanged a look of surprise not unmixed with fear.

"See who this man can be," said D'Aigrigny to Rodin, unable to conceal his uneasiness, and come and let me know."

Then speaking to the servant, who left the room, he said,

"Show him in."

And, with these words, D'Aigrigny disappeared by a side door, after exchanging a significant sign with Rodin. The next minute Faringhea, ex-chief of the sect of Stranglers, appeared before Rodin, who instantly recollected having seen him in the Château de Cardoville. The wily socius started, but would not appear to recognise the person who stood before him.

Still bending over his desk, and feigning not to perceive Faringhea, he hastily wrote a few lines on a sheet of paper.

"Sir," said the servant, astonished at the silence of Rodin, "this is the person."
Rodin folded the paper he had so hastily written, and said to the servant.
"Carry this to its address; they will send the answer."
The servant bowed and retired. Then Rodin, without rising, fixed his small
reptile eyes on Faringhea, and said to him, in a courteous tone,
"May I inquire to whom I have the honour of speaking?"

CHAPTER XII.
THE TWO BROTHERS OF "THE GOOD WORK."

ARINGHEA, though born in India, had, as has been said,
travelled much; he had frequently visited the European
establishments in different parts of Asia, had acquired
both the French and English languages, and, possessed
as he was of uncommon tact and intelligence, was per
fectly civilized.

Instead of replying to the question of Rodin, he fixed
on him a keen and searching look. The socius, impatient
at his silence, and pressaging, with a vague apprehension,
that Faringhea's visit, directly or indirectly, bore reference
to Djalma, reiterated his question, still speaking in a tone
of calm indifference.

"To whom, sir, have I the honour of speaking?"
"Do you not recollect me?" asked Faringhea, advancing toward Rodin's chair.
"I do not think I ever had the honour of seeing you," answered Rodin, coldly.
"Yet I remember you very well," said Faringhea. "I saw you at the Château
de Cardoville on the day when the steam-vessel and the ship were wrecked."
"At the Château de Cardoville! It is possible, sir, as I was there during the
storm."
"On that day I called you by your name. You inquired what I wanted of
ARREST OF THE STRANGLERS AT THE RUINS OF TCHANDI.
you? I told you, 'Nothing now, brother; much at another time.' That time has come, and I have come to require much from you."

"My dear sir," replied the still impassive Rodin, "before we continue this conversation, which to me is somewhat incomprehensible, I must again ask with whom I have the honour of conversing. You introduced yourself under the pretext of being the bearer of some communication from M. Joshua Van Daël, a respectable merchant in the island of Java."

"Do you know the handwriting of M. Joshua?" inquired Faringhea, interrupting Rodin.

"Perfectly."

"Look, then," said the Mulatto, drawing from his pocket (he was attired in a sort of half-genteel European costume) the voluminous despatch taken by him from Mahal, the Javanese smuggler, after he had strangled him on the shore at Batavia. These papers Faringhea displayed before the eyes of Rodin, without, however, letting them out of his grasp.

"That is M. Joshua's writing, certainly," said Rodin, extending his hand toward the packet, which the Mulatto quickly and prudently replaced in his pocket.

"My dear sir, you must permit me to tell you that you have a singular method of executing your commission. This letter being addressed to me, and intrusted to you by M. Joshua, you ought—"

"M. Joshuadid not intrust me with it," said Faringhea, interrupting Rodin.

"Then how did it come into your hands?"

"A smuggler of Java betrayed me. Joshua had secured this man's passage to Alexandria, and had given him this packet to take on board for the European mail. I strangled the smuggler, took his letter, presented myself in his stead on board the ship, and here I am!"

The Strangler pronounced these words in a tone of brutal boasting, his bold glance encountering, with unflinching steadiness, the scrutinizing gaze of Rodin, who, at this singular avowal, hastily raised his head, as though he would read the features of his visiter.

Faringhea had expected to astonish or terrify Rodin by this species of swaggering brutality; but, to his infinite surprise, the socius, imperturbable as a statue, merely replied,

"Ah, indeed! so they strangle men at Java, do they?"

"Yes, and elsewhere, too," said Faringhea, with a bitter smile.

"I cannot believe you; but I must confess your candour is astonishing. Monsieur——what is your name?"

"Faringhea!"

"Well, then, M. Faringhea, be pleased to tell me what aim you have in this strange conversation? It appears that, by a most horrible crime, you have seized upon a letter addressed to me, and yet you hesitate to give it into my hands."

"Because I have read it, and it may serve my purpose."

"Oh, you have read it?" said Rodin, somewhat disturbed; then added, "Why, certainly, after the somewhat unusual manner in which you became possessed of the letter, one should not expect you to be very ceremonious in other respects. And may I inquire what you found in the letter which you presume you shall find useful?"

"I learned, brother, that you, like myself, are a son of the 'good work.'"

"What good work do you mean?" said Rodin, greatly astonished.

Faringhea, in a tone of bitter sarcasm, answered,

"M. Joshua says, in his letter,

""Obedience and courage, secrecy and patience, cunning and audacity, union among ourselves, who have the universe for our country, our Order for our family, and Rome for our queen."

"It is possible M. Joshua may so have expressed himself; but what conclusion do you draw from these words?"

"Our 'Order' has also, like yours, brother, the world for its country; like you, our accomplices are our family; and for our queen we have Bohwanie."
"I do not know that saint," said Rodin, with affected humility. "She is our Rome," returned the Strangler. "Joshua speaks of other members of your work, who, scattered over the globe, labour for the glory of Rome, your queen. Members of our work labour in various lands for the glory of Bohwanie!"

"And who are these sons of Bohwanie, M. Faringhea?"

"Men resolute, audacious, patient, wary, and unflinching; who, to promote the 'good work,' are ready to sacrifice father, mother, brother, and sister, and to regard as enemies all those who are not of them."

"There appears to me much that is good in the persevering and exclusive spirit of this work," said Rodin, with an air of humility and modesty; "it remains only to know what is the proposed end."

"Brother, we do as you do—we make corpses!"

"Corpses!" exclaimed Rodin.

"Does not M. Joshua say in his letter to you," returned Faringhea, "The greatest glory our Order can achieve is to make man, as it were, a corpse!* Our sect also makes corpses of men. Dead men are sweet in the eyes of Bohwanie."

"But, M. Faringhea," cried Rodin, "M. Joshua speaks figuratively of the mind, the will, the thought, which should be subjected by discipline!"

"True, your Order kills men's souls; ours destroys the body: but come, brother, your hand—we are all hunters of men!"

"But, once again," said Rodin, "I repeat, we aim at no man's life; 'tis the will and the thought that are referred to in the words you have quoted."

"And what are men, deprived of the free exercise of thought and will, if not corpses? Come, come, brother, the dead bodies made by our cord are not more cold or inanimate than those you make with your discipline. Come, brother, own the truth; Rome and Bohwanie are sisters."

Spite of his apparent calm, it was not without alarm that Rodin saw an unprincipled creature like Faringhea the possessor of a long letter from Joshua, which certainly referred to Djalma. True, Rodin believed he had made it impossible for the young Indian to be in Paris by the following morning; but, ignorant what relations might have been established between the prince and the Mulatto since the shipwreck, he could but regard the latter as one who might be extremely dangerous. But in proportion as the socius was internally agitated, the more did he strive to assume a cool and contemptuous manner to Faringhea; he replied, therefore,

"Your comparison between Rome and Bohwanie is, no doubt, very striking; but I do not perceive what it tends to prove."

"I wish, brother, to show you what I am," said Faringhea, "of what I am capable, to convince you that it is better to have me for your friend than your enemy."

"In other words," said Rodin, with contemptuous irony, "you belong to a murderous sect in India, and you seek to intimidate me by alluding to the fate of the man from whom you stole a packet of letters addressed to me; permit me, in my turn, to inform you, with all deference, M. Faringhea, that we do not strangle people here; and that, if you have any notion of making corpses in honour of your Queen Bohwanie, you will have your head cut off for the sake of another deity commonly called Justice."

"And suppose I had attempted to poison any one, what would be done then?"

"I would humbly observe to you, M. Faringhea, that I have not the leisure to instruct you in our criminal jurisprudence; but take my advice, and resist every temptation either to strangle or poison any one; and, once for all, will you, or will you not, give me those letters of M. Joshua's?"

* We must remind our readers that the doctrine of passive and absolute obedience, the great lever of the company of Jesus, was comprised in those terrible words uttered by the dying Loyola, "Let each member of the Order be in the hands of his superiors but as a corpse—PERINDE AC CADAVER."
"You mean those relative to Prince Djalma, I suppose?" said the Mulatto, looking fixedly at Rodin, who, spite of the alarm and uneasiness he felt, con-strained himself sufficiently to say, in a calm and tranquil tone,

"Ignorant as I am of the contents of the letters you withhold, it is impossible for me to answer that question. I have only to request, and, if need be, to insist, that you either deliver those papers, or quit this room."

"In a few minutes, brother, you will beg me to remain."

"I doubt that!"

"A few words will effect the wonder. When I inquired just now about the punishment for poisoning, it was because you sent a doctor to poison Prince Djalma (at least for a time), at the Castle of Cardoville."

Spite of his self-command, Rodin felt a cold shudder, as he said,

"I do not understand you!"

"True, I am a poor stranger, speaking your language but imperfectly; I will, however, try to make my meaning clearer. I know, through the letters of M. Joshua, how important it is to you that the prince should not be in Paris tomorrow, and what you have done to prevent it. Now am I understood?"

"I have no reply to make."

Two taps at the door interrupted this conversation.

"Come in!" said Rodin.

"Your letter was sent as directed, sir," said an old servant, bowing; "and here is the reply."

Rodin took the paper presented to him; but, before opening it, said, courteously, to Faringhea,

"Will you excuse me?"

"Oh, never mind me," answered the Mulatto.

"You are very kind," said Rodin; who, after having read the letter, hastily wrote a few words at the end of it, and, giving it to the servant, said,

"Send this to the same address."

The servant bowed and retired.

"Shall I go on?" inquired the Mulatto of Rodin.

"If you please."

"Well, then, attend to me," said Faringhea. "The day before yesterday, just at the moment when, spite of his wounds, Djalma, by my advice, was about to start for Paris, there arrived a carriage loaded with rich presents for Djalma from some unknown friend; in the carriage were two men, one sent by the unknown friend, the other, a physician, engaged by you to watch over the health and take care of Prince Djalma till his arrival in Paris—that was charitable, was it not, brother?"

"Continue your recital, sir."

"Djalma set out yesterday. By representing that the prince's wounds would be made worse if he did not maintain a recumbent position on the journey, the doctor got rid of the person sent by the unknown friend, who at once proceeded to Paris; and he would have disembarassed himself of me also, had not the prince so warmly opposed my leaving him, that we set out, the prince, the doctor, and myself. Last evening, when we had proceeded half way, the doctor found it necessary to stop for the night at a small inn. 'We should have abundance of time,' he said, 'to reach Paris by this evening'—the prince having de-
declared that it was of the first importance he should be in that city on the evening of the 12th. The doctor had been very urgent to set off alone with the prince. I knew by Joshua's letter how necessary it was for you that he should not be in Paris on the 13th. Suspicions arose in my mind. I asked the doctor if he knew you. He hesitated, and my suspicions became certainties. After we reached the inn, and while the doctor was with Djalma, I went to his apartment; there I found a box he had brought with him, containing various small bottles; one of them was filled with opium. I guessed the whole scheme.

"And pray what did you guess?"

"I'll tell you. Before the doctor retired, he said to Djalma, 'Your wounds are going on well, but the fatigue of the journey may cause some inflammation; it will, therefore, be well for you to take a composing draught during the day, which I will prepare to-night, that we may have it ready in the carriage.' It was easy enough to see through all this," added Faringhea. "The next day (that is to-day) the prince was to swallow the potion about four or five o'clock in the evening, from the effects of which he would soon fall soundly asleep; then the doctor, feigning uneasiness, would, as night approached, stop somewhere till morning, declaring that it would be fatal to the prince to continue the journey, and taking care to prolong his slumbers till it suited your plans for him to awake. Such was your design, which appeared to me so clever that I thought I would turn it to my own account—and I have done so."

"My dear sir," said Rodin, biting his nails, "your discourse is all Hebrew to me."

"No doubt, owing to the imperfect way in which I speak your language. But tell me, do you know the array mow?"

"No."

"So much the worse. It is an admirable production of the island of Java, so rich in poisons."

"And what is that to me?" said Rodin, in a harsh tone, and scarcely able to conceal his growing anxiety.

"It concerns you a great deal," replied Faringhea. "We children of Bohwanie have a horror of shedding blood, and, to tie the fatal cord around the necks of our victims, we always wait till they are asleep. When their slumber is not sufficiently profound, we augment it at will. We are adepts in our art, brother; the serpent is not more subtle, the lion more daring. Djalma bears our symbols. The array mow is an impalpable powder; by causing a person to inhale a very small quantity during sleep, or by mixing it with the tobacco he smokes, the victim is cast into a lethargy, from which nothing can arouse him. If there is fear of administering too strong a dose at a time, the person may be made to inspire it several times during his sleep, and may thus be kept in his lethargic state, without danger, as long as a man can go without eating or drinking—from thirty to forty hours. You see how gross is the use of opium compared with this divine narcotic. I had brought with me a certain quantity from Java, merely from curiosity—without omitting to bring its antidote also."

"Oh, then, there is an antidote?" asked Rodin, mechanically.

"As there are persons in the world unlike you and me, brother of the 'good work.' The Javanese call the juice of this root the touboc, because it dissipates the drowsiness caused by the array mow as the sun disperses the clouds. Now, being sure yesterday evening of the projects of your emissary against Djalma, I waited till the doctor was asleep; then I crawled into his chamber, and administered to him such a dose of array mow that he must be sound asleep now."

"Wretch!" exclaimed Rodin, more and more alarmed at this recital, for Faringhea had aimed a dangerous blow against the machinations of the socius and his friends: "wretch! do you not fear poisoning the man?"

"No more, brother, than he feared poisoning Djalma. This morning we set off, leaving your doctor at the inn, plunged in a deep sleep: I was alone in the carriage with Djalma, who, like a true Indian, was smoking. A few particles of
the array mow, mixed among the tobacco with which I filled his long pipe, soon rendered him drowsy; a second dose produced a heavy sleep, and he is at this moment at the inn where we stopped. Now, brother, it depends on me to leave Djalma plunged in this lethargy, which will last till to-morrow evening, or to rouse him from it in an instant. Thus, according as you accede or not to my demands, Djalma will or will not be at No. 3 Rue Saint François to-morrow.”

Thus saying, Faringhea drew from his pocket the medal of Djalma, and, showing it to Rodin, said,

“You see, I am speaking the truth: While the prince slept, I took from him this medal, the only direction he has to the place he should be to-morrow. I finish, therefore, where I began, by saying, ‘Brother, I come to ask much of you!’”

For several minutes Rodin had been, as was his wont when moved by intense rage, biting his nails till the blood flowed.

At this instant the bell of the porter's lodge was rung three times, a peculiar interval being observed between the sounds.

Although Rodin affected to pay no attention to the noise, a gleam of malignant triumph sparkled in his small reptile-like eyes; while Faringhea, with folded arms, stood looking at him with a scornful and triumphant expression.

The soeius bent down his head in silence, mechanically took up a pen from the desk, and bit the feather of it for some moments, as if reflecting deeply on what Faringhea had said; at last, throwing down the pen, he turned suddenly to the Mulatto, and said to him, in a tone of supreme contempt,

“M. Faringhea, do you suppose I am child enough to believe your idle tales?”

Astonished, spite of his natural assurance, the Mulatto started back.

“What, sir!” continued Rodin, “you come into a respectable house and boast of having feloniously obtained private letters—strangled one man, and poisoned another with a deadly drug! You must be insane. I have heard you thus long, because I wished to see how far your audacity would lead you; for no one but a shameless villain would come here and boast of deeds so monstrous: but I am willing to believe that they have no existence save in your own imagination.”

Pronouncing these words with a degree of animation far from usual with him, Rodin arose from his chair, and by degrees approached the fireplace, while Faringhea, still under the influence of his surprise, watched him in silence. Recovering himself, however, he said at length, in a sullen, angry tone,

“Have a care, brother, that you do not compel me to prove the truth of my words.”

“Sir, you must have come from the Antipodes, to believe the French are quite so easily duped. You say you have the wiliness of the serpent and the courage of the lion. I know nothing as to your being a courageous lion, but as for your being a wily serpent, I deny it. What! you have about you a letter from M. Joshua, which may involve me in serious consequences (admitting that all you have been saying is not a fable); Prince Djalma is plunged in a stupor from which none but you can recover him; you can strike a blow which will fatally affect my interests, and you do not reflect, most terrible lion and subtlest of serpents, that all I require is to gain twenty-four hours of time. Then you are here, just arrived from India, a stranger, and unknown to every one, taking me for as great a villain as yourself, since you style me ‘brother!’ and yet it never occurs to you that you have placed yourself entirely in my power—that the house you have chosen to enter is a lone one—the street solitary—and that it is in my power to summon three or four persons capable of binding you hand and foot, strangler as you are; with one motion of my hand,” said Rodin, touching the bell-rope, “this might be achieved. Do not be alarmed,” he continued, with a diabolical smile, as he perceived Faringhea make a sudden start of surprise and terror. “Do you suppose I should tell you this if I intended to do it? Now, suppose I were to have you bound and gagged, and placed in some secure confinement for the next twenty-four hours, how could you hurt me? What would be easier than for me to seize the letters of Joshua, as well as the medal of Djalma,
who, sleeping under the effect of your powerful drug, could not give me any annoyance? You see, therefore, that your menaces are impotent, simply because they rest on falsehood, and because Prince Djalma is not in your power. Be gone! quit this place; and another time, when you are seeking for dupes, make a better choice than you have done now."

Faringheea stood mute with astonishment; the words he had just heard carried conviction with them. Rodin might easily cause the papers and medal to be taken from him, and, by detaining him a prisoner, make it impossible to awaken Prince Djalma; yet Rodin bade him leave the place, formidable as he thought himself.

Seeking the cause of this inexplicable conduct, the Strangler came to the conclusion that, spite of the proofs he had produced, Rodin disbelieved what he had said relative to Djalma being in his power; this would account for the contempt manifested by the correspondent of M. Joshua.

Rodin was playing a bold and skilful game; and, while feigning to mutter to himself with a wrathful air, from the corner of his scowling eye he perused with deep anxiety the countenance of Faringhea, who, feeling sure of having penetrated to the secret motives of Rodin's behaviour, said,

"I go—but one word first: you think I am uttering a lie?"

"I am convinced of it; you have been trying to deceive me by a tissue of falsehoods. I have already lost too much time in listening to you; excuse me from hearing any more—it is late—I wish to be alone."

"One minute: you are a man, I perceive," said Faringhea, "from whom it is useless to conceal anything. I have nothing to expect from Djalma but charity and sovereign contempt; for to say to a person of his character, 'Reward me largely, because when I had it in my power to betray you I did not,' would be to incur both his anger and scorn. I might have killed him twenty times, but his hour is not yet come," continued the Strangler, in a gloomy tone; "and to await that day, and others equally fatal, I must have gold, much gold; you alone can pay me the price of my treachery to Djalma, because you alone will profit by it. You refuse to listen to me because you believe me a liar: here is the address of the inn we are staying at; send some one to the place to ascertain how far I have asserted the truth—you will believe me then; but the price of my treachery will be great. I told you, brother, I should ask much of you."

With these words Faringhea offered a card to Rodin, but, although following from the corner of his eye every movement of the Mulatto, the socius feigned to be so lost in thought as not to hear him, and made no reply.

"Take this address," persisted Faringhea, "and satisfy yourself that I speak truth," again presenting the card to Rodin.

"What did you observe?" said the latter, affecting to be roused suddenly from his abstraction, casting a side glance at the paper until he had made himself master of its contents, but without touching it.

"Read this address," repeated the Mulatto, "that you may be convinced—"

"Upon my word, sir," cried Rodin, putting back the card, "your impudence passes all belief! I tell you again, I will have nothing to do with you. I do not know this Prince Djalma. You have it in your power to injure me, you say; do it then, and for the love of Heaven quit this room." So saying, Rodin rang the bell violently.

Faringhea assumed an attitude of defence. An old servant, with an amiable, placid countenance, appeared at the door.

"La Pierre," said Rodin, pointing to Faringhea, "show this gentleman out."

Bewildered by the effrontery of Rodin, the Strangler hesitated to quit the room.

"Well, sir," said Rodin, observing his perplexity, "what are you waiting for? I wish to be alone."

"Then," muttered Faringhea, slowly retreating backward to the door, "then you refuse my offers? Take care; to-morrow it will be too late."
"Sir, I have the honour to wish you good-evening," said Rodin, bowing with extreme politeness.

The Strangler left the room.

As the door closed upon him, D'Aigrigny appeared from the adjoining chamber, his countenance pale and agitated.

"What have you done?" he exclaimed, addressing Rodin. "I have heard all, and, unhappily, am too well convinced the villain speaks the truth; the Indian is in his power, and, doubtless, he will return to him—"

"I think not," answered Rodin, with a deferential bow, his features resuming their usual air of servility.

"What will hinder him from rejoicing the prince?"

"Permit me to explain. I recognised this atrocious miscreant the moment he entered the apartment, and, before I began my conversation with him, I despatched a few lines to Morok, who, with Goliath, was waiting your reverence's leisure below. Afterward, when I found the turn events had taken, I despatched fresh instructions to Morok, whose reply to my first missives signified his being ready to follow my directions."

"And what does this avail, since the man has left the house?"

"Your reverence will have the goodness to remember that he did not depart till, thanks to my feigned contempt, he had given me the address of the hotel where the Indian is. Even had I not succeeded, Faringheaw would still have fallen into the hands of Morok and Goliath, who were waiting for him in the street. Yet we should have been greatly embarrassed from not knowing the residence of Prince Djalma."

"Still violence!" said D'Aigrigny, with an air of repugnance.

"'Tis much, very much to be regretted," replied Rodin; "but it was necessary to follow the system hitherto employed."

"Is that intended as a reproach?" said D'Aigrigny, beginning to suspect that Rodin was not a mere writing automaton.

"I should never think of addressing a reproach to your reverence," answered Rodin, bowing almost to the ground. "The matter in hand was merely to detain this man twenty-four hours."

"But afterward! his complaints!"

"A wretch like him will not dare seek the protection of the laws; besides, he has left this house free and unmolested. After Morok and Goliath have overpowered him, they will bandage his eyes. There is an entrance to this dwelling from the street Vieille des Ursins; at this hour, and in this storm, nobody is passing along this lonely quarter; the wretch will not know where he is taken; he will be carried into an empty cellar, and to-morrow night he will be set at
liberty with the same precautions. As for the Indian, since we know where to find him, it will be necessary to despatch a confidential person to him; and, should he recover from his stupor, there is a very safe and, according to my poor judgment, a very innocent mode of keeping him from the Rue Saint François throughout the whole of to-morrow," said Rodin, humbly.

The same domestic who had admitted and dismissed Faringhea now entered the apartment, after having knocked gently at the door; he carried in his hand a leathern wallet, which he gave to Rodin, saying,

"M. Morok has just brought this; he came in from the Vieille Rue."

When the servant had left the room Rodin opened the bag, from which he took the contents, saying to D'Aigrigny, as he held them up to view,

"The medal, and the packet of M. Joshua. Morok has been skilful and expeditious."

"Thus, then, we escape another danger," said the marquis: "it is to be lamented that we have to employ such means."

"The blame rests with the wretched creature who placed us under this necessity. I will this instant send to the hotel of Prince Djalma."

"And at seven o'clock in the morning you will conduct Gabriel to the Rue Saint François; the interview he has so earnestly begged for the last three days shall take place there."

"I have instructed him to that effect this evening, and he will attend you there, according to your orders."

"Now, then," said D'Aigrigny, "after so many struggles, fears, and difficulties, a few hours only separate us from the time so ardently expected."

We shall conduct the reader to the house in the Rue Saint François.
PART XI.
"THE THIRTEENTH OF FEBRUARY."

CHAPTER I.

THE HOUSE IN THE RUE SAINT FRANCOIS.

Entering, at the time of this narrative, the Rue Saint Gervais by the Rue Doré (in the Marais), one would find himself opposite an enormously high wall, built of stones now black and almost porous with age. This wall, extending nearly the whole length of the lonely street, served as support to a terrace shaded with trees of many centuries' growth, planted in a soil raised at least forty feet above the pavement. Through their thick branches might be discerned the stone front, peaked roof, and high brick chimneys of an ancient mansion, whose entrance was No. 3 in the Rue Saint François, not far from the corner of the Rue Saint Gervais. Nothing could be more gloomy than the exterior of this house. The high stone wall was continued in the Rue Saint François, here pierced with occasional loop-holes, strongly barricaded with bars of iron. The entrance was of solid oak, banded with iron and studded with immense nails, whose primitive colour had long disappeared under a thick coat of rust and dirt, and, being arched at the top, fitted the curve of a deep niche like an arcade, so great was the thickness of the wall. In one half of this ponderous gate was a small wicket, which gave ingress or egress to the Jew Samuel, the keeper of this desolate abode.

Passing the threshold, the visitor found himself under a porch of the building which fronted the street, and in which was the lodge belonging to Samuel, the windows opening upon an inner court of considerable extent, terminated by an iron gate, through which a garden was visible.
In the midst of this garden was a stone mansion, two stories in height, but raised so singularly above the ground that it was necessary to ascend a double staircase of twenty stone steps to reach the entrance door, which had been walled up for a hundred and fifty years.

The shutters of the windows had been removed, and their place supplied by large thick sheets of lead, hermetically soldered, and secured by iron bars let into the stone. And, farther to exclude both light and air, as well as to guard against every inroad from the weather, the roof had been covered with thick sheets of lead, as well as the openings of the high chimneys, which had been previously filled up and bricked over.

The same means had been adopted to close a small square lookout on the top of the house, its glazed sides, as well as summit, being covered with lead, securely soldered down to that on the roof; but, by some strange caprice, each side of the leaden covering over the windows of the lookout, which corresponded with the four cardinal points, was pierced with seven small round holes, disposed in the form of a cross, and distinctly visible from the outside.

The windows in every other part of the house were closely covered with sheets of lead; and, thanks to these precautions and the solidity of the building, it had scarcely required any repairs, while it was more than probable that the interior would be found as uninjured by the years which had passed away as at the moment when the edifice was shut up. Yet dilapidated walls, worm-eaten and decayed shutters, a roof half fallen in, and windows overgrown with ivy and other parasitical plants, could scarcely have presented an aspect so dreary as did this stone structure, wrapped in its leaden covering, and preserved as though it were a tomb.

The garden, fallen into decay, and, except when Samuel the keeper took his weekly round, untrodden by human foot, presented, especially during summer, a confused mass of parasitical plants and weeds. The trees, left to themselves, had grown in wild luxuriance, and interwoven their branches in fantastic forms; some vines, springing from young shoots, at first prostrate on the ground, had by degrees approached the trees, then climbing up the stems, had finally gained the branches, and enveloped them in a huge net, as it were, of intermingled tendrils.

The only means of penetrating this wilderness was by a path kept free by Samuel, to admit of his going from the gate to the house, whose broad approach, forming a gradual descent to carry off the water, was well flagged, and presented a walk of about ten feet in width.

Another path round the walls was nightly guarded by two or three enormous Pyrenean dogs, whose faithful race had been perpetuated in this house for a century and a half.

Such was the habitation destined for the reassembling of the Rennepont family.

The night which divided the 12th from the 13th of February had nearly ended. Calm had succeeded to storm: the rain had ceased—the vault of heaven shone with its many stars—the moon ere it set glittered in silvery brightness, and threw a pale light on the silent, deserted building, the threshold of which no human foot had crossed in so many years.

A bright light, streaming from the windows of the lodge, announced that the Jew Samuel was yet watching.

Let the reader imagine an apartment of ample size, wainscotted from top to bottom with walnut-tree wood, almost black with age; two half-burned logs of wood lay on the hearth amid a mass of ashes; on the stone chimney-piece, painted in imitation of granite, might be seen an old iron candlestick, with a small candle in it, surmounted by an extinguisher; near this lay a pair of double-barrelled pistols, and a small sword highly polished, the handle of which, of carved bronze, belonged to the seventeenth century; while against one side of the chimney stood a heavy gun.

Four stools without backs, an old oaken closet, and a square table upon twisted legs, were the sole furniture of this apartment. Against the wall were ar-
ranged, in symmetrical order, keys of various sizes, whose form announced their age; each key bore a label affixed to the ring.

The back of the old oaken cupboard, which was moveable by a secret contrivance, had been displaced, and fixed in the wall was seen a large deep iron chest, whose open lid exhibited the wondrous mechanism of one of those Florentine locks in use during the sixteenth century, which, beyond all modern inventions, set all tampering at defiance; and it was still farther protected, according to the custom of the time, by a thick lining of asbestos, kept at a distance from the sides of the chest by threads of gold, and securing the objects it contained against injury by fire.

A large casket of cedar wood, taken from this iron chest, and placed upon a stool, was filled with numerous papers carefully arranged and labelled. By the light of a brazen lamp, the old keeper Samuel was writing in a small account-book, while Bathsheba, his wife, dictated from a ledger which she read aloud.

Samuel was about eighty-two years old, yet, spite of his advanced age, a thick mass of frizzled gray hair covered his head; he was small, thin, muscular, and the involuntary petulance of his movements showed that years had not diminished his energy and activity, although in the neighbourhood, where he rarely appeared, he assumed that appearance of childish old age which Rodin had described to D'Aigrigny. An old dressing-gown of maroon-coloured barracan, with loose sleeves, entirely enveloped the old man, and fell to his feet.

The features of Samuel exhibited the pure and Oriental type of his race; his complexion was pale and sallow; his nose aquiline; his chin bore a small white beard; his projecting cheekbones contrasted strongly with his hollow, wrinkled cheeks; his physiognomy expressed acuteness, intelligence, and sagacity; his large high forehead betokened firmness, frankness, and integrity; his eyes were black and sparkling, as those of an Arab, and had a look of mingled gentleness and penetration.

His wife, Bathsheba, fifteen years younger, was tall, and dressed in black; a flat headdress of stiffened lawn, recalling the grave style worn by Dutch matrons, gave a formal expression to her pale and austere countenance, which must once have possessed uncommon beauty; the few wrinkles on her forehead, caused by the habitual contraction of her gray eyebrows, showed that she was often a prey to melancholy sadness.

At the present moment the features of Bathsheba expressed the most acute misery; her eye was fixed, her head drooping on her breast; her right hand, in which she held the small ledger, had fallen on her lap, while with the other she convulsively grasped a thick tress of hair, black as the jet ornaments she wore round her neck; this plait of hair was fastened by a golden clasp about an inch square, covered on one side with glass, beneath which was a piece of folded linen almost covered with spots of a deep red colour, resembling blood that had been long dried.

After a moment's silence, during which Samuel continued to write in his account-book, he said, reading aloud what he had just written,

"Per contra, 5000 shares in the Austrian mines, at 1000 florins, bearing date 19th October, 1826."

Raising his head as he completed his enumeration, Samuel added,

"Is that correct, Bathsheba? have you compared it with the entry in the ledger?"

Bathsheba did not answer.

Samuel looked at her, and, perceiving her affliction, anxiously and tenderly said,

"What troubles you, Bathsheba?"

"The 19th of October, 1826!" she said, slowly, her eyes still fixed, and her hand tightly pressing the tress of raven hair; "tis a fatal date, Samuel; most fatal! 'tis that of the last letter we received from—"

Bathsheba could proceed no farther; uttering a deep groan, she concealed her face with her hands.
"Ah! I understand you," replied the old man, in a voice trembling with emotion; "a father may throw off his sorrows amid the cares of the world, but a mother's heart never forgets—"

And, throwing his pen on the table, Samuel leaned his hoary head upon his hands.

Bathsheba, as though relieved by dwelling on the painful recollection of her grief, resumed the conversation, by saying,

"Yes, that date marks the day on which our son Abel last wrote to us, announcing that he had employed in Germany the money intrusted to him, according to your orders, and that he was about going to Poland for another operation—"

"And in Poland," interrupted Samuel, "he died the death of a martyr. Without proof or reason, for never was a more false accusation made, he was unjustly accused of having come to organize a system of smuggling; and the Russian governor, treating him as all our brethren are treated in that land of savage tyranny, condemned him to the fearful punishment of the knout, without deigning either to see or hear him. But what would have been the use of hearing a Jew? What is a Jew? A creature many degrees lower than a serf. Do they not reproach them in that country with the very vices engendered by the servile bondage in which they are held? Who would trouble himself about a Jew perishing beneath the whip of the executioner?"

"And so perished our good, our generous Abel! as much from shame as from the severity of the punishment," said Bathsheba, shuddering. "With much difficulty one of our brethren obtained permission to bury him; he cut off his long black hair: that hair, and this piece of linen, spotted with the blood of our dear son, are all that remain to us of him;" and she convulsively kissed the relics of which she spoke.

"Alas!" cried Samuel, drying the tears which had flowed freely at these heart-rending recollections, "at least the mercy of the Lord took not our son till the task was wellnigh accomplished which our family have faithfully performed for a century and a half. Of what farther use can our race be on the earth?" continued Samuel, with concentrated bitterness. "Is not our task fulfilled? Does not this chest contain royal treasures? and will not the mansion, walled up for 150 years, be opened this morning to the descendants of him who was the benefactor of my progenitors?"

As Samuel pronounced these words he looked sadly toward the house, which could be seen from his window. Day was just beginning to dawn, the moon had set, and the lookout, with the roof and chimneys, stood out in bold relief against the blue of the firmament. All at once the old man turned pale, and, rising, said to his wife, in a trembling voice, as he pointed to the house,

"Bathsheba! the seven points of light as they appeared thirty years ago! Look! look!"

And so it was; the seven round openings in the form of a cross, pierced in the lead which covered the windows of the lookout, emitted so many rays of bright light, as though some person had ascended within to the summit of the shut-up house.
CHAPTER II.

"THE 13TH OF FEBRUARY."—DEBITS AND CREDITS.

For some moments Samuel and Bathsheba remained motionless, their eyes fixed in fear and disquietude on the seven luminous points, which shone out amid the last stars of the night from the summit of the lookout, while in the horizon behind the house a pale, rose-coloured streak announced the coming dawn.

Samuel first broke this silence, and, passing his hand over his brow, said to his wife,

"The grief which the recollection of our poor boy has caused us prevented us from remembering and reflecting that, after all, there is nothing in this which should cause us any alarm."

"What do you mean, Samuel?"

"Did not my father tell me that he and my grandfather had several times seen such lights at long intervals?"

"Yes, Samuel; but they were unable, as well as ourselves, to explain the cause."

"But, like my father and my grandfather, we may suppose that a passage, unknown to them as to us, admits some persons who have also some mysterious duty to fulfil in this abode. My father told me not to be disturbed by these singular occurrences, of which he spoke to me, and which now appear for the second time in thirty years."

"Yet, Samuel, it is as terrifying as if it were something supernatural."

"The age of miracles is passed," said the Jew, shaking his head mournfully.

"Many of the old mansions in this quarter have subterranean communications with distant places: some, they say, extend as far as the Seine, and even to the Catacombs. No doubt this house is so constructed, and the persons who come so seldom introduce themselves by this way."

"But the lookout thus lighted—"

"From the plan of this building, you know that the lookout forms the roof or
lantern of what is called 'The great chamber of mourning,' which is situated in the highest floor of the house. As the house must be in total darkness, all the windows being closed, necessarily a light must be employed by one going up to the mourning chamber—an apartment in which they say there are very strange and awful things," added the Jew, shuddering.

Bathsheba looked attentively, as did her husband, at the seven luminous points, whose brightness diminished as the dawn advanced.

"As you say, Samuel, this mystery may be thus explained," replied the wife of the old man; "and, moreover, this is so important a day for the Rennepont family, that, under such circumstances, the appearance need not surprise us."

"And," said Samuel, "in a century and a half these lights have appeared several times! There is, then, another family which, from generation to generation, is devoted like our own to accomplish a pious duty."

"But what is that duty? Perhaps to-day all will be cleared up."

"Come, come, Bathsheba!" said Samuel, suddenly, throwing off his reverie, as if he reproached himself with his indolence, "the day has arrived, and before eight o'clock I must have my cash account arranged, and this immense list of property classed," and he pointed to the large cedar-wood chest, "that they may be placed correctly in the hands of those who have a right to them."

"You are right, Samuel; this day does not belong to us: it is a solemn day, and one that will be happy—ah, very happy for us! if, indeed, we can ever again be happy," said Bathsheba, sadly, thinking of her son.

"Bathsheba," said Samuel, mournfully, taking his wife's hand, "we shall at least have the satisfaction of having done our duty. Has not the Lord been exceedingly favourable unto us, although we have been sorely tried by the death of our son? Is it not through His gracious providence that three generations of my family have begun, continued, and completed this great work?"

"Yes, Samuel," said the Jewess, affectionately; "and, at least for you, there will be calm and repose united with this satisfaction, for when the hour of noon hath stricken you will be delivered from a fearful responsibility!" And, as she spoke, Bathsheba pointed to the cedar coffer.

"True!" said the old man. "I would rather know that these immense riches were in the hands of those to whom they belong than that they were in mine; but to-day I shall not remain the depositary. I will, then, for the last time, examine the condition of these properties, and we will check them by my register and the book which you hold."

Bathsheba made an affirmative nod with her head, and Samuel, taking up his pen, gave all his attention to his calculations; while his wife again abandoned her thoughts, in spite of herself, to the cruel recollections which a fatal date had recalled to her.

We will rapidly present the simple, but apparently romantic and marvellous history of the 50,000 crowns, which, thanks to a prudent and faithful accumulation and management, had naturally, or, rather, forcibly, been converted at the end of a century and a half into a sum much more important than the 40,000,000 (of francs) assumed by D'Aigrigny, who, imperfectly informed on this subject, and allowing for adverse circumstances, losses, and bankruptcies which, in so many years, had probably affected the successive depositaries of these properties, still considered as enormous the sum of 40,000,000.

The history of this fortune, of necessity united with that of the Samuel family, which had accumulated these funds for three generations, we will give in few words.

About 1670, several years before his death, M. Marius de Rennepont, during a journey to Portugal, had, by powerful influence, saved the life of an unfortunate Jew, condemned to the stake by the Inquisition for his religious creed.

This Jew was Isaac Samuel, the grandfather of the guardian of the house in the Rue Saint François.
Generous men often attach themselves as closely to those they have served as the served attach themselves to their benefactors. Being first convinced that Isaac, who was in business in Lisbon as a money-changer on a small scale, was honest, active, industrious, and intelligent, M. de Rennepont, who then had a large property in France, proposed to the Jew to accompany him, and take the superintendence of his estates, &c. The aversion and mistrust with which the Jews have always been regarded were then at their height, and Isaac was, therefore, doubly grateful for the mark of confidence which M. de Rennepont bestowed on him.

He accepted the offer, and vowed to devote his existence henceforward to the service of him who, after having saved his life, had faith in his honesty and integrity, though he was a Jew, and belonged to a race so generally suspected, hated, and despised. M. de Rennepont was a noble-hearted man, with strong sense and a powerful mind, and he was not deceived in his choice. Until he was stripped of his possessions they thrived enormously in the hands of Isaac Samuel, who, endowed with a peculiar aptness for affairs, applied himself exclusively to the interest of his benefactor.

Then came the persecution and ruin of M. de Rennepont, whose wealth was confiscated and given up, some days before his death, to the reverend fathers of the Company of Jesus, who had informed against him. Concealed in the retreat which he had selected as the spot wherein he would end his days violently, he had sent for Isaac Samuel secretly, and given him 50,000 crowns, all that remained of his property, desiring his faithful servant to invest this sum and its proceeds; if he had a son, to hand down to him the same obligation; and, in default of a son, he was to find some honest relative who would continue the charge, always liable to a certain salary: the trust was to be transmitted from one kinsman to another until the expiration of a century and a half. M. de Rennepont had, moreover, begged Isaac to be, during his life, the guardian of the house in the Rue Saint François, in which he was to reside rent free, and to hand down this office to his descendants if it were possible.

If Isaac Samuel had had no children, the powerful bond of union which often unites certain Jewish families would have enabled him to comply with the last wishes of M. de Rennepont. The relatives of Isaac would have assumed his gratitude to his benefactor, and they and their successive generations would have religiously accomplished the task imposed on one of their people: but Isaac had a son many years after the death of M. de Rennepont.

This son, Levi Samuel, born in 1689, had no children by his first wife, but had married again at nearly sixty years of age, and, in 1750, had a son born, David Samuel, the guardian of the house in the Rue Saint François, who, in
1832 (the date of this recital), was eighty-two years of age, and promised to be as long-lived as his father, who died when he was ninety-three years old. We must add that Abel Samuel, the son, whom Bathsheba so bitterly deplored, born in 1790, had died, under the Russian knout, at the age of twenty-six.

Having given this humble genealogy, it may easily be understood that the successive longevity of these three members of the Samuel family, who had been perpetual guardians of the walled house, and who thus united the nineteenth to the seventeenth century, had singularly simplified and facilitated the execution of the last wishes of M. de Rennepont, who had formally declared to the ancestors of the Samuels that he desired the sum be left to be augmented only by the simple interest of five per cent., in order that this fortune should reach his descendants free from any usurious speculation.

The co-religionaries of the Samuel family, the first inventors of the bill of exchange, which served in the middle ages to transport secretly large sums from one end of the world to the other, to conceal their wealth, and place it beyond the reach of their rapacious enemies—the Jews had almost alone carried on the business of exchange and dealings in money till the close of the eighteenth century, which greatly aided the secret transactions and financial operations of the Samuel family, who, until 1820, or thereabout, placed all this wealth, which had become enormous, in the banking-houses of the richest Israelites in Europe. This sure and secret way of doing business had permitted the actual guardian of the Rue Saint François to effect, unknown to any one, by simple deposits or letters of exchange, immense investments; for it was particularly during his control that the sum capitalized had reached, by simple accumulation, an amount almost incalculable; his father, and particularly his grandfather, having, in comparison with himself, but small funds to manage.

Although the only consideration was to find certain and ready means of employment, that the money should not lie idle for a moment, it yet required great financial abilities to attain this result, especially when it was a question affecting fifties of millions; and this capability Samuel, who had been well brought up by his father, displayed in an eminent degree, as will be shown by the results we shall quote.

Nothing could be more touching, more noble, more worthy, than the conduct of this Jewish family, who, assuming the debt of gratitude incurred by one of their ancestors, had devoted themselves for so many years with equal disinterestedness, intelligence, and fidelity to the gradual accumulation of a fortune worthy of a monarch, of which they expected no share, and which, thanks to them, would be handed over intact and vast to the descendants of their ancestor's benefactor.

Nothing, indeed, could be more honourable for the proscribed man who made the deposite, and for the Jew who received it, than this simple exchange of words, given and taken with no other guarantee than a reciprocal confidence and esteem, when it concerned a result which was only to arrive at the end of 150 years.

After having read his inventory, Samuel said to his wife, "I am certain of the correctness of my totals: will you now check the sums by your cash-book, as I have inscribed them in the register? I will, at the same time, see that the papers are classed in proper order in this strong box; for this morning, when the will is opened, I must hand all over to the notary."

"Begin, and I will follow you," said Bathsheba.

And Samuel read the following account, checking it by his vouchers in the chest as he proceeded:
## Balance-Sheet of Account with the Heirs of M. de Rennepons, as given in by David Samuel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEBITS</th>
<th>CREDITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,000,000 £, in the French 5 per cent. in inscriptions named, and to bearer, bought from 1825 to 1832 (as by other statements) at an average of 95/4; 50c.</td>
<td>150,000 £, received from M. de Rennepons by Isaac Samuel, my grandfather, and successively placed by him, my father, and myself at interest at 5 per cent., the interest invested every six months, which have produced, as by accounts and vouchers hereunto annexed, the sum of 235,300,000 £.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900,000 £, French 3 per cent., by different purchases, for the same years, at an average of 74/6. 35c.</td>
<td>But there must be deducted, as by details annexed, for losses by failures, for commissions, brokerage to sundry persons, and also salary to three generations of managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000 shares in the Bank of France, bought at 1900/6.</td>
<td>13,775,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,500,000 3000 shares in four canals, and a certificate of deposit of the said shares with the company, bought at an average of 1116.</td>
<td>212,175,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,345,000 135,000 ducats of Neapolitan stock, at an average of 85/; 2,050,000 ducats, at 4/4; 40c. each</td>
<td>2,050,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,080,000 5000 Austrian médiatiques of 1000 florins, at an average of 94/6; 4,000,000 florins, at an exchange of 3f. 50c. each.</td>
<td>9,020,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,095,000 £75,000 sterling in the English 3 per cent., at 88½; 26,312,750 sterling, at 32f. per pound sterling.</td>
<td>11,625,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55,466,000 1,300,000 florins in 24 Dutch, at 6f. 50,000,000 florins, at 4f. 10c., the florin of the Low Countries.</td>
<td>55,468,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60,506,000 Bank-bills, gold, and silver.</td>
<td>60,606,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>335,250</td>
<td>335,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>212,175,000</td>
<td>212,175,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Quite right," said Samuel, after having examined the letters contained in the cedar casket. "There is, therefore, in hand, at the disposal of the heirs of the Rennepons family, the sum of 212,175,000 francs." And as the old man uttered these words he looked at his wife with a legitimate pride.

"Can it be possible?" cried Bathsheba, struck with astonishment. "I knew that you had immense sums in your hands, but I never could have supposed that 150,000 francs, left for 150 years, could be the source of such an enormous fortune."

"And yet so it is, Bathsheba," replied Samuel, proudly. "You may suppose
that my grandfather, father, and myself have exercised our utmost zeal and fidelity in managing the fund; and it required skill and judgment in times of political agitation and commercial crises; but all this we had great facilities of doing, owing to our business transactions with our brethren in all countries: never have I or those belonging to me made any investment at usurious interest. The positive commands of M. de Rennepont, as received by my grandfather, strictly enjoined this; and never was fortune more fairly acquired: but for this disinterested prohibition, we might, by taking advantage of several favourable circumstances, have materially increased the amount."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed the wife.

"Nothing more simple, Bathsheba. Every one knows that in fourteen years a capital is doubled by the simple accumulation of the interest at five per cent. Now reflect, that in 150 years there are ten times fourteen years. In 1682, M. de Rennepont confided to my grandfather 150,000 francs; this sum, capitalized as I have told you, had produced, in 1696, fourteen years afterward, 300,000 francs. They were doubled in 1710, and produced 600,000 francs. At the death of my grandfather, in 1719, the sum reached nearly 1,000,000 francs; in 1738, 2,400,000 francs; in 1752, two years after my birth, 4,800,000 francs; in 1766, 9,600,000 francs; in 1780, 19,200,000 francs; in 1794, twelve years after the death of my father, 38,400,000 francs; in 1808, 76,800,000 francs; in 1822, 153,600,000 francs; and now, adding the interest for ten years, it must be at least 225,000,000 francs: but losses, defalcations, and unavoidable expenses, of which I have given a full and exact statement, have reduced the amount to 212,175,000 francs, the representatives of which are enclosed in this chest."

"Now I understand," said Bathsheba, thoughtfully. "But what an astonishing thing is the power of accumulating; and what admirable stores for the future might be formed out of the feeble resources of the present day!"

"Such was, no doubt, M. de Rennepont's idea; for, according to my father, who heard it from my grandfather, M. de Rennepont was one of the ablest men of his day," said Samuel, closing the cedar casket.

"Heaven grant that his descendants may be worthy of this regal fortune, and make a noble use of it," said Bathsheba, rising.

It was now broad day. Seven o'clock sounded.

"The masons will soon be here," said Samuel, replacing his cedar casket in the iron chest concealed behind the old oaken cabinet. "Like you, Bathsheba, I am curious to know who will present themselves here to-day as the descendants of M. de Rennepont."

Two or three strokes, dealt with the iron knocker on the outer gate, resounded through the house; the barking of the watchdogs replied to this unusual summons.

"'Tis doubtless the masons," observed Samuel, "sent by the notary, with one of his clerks. Collect all the keys with their labels; I will come and fetch them." So saying, Samuel, spite of his age, nimbly descended the staircase. approached the gate, and having, as a precautionary measure, opened the small wicket, saw three labourers, dressed like masons, accompanied by a young man in black.

"What is your pleasure?" asked the Jew, before opening the gate, that he might be perfectly assured of the identity of these persons.

"I come from M. Dumesnil, the notary," replied the clerk, "to be present at the opening of the walled-up door; here is a letter from my employer for M. Samuel, the person in charge of the house."

"I am he, sir," answered the Jew; "have the goodness to put your letter in the box, and I will take it."

The clerk obeyed the directions, but shrugged his shoulders at what he deemed an absurd whim on the part of a suspicious old man.

Samuel opened the box, took out the letter, which he carried to the other end of the arch to read it by the full light, carefully compared the signature with
another letter of the notary's which he took from the pocket of his great-coat; then he chained up his dogs, and returned to admit the clerk and the masons.

"Mercy on me!" exclaimed the clerk, as he entered; "you could not observe more ceremony if we were entering some fortified castle!"

The Jew bowed, but made no reply.

"Are you deaf, my old fellow?" bawled the clerk in his ears

"No, sir," answered Samuel, with a gentle and benignant smile, and advancing beyond the arch under which they were standing; then, pointing to the house, he added,

"There, sir, is the walled-up door you must open. You will also be required to wrench away the bars of iron and covering of lead from the second window on the right hand."

"Why not open all the windows?" demanded the clerk.

"Because such are the orders I received when intrusted with the care of the premises."

"And who gave you these orders?"

"My father, who received them from his father, who was so directed by the master of the mansion. When I shall have ceased to be guardian here, and the property will have passed into the hands of the new proprietor, he will use his own pleasure."

"All right," said the clerk, somewhat surprised at what he heard: then, addressing the masons, he added, "Now, then, my worthies, undo that door, and wrench away the iron and lead coverings from the second window on the right."

While the workmen proceeded to execute their orders, under the inspection of the notary's clerk, a carriage stopped before the gate, and Rodin, accompanied by Gabriel, entered the house in the Rue Saint François.
CHAPTER III.

THE HEIR.

SAMUEL opened the door to Gabriel and Rodin.

The latter said to the Jew,

"You, sir, are the guardian of this house?"

"Yes, sir," replied Samuel.

"This gentleman, the Abbé Gabriel de Rennepont," said Rodin, pointing to his companion, "is one of the descendants of the Rennepont family."

"So much the better, sir," said the Jew, almost involuntarily, struck with the angelic countenance of Gabriel, for the nobility and serenity of mind of the young priest were legible in his features, and on his pure, white brow, already encircled with a martyr's crown.

Samuel contemplated Gabriel with curiosity, mingled with kindness and interest; but, soon perceiving that his silent observation became embarrassing to Gabriel, he said to him,

"M. l'Abbé, the notary will not arrive until ten o'clock."

Gabriel looked at him with a surprised air, and replied,

"What notary, sir?"

"Father d'Aigrigny will explain this to you," said Rodin, hastily; and then, addressing Samuel, he added, "We are rather soon. Can we not wait somewhere for the arrival of the notary?"

"If you will be so good as to come into my abode," said Samuel, "I will show you the way."

"I thank you, sir—most willingly," replied Rodin.

"Follow me, then, gentlemen, if you please," added the old man.

A few moments afterward the young priest and the socius, preceded by Samuel, entered one of the rooms which the latter occupied on the ground floor of the house, which was next the street, and looked on the courtyard.

"The Abbé d'Aigrigny, who has been M. Gabriel's tutor, will be here shortly, and inquire for us," added Rodin. "Will you be so good, sir, as conduct him hither?"

"I will be sure to do so, sir," said Samuel, leaving the room.

The socius and Gabriel remained alone.

The excessive gentleness which usually gave the handsome features of the missionary a charm so winning, was, at this moment, succeeded by a remarkable expression of sadness, resolution, and severity. Rodin, who had not seen Gabriel for some days, was deeply occupied with the alteration he observed in him, and which he had remarked in silence during their drive from the Rue des Postes to the Rue Saint François.

The young priest wore, as usual, a long black cassock, which made the transparent pallor of his features more conspicuous. When the Jew had left the room, he said to Rodin, in a firm voice,

"Will you tell me, sir, at last, why for several days I have not been allowed to speak to his reverence, Father d'Aigrigny, and why he has chosen this house to grant me this conversation?"

"It is impossible for me," said Rodin, coldly, "to reply to these questions. His reverence will be here shortly, and will hear you. All I can tell you is, that our reverend father has this interview as much at heart as yourself; and if he has selected this house for the conversation, it is because you have an interest in being here. You know that well, although you have affected some astonishment in hearing the guardian mention a notary."

So saying, Rodin fixed a scrutinizing and unquiet look on Gabriel, whose face expressed nothing but surprise.
"I do not understand you," he replied to Rodin. "What interest can I have in being here?"

"Once more, it is impossible that you do not know," replied Rodin, still fixing his eyes on Gabriel.

"I have told you, sir, that I am utterly ignorant of it," he responded, almost hurt at the obstinacy of the socius.

"Then what did your adopted mother come to say to you yesterday? Why did you admit her without having obtained the authority of the Reverend Father d'Aigrigny, as I learned this morning? Did she not speak to you of certain family papers found on you when she discovered you?"

"No, sir," said Gabriel; "at that time the papers were given by my adopted mother to her confessor, and subsequently they passed into the possession of the Reverend Father d'Aigrigny. For the first time in a long while I now hear these papers referred to."

"Then you pretend that it was not on this subject Françoise Baudoin came to converse with you yesterday!" replied Rodin, pertinaciously, and laying a slight emphasis on each word.

"This, sir, is the second time that you seem to doubt what I affirm," said the young priest, gently, repressing an impatient feeling. "I assure you that I speak the truth."

"He knows nothing," thought Rodin, for he well enough knew Gabriel's sincerity not to have the least doubt after so positive a denial.

"I believe you," replied the socius; "but the idea occurred to me when I was trying to seek some motive strong enough to make you transgress the orders of the Reverend Father d'Aigrigny as to the close confinement which he had ordered you—a confinement which excluded all communication from without. Moreover, contrary to all the regulations of our house, you closed your door, which ought always to remain open, or half open, that the mutual surveillance which is prescribed to us may be rendered more easy. I could not account for your grave offence against discipline but by the necessity of a very important conversation with your adopted mother."

"It was to a priest, and not to her adopted son, that Madame Baudoin desired to speak," replied Gabriel, gravely: "I thought it right to hear her; and, if I closed my door, it was because she was in the act of confession."

"And what had Françoise so pressing to confess to you?"

"That you will know presently when I tell it to his reverence, if it is his pleasure that you shall hear me," replied Gabriel.

The missionary said these words in a tone so decided, that a long silence followed.

We will remind the reader that Gabriel had been, up to this time, kept by his superiors in the most complete ignorance of the important family interests which demanded his presence in the Rue Saint François. On the evening referred to, Françoise Baudoin, absorbed in her grief, had not thought of telling him that the orphans ought also to be present at the same meeting; and, had this occurred to her, the express commands of Dagobert would have prevented her from speaking of this circumstance to the young priest.

Gabriel was thus entirely ignorant of the family ties which bound him to the daughters of Marshal Simon, Mademoiselle Cardoville, M. Hardy, Prince Djalma, and Couche-tout-Nu. In a word, if he had been told, at that moment, that he was the heir of M. Marius de Rennepont, he would have believed himself the sole descendant of this family.

During the interval of silence which succeeded his conversation with Rodin, Gabriel looked through the windows of the room at the masons employed in taking down the stones that blocked up the door. This first operation terminated, [See cut, on page 522.] they began to detach the iron bars which supported a sheet of lead on the outer side of the door. At this instant Father d'Aigrigny, introduced by Samuel, entered the apartment.
Before Gabriel turned, Rodin had time to say, in a low voice, to the reverend father,

"He knows nothing; and there is nothing to fear from the Indian."

In spite of his assumed calmness, the features of D'Aigrigny were pale and contracted, like those of a player who is on the point of seeing a game of terrible importance determined. Up to this time everything had favoured the schemes of the society, but he could not think without dread of the four hours which had yet to intervene before the fated hour arrived.

Gabriel turned round, and Father d'Aigrigny said to him, in an affectionate and cordial voice, going toward him with a smile on his lips, and extended hand,

"My dear son, it has cost me much to refuse you until this moment the conversation you have requested since your return. It has been not less painful to order you into solitude for some days. Although I have no explanation to give you on the subject of the orders you receive, I wish you to understand that I have only been acting for your interest."

"It is my duty to believe your reverence," replied Gabriel, bowing.

The young priest felt, in spite of himself, a vague emotion of fear; for, to the time of his departure for his mission in America, Father d'Aigrigny, to whom he had made the formidable vows which bound him irrevocably to the Society of Jesus, had exercised over him that fearful influence which, emanating from despotism, compulsion, and intimidation, destroys all the powers of the mind, and leaves it inert, trembling, and terrified.

The impressions of early youth are ineffaceable, and it was for the first time since his return from America that Gabriel met Father d'Aigrigny; therefore, although he did not falter in the resolution he had made, Gabriel regretted that he had been unable, as he had hoped, to gain fresh strength from an unreserved conversation with Agricola and Dagobert.

Father d'Aigrigny knew mankind too well not to have observed the emotion of the young priest, and suspected the cause of it. This impression appeared to him a favourable augury; and he, in consequence, redoubled his suavity, tenderness, and amenity, reserving to himself, if it were necessary, the power to assume another mask. He said to Gabriel, as he sat down, while the young priest remained respectfully standing, as well as Rodin,

"You desire, my dear son, to have an important conversation with me?"

"Yes, father," said Gabriel, lowering his eyes, in spite of himself, before the sparkling and full gray eyes of his superior.

"I have also matters of the deepest interest to tell you. First listen to me, and then you shall speak."

"I do listen, father."

"It is now about twelve years, my dear son," said Father d'Aigrigny, affectionately, "since the confessor of your adopted mother, addressing himself to me, through the intervention of M. Rodin, called my attention to you by speaking to
me of the astonishing progress you were making in the school of the brother-
hood. I learned that your admirable conduct, your gentle and modest charac-
ter, your precocious understanding, were worthy of the utmost interest: from this
moment we had our eyes upon you. At the end of some time, seeing that your
conduct was still meritorious, it seemed to me that you were made for something
better than an artisan; your adopted mother was spoken to, and, by my inter-
ference, you were admitted gratuitously into one of the schools of our Order;
thus a burden the less weighed upon the excellent woman who had adopted you,
and a child who had already created such high expectations received from our
paternal hands all the benefits of a religious education. Is not this true, my
dear son?"

"Perfectly true, father," replied Gabriel, lowering his eyes.

"As you grew up, excellent and rare qualities developed themselves in you—
your obedience, your gentleness, were especially exemplary. You made rapid
advances in your studies. I was at that time ignorant of the career you would
ultimately adopt; but I was sure that, in whatever path your destiny might be-
cast, you would remain always a beloved son of the Church. I was not deceived
in my hopes; or, rather, my dear son, you have surpassed them. Learning, in
friendly confidence, that your adopted mother ardently desired to see you take
holy orders, you generously responded to the desires of that excellent woman to
whom you owed so much. But, as the Lord is always just in his rewards, he
has willed that the most touching proof of gratitude which you could give to your
adopted mother should be also divinely profitable, since it led you to enter among
the members militant of our holy Church."

At these words of Father d'Aigrigny, Gabriel could not repress a movement
when he recalled the painful confessions of Françoise; but he restrained himself,
while Rodin, standing up, and resting his elbow at the chimney-corner, con-
tinued looking at him with singular and concentrated attention.

Father d'Aigrigny resumed:

"I will not conceal from you, my dear son, that your resolution filled me with
joy. I saw in you one of the future lights of the Church, and I was desirous to
see it burn in the midst of our society. Our trials, so hard, so painful, so numer-
ous, you underwent courageously. You were judged worthy of belonging to us,
and after having taken, at my hands, the irrevocable and sacred oath, which binds
you to our society forever, for the greater glory of the Lord, you desired to an-
swer the appeal of our holy father to souls of good will, and to go and preach as
a missionary* the Catholic faith among barbarians. Although it was painful to us
to separate from our dear son, we felt bound to accede to his pious desires, and
you went forth a humble missionary, returning to us as a glorious martyr, and
we were justly proud of having you among us. This rapid sketch of the past
was requisite, my dear son, in order to arrive at what follows; for it is necessary,
if possible, to unite still more closely the bonds that join you to us. Listen to
me, then, attentively, my dear son, for this is confidential, and of the highest im-
portance, not only for you, but also for our society—"

"Then, father," exclaimed Gabriel, interrupting Father d'Aigrigny, quickly.

"I cannot—I ought not to hear you!"

The young priest became pale, and it was evident, from the alteration in his
features, that a violent struggle was passing within him; but soon resuming his
first resolution, he raised his head, and, giving a steady look at D'Aigrigny and
Rodin, who gazed at him mute with surprise, resumed:

"I repeat to you, father, that, if it is respecting confidential matters of the
company, it is impossible that I can hear you."

"Really, my dear son, you cause me great astonishment! What ails you?
Your features are altered—you are deeply excited! Speak, and without fear.
Why can you not hear me farther?"

"I cannot tell you, father, until—until I have also referred rapidly to the past.

* The Jesuits recognize only in missions the initiative of the pope with respect to their company.
such as I have now viewed it for some time. You will then comprehend, father, that I have no longer any right to your confidence, for very soon an abyss will, doubtless, separate us."

At these words of Gabriel, it is impossible to paint the glance which D'Aigrigny and Rodin rapidly exchanged. The socius began to bite his nails, fixing his irritated and reptile gaze on Gabriel, while D'Aigrigny became livid, and his forehead broke out into a cold sweat. He asked himself with alarm if, at the moment of reaching the goal, the obstacle would be raised by Gabriel, in whose favour all other obstacles had been got rid of.

There was desperation in the thought, yet the reverend father repressed his emotions admirably, remained calm, and replied, with affectionate unction, "I cannot believe, my dear son, that you and I shall ever be separated by an abyss, if it be not the abyss of grief which I should experience from some great danger to your welfare: but speak—I hear you."

"It is, indeed, twelve years, my father," resumed Gabriel, with a firm voice, and becoming bolder as he proceeded, "since, by your care, I was received into a college of the Company of Jesus. I entered it affectionate, frank, and confiding; how were all these, the precious instincts of youth, fostered? Thus: On the day of my arrival, the superior said to me, pointing to two lads a little older than myself, 'Those are the companions you will select, and you three will take exercise together. The rule of the house forbids two persons to converse; the rule also requires that you listen attentively to all your comrades say, that you may tell it to me again, for those dear children may, without knowing it, have bad thoughts, or meditate the commission of some faults: so, if you love your companions, you must tell me of their improper inclinations, that my paternal remonstrances may spare them punishment by preventing the faults. It is better to prevent than to punish.'"

"Such, truly," said Father d'Aigrigny, "is the rule of our houses, and the language held to all the pupils who present themselves."

"I know it, father," resumed Gabriel, with bitterness; "and three days afterward, poor, submissive, credulous infant, I in my simplicity became the spy over my comrades, listening to and retaining their conversation, which I afterward detailed to my superior, who praised my zeal. What I was compelled to do was unworthy, and yet, God knows, I believed that I was fulfilling a labour of charity. I was happy to obey the orders of a superior whom I respected, and to whose words, in my infantine faith, I listened as I should have listened to those of God. Afterward, when one day I had been guilty of an infraction of
the rule of the house, the superior said to me, 'My child, you have deserved severe punishment, but you shall be forgiven if you can surprise one of your comrades in the same fault which you yourself have committed;' and, for fear this excitement to informing, based on personal interest, should, in spite of myself, appear hateful to me, the superior added, 'I speak to you, my child, in the interest of the salvation of your companion, for if he escape punishment he will become habituated to evil by impunity, while, by surprising him in his fault, and drawing down on him a wholesome chastisement, you will have the twofold advantage of aiding in his salvation and of removing from yourself a punishment deserved, but for which your zeal in detecting another will obviate the necessity.'"

"No doubt," said Father d'Aigrigny, more and more alarmed at the language of Gabriel; "and, in truth, my dear son, all this is in strict conformity with the established rule of our colleges and the habits of the members of our society, who mutually denounce each other from pure brotherly love and reciprocal charity, and for their greater spiritual advancement, more especially when commanded or requested by the superior for the advancement of the glory of God."†

"I know it!" exclaimed Gabriel; "I know that it was in the name of all that is good and holy I was encouraged to do evil!"

"My dear son," said D'Aigrigny, striving to conceal his increasing terrors beneath an appearance of wounded dignity, "these terms from you to me are, at least, somewhat strange!"

At this moment Rodin, leaving the chimney-piece, began pacing the chamber with a meditative air, still biting his nails.

"I am pained, my dear son," continued D'Aigrigny, "to be obliged to remind you that you are indebted to us for the education you have received."

"Such were its fruits," replied Gabriel. "Hitherto I had become a spy upon the others from disinterested motives, but by the orders of my superior I had advanced another step in the unworthy task allotted me—I had become an informer, to escape a merited punishment! Yet such was my trusting, my humble confidence, that I continued, in all innocence, to perform a doubly hateful part. Yet once, I confess, tormented by vague scruples, the expiring efforts of a mind whose generous impulses were to be stifled within me, I asked myself whether the charitable and religious motives ascribed as the aim of this spying and revealing were sufficient to absolve me. I laid my fears before the superior, who answered, 'That it was for me to obey, not to scrutinize, and that to him alone belonged all the responsibility of my actions.'"

"Go on, my son," said D'Aigrigny, yielding, in spite of himself, to a deep dejection. "Alas! I was right to oppose, as I did, your voyage to America."

"And Providence decreed that in that new, free, and fertile country a singular chance should open my eyes to the past and present," exclaimed Gabriel. "Yes, it was in America that, liberated from the sombre abode in which passed so large a portion of my youth, finding myself, for the first time, face to face with the Divine Majesty, in the midst of the immense forests which I traversed—it was there that, awe-struck before so much magnificence and grandeur, I took an oath—" Interrupting himself, Gabriel resumed: "I will speak farther of this oath hereafter; but, believe me," added the missionary, in a tone of deep sorrow, "it was a fatal, a miserable day, when I found myself compelled to mistrust and accuse those whom I had so long blessed and venerated. Yes, father, you may believe me," pursued Gabriel, fixing his humid eyes on D'Aigrigny; "I wept not for myself only."

"I know the excellence of your heart, my dear son," answered D'Aigrigny, whose hopes revived as he perceived the emotion of Gabriel. "I fear you have been led astray, but confide in us as your spiritual fathers, and I trust we shall

* These obligations of espionage and abominable incentives to informing are the bases of the education given by the revered fathers.
† These words are copied literally from the *Constitutiones des Jésuites, Examen Général*, vol. ii., p. 28.
strengthen your faith, which unhappily is shaken, and dissipate the darkness which obscures your view: for, alas! my son, in your illusion you have mistaken some deceitful glimmerings for the pure light of day."

While D'Aigrigny was thus speaking, Rodin stopped, took a pocket-book from his pocket, and wrote a few lines.

Gabriel's countenance became paler, and his emotion increased; for, since his return from America, he had learned to know the formidable power of the society: but this revelation of the past, seen through the medium of a more enlightened present, being the excuse, or, rather, the cause of the determination he had come to make known to his superior, he was resolved candidly to speak out, however great might be the danger he incurred.

He therefore proceeded, in a voice tremulous with agitation,

"You know, father, that the close of my youth, that happy time of innocent joy and frankness, was passed in an atmosphere of constraint, of fear, and mistrustful espionage. Alas! how could I indulge in confidence or tenderness, when I was constantly enjoined never to meet the eye of persons to whom I spoke, lest they should read on my countenance the impression their words had made—to conceal my own feelings, while I observed and listened to all that was done or said in my presence! Thus I reached my fifteenth year. By degrees, the very few visits I had been permitted to make (always in the presence of one of the fathers) to my adopted mother and brother were entirely suppressed, the better to shut my heart against every sweet and tender feeling; fearful and spiritless, in that cold, silent, gloomy abode, I daily felt myself more completely separated from the world of freedom and of love. My time was divided between mutilated studies, without aim or end, and long hours of religious minutiae and devotional exercises; but I ask you, father, was any attempt ever made to kindle our young hearts by words imbued with tenderness and holy affection? Alas! no. For that blessed command given by our gracious Redeemer, 'Love ye one another,' they seem to have substituted, 'Suspect ye one another.' Did we ever hear a word of country or liberty? No! oh no! for such words make the heart throb, and the heart must be still. To our hours of study and religious exercise succeeded, as the only recreation, a measured walk of three—never two; because, with three, a mutual espionage might be carried on,* and because between two friendship more easily springs up, and one of those noble, generous attachments might be cemented which make the heart throb, and the heart must be still. Thus, by dint of smothering all feeling, a day came at last when I had none. In six months I had not seen my brother and my adoptive mother; they came to the college: some years before, I should have received them with transports of

* Such is the strictness of this regulation in all Jesuitical colleges, that, if three pupils are walking together, and one of the party should quit his companions for an instant, the remaining two are obliged to remove at a distance from each other, beyond the hearing of each other's voices, and so remain till the return of the third.
tearful joy; now my eyes were dry, my heart cold: they left me, weeping for my apathy. The sight of their grief pained me, and I felt horror-struck at the frigid insensibility which had taken possession of me since I became an inhabitant of this living tomb. Terrified, I wished to escape while there was yet time: I spoke to you, father, of the choice of a pursuit; for, in those moments of soul-waking, I seemed to hear from afar the hum of busy, useful life, the life of labour and freedom, of affections, of domestic joys. Oh! how I longed for liberty, for noble impulses! In them I should have found the soul's life which I sought in vain. I told you, father, kneeling before you in tears, that a military life, or that of an artisan, anything would have been welcome; then it was you informed me that my adopted mother, to whom I owed my life (for she found a starving outcast, and, poor herself, divided with me the bread of her own child—the greatest sacrifice a mother could make)—then it was, continued Gabriel, hesitating and looking downward (for his was one of those noble natures which experience a sense of shame for the baseness of which they are the victims), "it was then, father," continued Gabriel, with renewed embarrassment, "that you told me my adopted mother had but one end, one desire, which was—"

"That of seeing you take orders, my dear son," replied D'Aigrigny, "since that good and pious woman believed that, by securing your salvation, her own would be assured; but she durst not ask it, fearing lest you might suppose her desire arose from interested motives—"

"Enough, father!" said Gabriel, interrupting D'Aigrigny, with a movement of irrepressible indignation. "It is painful to me to hear you persist in what is not true. Françoise Baudoin never entertained that wish."

"My dear son," replied D'Aigrigny, mildly, "you are hasty in your conclusions. I tell you that such was the sole thought and desire of your adopted mother."

"Yesterday, father, she told me all. She and I have been mutually deceived."

"Then, my son," said D'Aigrigny, in a stern voice, "you give the assertion of your adopted mother the preference to mine?"

"I beseech you, father," said Gabriel, casting down his eyes, "to spare me a reply as painful for you as for me."

"Will you, then, explain," said D'Aigrigny, anxiously, "what you mean to—"

He was interrupted by the entrance of Samuel, who said,

"There is a middle-aged person requesting to speak with M. Rodin."

"I am M. Rodin," answered the socius, much surprised. "I am much obliged to you."

Then, before he followed the Jew, he gave to D'Aigrigny some words, written in pencil on a leaf torn from his pocket-book. Rodin then left the room, not a little anxious to know who had come in search of him to the Rue Saint François.

D'Aigrigny and Gabriel were left alone.
CHAPTER IV.

RUPTURE.

FATHER D'AIGRIGNY, plunged in a mortal anxiety, had mechanically received Rodin's note, and held it in his hand without thinking of opening it. He asked himself, with alarm, what conclusion Gabriel would arrive at, after all these criminations on the past. He dared not reply to his reproaches, as he feared to irritate the young priest, on whom at this moment rested interests so important.

Gabriel could not possess anything of his own, according to the constitution of the Society of Jesus, and, moreover, the reverend father had taken care to obtain from him, in favour of the Order, an express renunciation of all property which might at any time revert to him; but the commencement of this conversation seemed to announce so serious a modification of Gabriel's views with respect to the society, that he might be resolved to break the ties which bound him thereto, and, in this case, he was not legally bound to fulfil any of his engagements.* In fact, the act of donation was annulled, and, at the very moment of being so felicitously realized by the possession of the immense fortune of the Rennepont family, the hopes of Father d'Aigrigny were completely and forever destroyed.

Amid all the perplexities under which the reverend father had suffered concern ing this heritage, none had been more entirely unforeseen, more terrible. Fearing to interrupt or question Gabriel, D'Aigrigny awaited in silent terror the result of this conversation, which threatened so much of ill.

The missionary resumed:

"It is my duty, father, to continue this exposition of my past life to the moment of my departure for America. You will understand directly why I impose this task upon myself."

Father d'Aigrigny made him a sign to continue.

"Once informed of the pretended desire of my adoptive mother, I resigned myself to it at every sacrifice, and left the gloomy walls in which I had passed a portion of my childhood and my early youth, to enter one of the seminaries of the society. My resolution was not dictated by an irresistible vocation for the Church, but by a desire to acquit a sacred debt to my adoptive mother: yet the real spirit of Christ's religion is so full of inspiration, that I felt myself reanimated and excited by the idea of following the adorable precepts of the Divine Saviour. In my thoughts, instead of resembling the college in which I had lived until then under such a deadly compression, a seminary was a blessed spot, where all that was pure and invigorating in an evangelic brotherhood was applied to common life; where, for instance, they incessantly preached the ardent love of humanity, the ineffable sweetness of mercy and tolerance; where they interpreted the immortal word of Christ in its largest and most fruitful sense; where the mind was prepared, by the habitual expansion of the most generous sentiments, for that glorious apostleship whose aim is to touch the hearts of the rich and happy for the anguish and sufferings of their fellow-men, by laying bare before them the miseries of afflicted humanity—a sublime and holy morality, which none can resist when it is preached with the eyes full of tears and the heart running over with tenderness and love."

As he uttered these last words with deep emotion, Gabriel's eyes were suffused with tears, and his face glowed with angelic beauty.

* The statutes formally set forth that the company may eject from its bosom such members as it may consider useless or dangerous; but a member is not allowed to break the bonds which bind him to the company, if the latter think it to their interest to retain him.
"Such is, in truth, my dear son, the spirit of Christianity; but we must, before all things else, study and explain the letter," replied Father d'Aigrigny. "It is to this study that the seminaries of our company are especially devoted. The interpretation of the letter is a work of analysis, discipline, submission, not of heart and sentiment."

"I discovered that but too clearly, father. On my entrance into this new house, I saw, alas! all my hopes crushed; my heart, for a moment expanded, soon again contracted, when, instead of the centre of life, affection, and youth, of which I had dreamed, I found in this seminary, so cold and chilling, the same repression of every generous impulse, the same unbending discipline, the same system of mutual betrayal, the same mistrust, the same invincible obstacles to every tie of friendship: thus the warmth which had been momentarily excited in my soul was weakened, and I gradually fell back into the habit of an inert, passive, and mechanical existence, which a pitiless authority regulated with mechanical precision, just as one regulates the inanimate movements of a clock."

"Because order, submission, and regularity are the first principles of our society, my dear son."

"Alas, father! it was death, and not life, which was thus laid down in rules. In the midst of this destruction of every generous principle I gave myself up to the studies of the schools and of theology. Gloomy and contracting studies they were; cautious, menacing, or hostile science, which always excited ideas of peril, struggle, and warfare, and never of peace, progress, and liberty."

"Theology, my dear son," said Father d'Aigrigny, sternly, "is at once a buckler and a sword; a buckler to defend and cover the Catholic faith—a sword to attack heresy."

"Yet, father, Christ and his apostles were ignorant of this dark science, and, by their simple and touching language, men were regenerated, and liberty succeeded to bondage. The Gospel, that divine code, is surely sufficient to teach men to love one another. But, alas! far from making us understand this language, they told us but too constantly of religious wars, enumerating the seas of blood which have been necessarily shed, to please the Lord and to drown heresy. Such terrific instruction made our life still more gloomy. In proportion as we approached the end of youth, our connexion with the seminary assumed a character of increasing bitterness, jealousy, and suspicion. The habit of informing against each other, being applied to more serious matters, engendered hatred and deep resentment. I was neither better nor worse than the rest: all broken for years to the iron yoke of passive obedience, debarred from all action, from all free will, humble and trembling before our superior, we alike presented a pale, mournful, and dejected appearance. At last I took or
ders; and, once become a priest, you induced me, father, to enter into the Company of Jesus; or, rather, I found myself insensibly, almost unconsciously, led to this determination—I know not how: for so long a time my will had not belonged to me. I underwent every ordeal; and the most terrible was decisive. For many months I lived in the silence of my cell, observing with resignation the strange and mechanical routine which you had ordered to me, father. Except your reverence, no one approached me in this long space of time—no human voice but yours fell upon my ear. At night I sometimes experienced vague terrors; my mind, weakened by fasting, austerity, and solitude, was then impressed with frightful visions: at other times, on the contrary, I felt a depression, filled with a kind of quietude, in believing that, by pronouncing my vows, I should deliver myself forever from the burden of will and thought. Then I abandoned myself to an overwhelming torpor, like those unfortunates who, surprised in a snow-storm, yield to the stupor of a frozen death. I waited the fatal moment; and then, father (as the discipline ruled), stilling in my agony,* I hastened the moment of accomplishing the last act of my expiring will—the vow of renouncing the exercise of my will.”

“Recollect, my dear son,” said Father d’Aigrigny, pale, and tortured by his increasing agony of mind, “recollect that, on the eve of the day appointed for taking your vows, I offered to you, according to the rule of the company, the privilege of renouncing your connexion with us, leaving you completely free; for we do not accept any but those whose call is voluntary.”

“True, father,” replied Gabriel, with painful bitterness; “when, exhausted, overcome by three months of solitude and trials, I was prostrated, incapable of effort, you opened the door of my cell, and said to me, ‘If you desire it, rise and go forth; you are free.’ Alas! my strength had left me; the sole desire of my soul, deadened and so long paralyzed, was the repose of the tomb: I pronounced those irrevocable vows, and fell back into your hand like a corpse!”

“And to this time, my dear son, you have never failed in your corpse-like obedience, as it was indeed termed by our glorious founder, because the more entire this obedience, the more is it meritorious.”

After a moment’s silence, Gabriel continued:

“You have always concealed from me, father, the real ends of the society into which I had entered. The entire abandonment of my own will, which I gave up to my superiors, was demanded of me for the greater glory of God. My vows pronounced, I was to be in your hands a pliant and complying tool; but you told me that I should be employed in a holy, vast, and beautiful work: father, I believed you; how could I do otherwise? I waited, and a sad event came to change my destiny—a severe illness, caused by—”

“My son!” exclaimed D’Aigrigny, interrupting Gabriel, “it is useless to recall those circumstances.”

“Excuse me, father; but I must recall everything. I have a right to be heard, and I will not pass in silence over any of the facts which have dictated to me the immutable resolution I have to announce to you.”

“Speak, then, my son,” said Father d’Aigrigny, frowning, and apparently dreading to hear what the young priest was about to relate, whose cheeks, before pale as ashes, were now suffused with a rich scarlet.

“Six months before my departure for America,” resumed Gabriel, lowering his eyes, “you informed me that I was destined for the confessional, and, to prepare me for this holy ministration, you gave me a book—”

Gabriel again hesitated, and his cheek was still more deeply dyed. Father d’Aigrigny could hardly repress a movement of impatience and anger.

“You gave me a book,” resumed the young priest, making an effort over himself—“a book containing the questions which a confessor should address to young men, young girls, and married women, when they present themselves at

* This expression is from the text. It is expressly desired by the constitution that this decisive moment of proof should be exhibited, and then hasten the pronouncing of the vows
the tribunal of penitence. Merciful Heaven," said Gabriel, shuddering at the recollection; "I shall never forget that fearful moment. It was evening. I retired to my chamber, carrying with me this volume, composed, as you had informed me, by one of our fathers, and completed by a holy bishop.* Full of respect, of confidence and faith, I opened those pages. At first I did not understand—then, at length, I understood. I was overwhelmed with shame, horror, and amazement. I could scarcely close that abominable volume with my trembling hand. I ran to you, my father, accusing myself for having involuntarily cast my eyes over those nameless pages which, by mistake, you had placed in my hands—"

"Again recollect, my dear son," said Father d'Aigrigny, gravely, "that I calmed your scruples by telling you that a priest, destined to know all under the seal of confession, must know everything, be able to appreciate everything; that our company imposed the reading of this Compendium as a classic work for young deacons, seminarists, and young priests destined for the confessional."

"I believed you, father; for the habit of passive obedience was so powerful within me, discipline had so deprived me of all power of self-examination, that, spite of my horror (with which I reproached myself as a serious sin), I took back the book to my chamber, and read it. Oh, father! what a fearful disclosure was this of the criminal excesses of luxury, refined in its wickedness! I was in the vigour of youth, and, until then, my ignorance and God's help had alone sustained me in my fierce struggles against the senses. Oh, what a night! what a night! as, in the deep silence of my solitude, shuddering with fright and confusion, I spelled over this catechism of monstrous, gross, unheard-of debaucheries! As the obscene pictures of horrible lubricity presented themselves to my imagination, until then chaste and pure, my very reason seemed to fail me—and it completely left me; for, while I desired to flee from this infernal book, a devouring curiosity impelled me, breathless and distracted, to peruse these infamous pages, until I thought I should die with confusion and shame. * * *"

"You speak of this work in blameable language," said Father d'Aigrigny, with severity. "You were the victim of a too lively imagination, and to that you must attribute this sad impression, produced by a work excellent and irreproachable of its class, and, moreover, authorized by the Church."

"And thus, father," replied Gabriel, with deep bitterness, "I have not the right to complain that my imagination, until then pure and unsullied, has been forever stained by monstrous ideas which I could never else have conceived; for I doubt if those who can abandon themselves to such horrors ever come to ask for absolution from a priest."

"Those are questions of which you are not a competent judge," replied D'Aigrigny, sharply.

* It is impossible for us, out of respect to our readers, to give, even in Latin, an idea of this infamous book. M. Genin, in his bold and excellent work, Des Jésuites et de l'Université, says thus: "I feel great embarrassment in beginning this chapter; it treats of a book which it is impossible to translate, and difficult to quote literally, for the Latin braves decency with too much shamelessness. I must ask the indulgence of the reader, and I promise, in return, to spare him as much of its obscenity as possible."

Farther, in alluding to the questions imposed by the Compendium, M. Genin exclaims, with generous indignation, "What, then, are the conversations which pass in the confessional between the priest and a married woman? I dare not speak more on this point."

The author of Découvertes d'un Bibliophile, after having literally quoted a great number of passages from this horrid catechism, says: "My pen refuses to reproduce more amply this encyclopedia of all that is most foul. I have even a remorse, which alarm me, for having gone so far. I say to myself in vain that I have only copied. I still feel the horror one has after having touched poison. Yet this very horror gives me courage. In the Church of Jesus Christ, according to the admirable order established by God, the greater the evil, the more prompt, the more efficacious the remedy. The holiness of morality cannot be endangered, but truth will raise its voice and will be heard."
"I will speak of them no more, father," said Gabriel, and resumed: "A long illness succeeded that terrible night, and often, as I was told, it was feared that my reason was destroyed. When I recovered, the past appeared to me as a painful dream. You told me then, father, that I was not yet fitted for certain functions. It was then that I asked you, with earnest entreaties, leave to go on a mission to America. After refusing my prayer for a long time, you consented, and I departed. From my infancy I had always lived, in college or the seminary, in a state of perpetual restraint and subjection, and, by force of accustoming myself to lower my head and eyes, I had, as it were, become unused to contemplate heaven and the splendours of nature; thus, then, what deep and holy joy did I experience when I found myself all at once transported into the midst of the imposing grandeur of the sea—when, during our voyage, I saw myself between ocean and sky! I seemed then to have left thick and heavy darkness, and, for the first time in many years, I felt my heart beat freely in my bosom! For the first time I felt myself master of my thoughts, and I dared to examine my past life, as from the height of a mountain one gazes into a dark valley below. Then strange doubts arose in my mind. I asked myself by what right, for what purpose, my will, my liberty, my reason had so long been repressed and fettered down, since God had endowed me with liberty, will, and reason? But I said to myself that perhaps the end of this great, beautiful, and holy work, to which I was bound, would one day be unveiled to me, and compensate me for my obedience and resignation."

At this moment Rodin returned.

Father d'Aigrigny questioned him by a meaning look. The socius approached, and said, in a low voice, so that Gabriel could not hear,

"Nothing important: they only came to tell me that the father of General Simon had arrived at the manufactory of M. Hardy."

Then, glancing at Gabriel, Rodin seemed to inquire of Father d'Aigrigny, who looked down with a troubled air. Recovering himself, however, he addressed Gabriel, while Rodin again leaned on his elbow against the chimney.

"Continue, my dear son; I am most desirous to know the resolution at which you have arrived."

"I will tell you instantly, father. I reached Charleston. There the superior of our establishment, to whom I communicated my doubts as to the aims of our society, undertook to clear them up; and with fearful frankness he did disclose to me the aims contemplated, perhaps not by all the members of the company, for many shared my ignorance, but which its chiefs have pertinaciously pursued since the foundation of the Order. I was thunderstruck. I read the Casuists, and then, father, I had a new and fearful revelation, when, at each page of those books written by our fathers, I read excuses, justification of robbery, slander, violation, adultery, perjury, murder, regicide.* When I thought that I, a priest

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*This assertion is within the bounds of truth. Here are extracts from the Compendium for the use of the seminaries, published at Strasbourg, in 1843, under the title, Découvertes d'un Bibliophile: we shall find that the doctrine of the reverend fathers was sufficient to alarm Gabriel.

**Perjury.**

"It is asked how far a man is bound who has taken an oath in a fictitious manner, and to deceive." **Answer:** "He is bound to nothing as regards religion, because he has not taken a real oath; but he is bound, by justice, to do what he has sworn in a fictitious manner, and to deceive."

**Violation.**

"He who, by force, threat, fraud, or importunity of his prayer, has seduced a virgin without any promise of marriage, is bound to indemnify the girl and her parents from all the wrong which may result to them, by giving her a dowry, in order that she may marry; and by marrying herself, if he cannot indemnify her otherwise. If, however, his crime has remained absolutely a secret, it is more probable that, in conscience, the seducer is not bound to any reparation."

**Adultery.**

"If any one has guilty intercourse with a married woman, not because she is married, but because she is handsome, thus abstracting the circumstances of marriage, this connexion, according to many authors, does not constitute the sin of adultery, but is only simple impurity."

**Suicide.**

"A doctor orders a Carthusian, stricken with a serious malady, the use of meat, as a necessary remedy to avoid certain death; is he bound to obey his doctor? **Answer:** "This question has been one of controversy; but a negative decision appears to us most probable, and is, therefore, most general among the teachers."
of the God of charity, justice, pardon, and love, belonged henceforward to a
company whose chiefs professed such doctrines, and glorified themselves therein,
I took an oath before God to break forever the ties that bound me to it!"

At these words of Gabriel, Father d'Aigrigny and Rodin exchanged a look of
terror: all was lost—their prey escaped them!

Gabriel, deeply moved by the recollections he had awakened, did not per-
ceive this movement of the reverend father and the sociose, and continued:

"Notwithstanding my resolution, father, to leave the company, the discovery
I had made was deeply distressing to me. Ah! believe me, to a just and good
soul nothing is more frightful than to have to renounce that which it has long
respected, and to sever from it. I suffered so greatly, that, when I thought of
the dangers of my mission, I hoped, with secret joy, that God would recall me,
perhaps, to himself under these circumstances; but, on the contrary, He has
watched over me with providential care."

As he said these words, Gabriel shuddered
at the remembrance of the mysterious female
who had saved his life in America. After a
moment's silence, he thus continued:

"My mission terminated, I returned hither,
farther resolved to beseech you to set me at
liberty, to release me from my vows. Very
frequently, but in vain, I have begged to have
an interview with you: yesterday Providence vouchsafed that I should have a long con-
servation with my adoptive mother, from whom I
learned the stratagem that had been employed
to compel me to take holy orders, and the
sacrilegious abuse that has been made of con-
fusion by inducing her to confide to other
persons the orphans whom a dying mother
had confided to the hands of a worthy soldier.
You must understand, father, that if I could
have hesitated for a moment to break my
bonds, what I learned yesterday would have
made my decision irrevocable. But, at this
solemn moment, father, I must tell you that I
do not accuse the whole company. There are
many simple, credulous, confiding men, like
myself, doubtless, among its members. In
their blindness, passive instruments! they are ignorant of the object to which
they are made instrumental. I pity them, and will pray to God to enlighten them
as he has enlightened me."

"Thus, then, my son," said Father d'Aigrigny, rising, livid and aghast, "you
come to ask me to sever the ties which bind you to the company?"

"I do, father; I have taken an oath at your hands, and I pray you to absolve
me of that oath."

"Thus, then, my son, you intend that all the engagement freely taken in for-
mer days by you should be considered as vain and dissolved?"

"Yes, father."

Robbery.

"Robbery is excusable when it constitutes a secret compensation, by which the creditor carries ofl secretly the prop-
erty of his debtor to an amount equal to what is due to him."

Murder.

"It is certain that it is permissible to kill a robber to preserve possessions necessary to life; because there the ag-
gressor attacks not only our property, but indirectly our life also. But it is doubtful if it is permissible to kill him who
unjustly attempts to carry off property of great importance not necessary to life, if this property cannot be defended
with success. The affirmative appears most probable. The reason being, that charity does not require that any one
should undergo a severe loss of his goods to preserve the life of his neighbour."

As to regicide, read Sanchez, etc., etc., etc.
THE WANDERING JEW.

"Thus, then, my son, there will henceforward be nothing in common between you and our society?"

"No, father, as I wish to be released from my vows."

"But you know, my son, that the company may release you, but you cannot release yourself from it!"

"The step I have taken, father, must prove to you the importance I attach to my oath, since I come to you to ask to be released from it. Still, even if you refuse me, I shall no longer consider myself bound either in the eyes of God or man."

"It is perfectly clear," said Father d'Aigrigny to Rodin; and his words expired on his lips, so deep was his despair.

Suddenly, while Gabriel, with his eyes fixed on the ground, was awaiting the reply of Father d'Aigrigny, who was mute and motionless, Rodin appeared struck with a sudden idea when he perceived that the reverend father still held in his hand the note he had written in pencil.

The socius quickly approached Father d'Aigrigny, and said to him, in a low tone, with an air of doubt and alarm,

"Have you not read my note?"

"I had not thought of it," replied the reverend father, mechanically.

Rodin appeared to make an effort to repress a burst of violent anger, and then said to Father d'Aigrigny, calmly,

"Read it, then."

Scarcely had the reverend father cast his eyes on the billet, when a sudden ray of hope lighted up his countenance, till then so despairing, and pressing the hand of the socius, with an expression of deep gratitude he said to him,

"You are right, Gabriel is ours."
CHAPTER V.

THE RETURN.

FATHER D’AIGRIGNY, before he addressed Gabriel, reflected deeply: his countenance, hitherto so dejected, gradually became serene. He appeared to meditate, calculating the effect of the eloquence which he was about to employ on a theme so admirable and sure as that which the socius, struck with the danger of their position, had written rapidly with his pencil, and which in his trouble the reverend father had at first neglected.

Rodin resumed his post of observation near the chimney, where he leaned on his elbow, after having thrown on Father d’Aigrigny a look of disdainful and angry superiority, accompanied by a very significant shrugging of the shoulders.

After this involuntary manifestation, fortunately unperceived by Father d’Aigrigny, the corpse-like countenance of the socius resumed its icy calm: his heavy eyelids, a moment raised in anger and impatience, fell, and half veiled his small, dull eyes.

It must be confessed that Father d’Aigrigny, spite of his elegant and flowing language, spite of the attractions of his face and his endowments as an accomplished and refined man of the world—Father d’Aigrigny was often controlled by the pitiless firmness, the devilish cunning and depth of Rodin, that repulsive, dirty, meanly-clad old man, who, however, but seldom quitted his humble character of secretary and mute auditor.

The influence of education is so powerful, that Gabriel, notwithstanding the formal rupture he had provoked, felt still intimidated in the presence of Father d’Aigrigny, and awaited with deep anguish the reply of the reverend father to his direct request to be released from his oaths.

His reverence, having, no doubt, skilfully combined his plan of attack, at length broke silence, and heaving a deep sigh, and giving to his countenance, recently so stern and irritated, a touching expression of tenderness, said to Gabriel, in an affectionate voice,

"Pardon me, my dear son, for having so long kept silence, but your sudden determination took me so utterly by surprise, and created so many painful emotions, that I required some moments to collect myself, and endeavour to penetrate the cause of your desire to sever from us; and I believe I have detected it. Have you, my dear son, reflected well on the importance of this step?"

"Yes, father."
"You have absolutely decided on abandoning the company, even in opposition to my wishes?"
"It will be painful to me, father; but I am resolved upon it."
"It must, indeed, be painful to you, my dear son; for you freely took an irrevocable oath, and that oath, according to our statutes, enjoins you not to leave the company but with the consent of your superiors."
"Father, I was then ignorant, as you know, of the nature of the engagement I entered into; now, better informed, I ask to withdraw; my only desire is to obtain a curacy in some village far from Paris. I feel an irresistible vocation for such humble and useful functions, for there is in the country so much dreadful misery, so much profound ignorance of all which tends to meliorate the condition of the agricultural labourer, whose existence is as wretched as that of the Negro slave. For, what is his liberty? what his instruction? Oh! it seems to me that, by Divine assistance, I could, as a village curate, render some service to my fellow-creatures! It would, therefore, be painful to me, father, to have you refuse me what—"

"Oh, make your mind easy, my son," replied Father d'Aigrigny; "I do not propose to contend any farther against your desire to separate from us."
"Then, father, you release me from my vows?"
"I cannot do that of myself, my dear son; but I will write immediately to Rome to request the authority of our general."
"I thank you, father!"
"Soon, therefore, my dear son, you will be delivered from those bonds which weigh upon you; and the men whom you abjure with so much bitterness will not the less continue to pray for you, that God may preserve you from any farther wanderings. You believe yourself severed from us, my dear son, but we shall never consider ourselves severed from you: we do not thus rend asunder the ties that bind us in habits of paternal attachment. We consider ourselves obliged to our fellow-creatures by the very benefits which we have heaped upon them. Thus, you were poor and an orphan; we extended our arms to you, as much for the interest which you really deserved, my dear son, as to spare a too heavy expense to that worthy woman, your mother by adoption."
"Father!" said Gabriel, with restrained emotion, "I am not ungrateful."
"I am willing to believe so, my dear son; for long years we gave you, as to our beloved child, the bread of soul and body; to-day you desire to sever from, to abandon us. Not only do we consent, now that I have penetrated the real cause of your rupture with us, but it is my duty to release you from your vows."
"Of what cause do you speak, father?"
"Alas, my dear son, I can understand your fear! At this moment dangers threaten us: you know that well—"
"Dangers, father!" exclaimed Gabriel.
"You cannot be ignorant, my dear son, that, since the fall of our legitimate sovereign, our natural supporter, revolutionary impiety becomes more and more menacing, and we are overwhelmed with persecutions. Thus, my dear son, I understand and appreciate, as I should, the motive which, such being our position, induces you to separate from us—"
"Father!" exclaimed Gabriel, with equal indignation and grief, "you do not think so of me—you cannot think so!"

Father d'Aigrigny, without any attention to Gabriel's protestation, continued the imaginary picture of the dangers of the company, which, far from being in peril, was already beginning secretly to resume its influence.
"Oh, if our Order were as all-powerful as it was a few years since," resumed Father d'Aigrigny; "if it were surrounded by the respect and homage which the faithful owe to it, in spite of the many abominable calumnies with which we are pursued, perhaps then, my dear son, we might hesitate to release you from your oaths, to, perhaps, seek to open your eyes to the light, to snatch you from the fatal vertigo to which you are a prey; but now, when we are feeble, oppressed,
threatened on all sides, it is our duty, it is our charity, not to make you partake, by force, of the perils from which you have the sagacity to withdraw yourself."

Saying these words, Father d'Aigrigny cast a rapid glance at his socius, who replied by an approving sign, accompanied by a gesture of impatience, which seemed to say, "Proceed! proceed!"

Gabriel was aghast. There was not in the world a more generous, more loyal heart than his, and we may judge of his feelings when he heard this interpretation put upon his resolution.

"'Father,' he replied, with a voice of deep emotion and eyes filled with tears, "your words are cruel—unjust, for you know I am no coward!"

"No," said Rodin, in his harsh and sarcastic tone, addressing himself to Father d'Aigrigny, "your dear son is prudent!"

At these words of Rodin Gabriel started; a slight colour suffused his pale cheeks, his large blue eyes glistened with generous indignation, but, faithful to the precepts of resignation and Christian humility, he subdued the sensation of anger, bowed his head, and, too much moved to reply, was silent, and wiped away a tear.

This tear did not escape the socius, who saw it a favourable symptom, and again exchanged a look of satisfaction with Father d'Aigrigny.

The latter was then on the point of touching on the vital question, and, spite of his usual self-control, his voice was slightly tremulous, when, in a manner encouraged, impelled by a look from Rodin, who became extremely attentive, he said to Gabriel,

"Another motive also forbids us to hesitate in releasing you from your oaths, my dear son—it is a question of delicacy. You have, probably, learned yesterday from your adoptive mother that you were, perchance, called to an inheritance, of whose value I am ignorant."

Gabriel raised his head quickly, and said to Father d'Aigrigny,

"I have already declared to M. Rodin that my mother only spoke to me of scruples of conscience, and I am utterly ignorant of the existence of the inheritance of which you speak."

The expression of indifference with which the young priest pronounced these last words was remarked by Rodin.

"Well, then," replied D'Aigrigny, "you are, I am willing to believe, ignorant of this, though all appearances prove the contrary—prove, indeed, that the knowledge of this inheritance is active in making you desire to separate from us."

"I do not understand you, father."

"Still, what I say is simple enough. I say that your rupture with us has two motives: in the first place, we are threatened, and you think it prudent to leave us—"

"Father!"

"Allow me to conclude, my dear son, and proceed to the second motive; if I am deceived, you will say so. The facts are these: At a former period, and in the supposition that your family, of whose fate you were ignorant, might leave you some property, you had, in return for the care which the company had taken of you—you had made, I say, a gift of any property that might fall to you, not to us, but to the poor, whose born guardians we are."

"Well, father?" inquired Gabriel, still ignorant whither this preamble tended.

"Well, my dear son, now that you are certain of enjoying some means, you desire, no doubt, in separating from us, to annul the donation made by you in former days."

"To speak clearly, you break your oath because we are persecuted, and because you wish to take back your gifts," added Rodin, in a harsh voice, as if to expose at once, in as plain and brutal a manner as possible, Gabriel's position to the Company of Jesus.

At this infamous accusation, Gabriel could not but raise his hands and eyes to heaven, and exclaim, with agony, "Alas! alas!"
Father d'Aigrigny, after having exchanged a meaning glance with Rodin, said to him, in a stern voice, that he might appear to rebuke his rude interference,

"I think you go too far: our dear son might have acted in the base and cowardly way you describe, if he had been informed of his new position as heir; but, as he affirms the contrary, I must believe him in spite of appearances."

"Father," said Gabriel, pale, full of emotion, trembling, and yet subduing his painful indignation, "I thank you for suspending your judgment, at least. No, I am no coward; for God is my witness that I was ignorant of the dangers which your company runs: no, I am no coward; no, I am not avaricious; for God is my witness it is but this moment I learn from you, father, that it is possible I may be called on to receive an inheritance, and that—"

"One word, my dear son: I have recently learned this fact by the merest chance in the world," said Father d'Aigrigny, interrupting Gabriel, "and that, thanks to the family papers which your adoptive mother gave to her confessor, and which were confided to us when you entered our college. A short time before your return from America, while classifying the archives of the company, your name fell under the hand of our reverend father the procureur; the papers were examined, and then we discovered that one of your paternal ancestors, to whom the house in which we now are belonged, left a will, which is to be opened at noon this day. Yesterday evening we still deemed you as belonging to us: our statutes will that we should not possess anything of our own: you had complied with these statutes, by a gift in favour of the patrimony of the poor, which we administer. It was then no longer you, but the company, who, in my person, came forward as heir in your stead, furnished with your claims, which I have here in due form. But now, my dear son, that you separate from us, it is for you to present yourself: we only come here as agents for the poor, to whom you had piously given up all property you might one day possess; but now, on the contrary, the hope of a fortune changes your feelings: you are free to do so; resume your gifts."

Gabriel had listened to Father d'Aigrigny with grieving impatience, and exclaimed, "And is it you, father—you, who think me capable of resuming a donation given freely in favour of the company in recompense for the education it had generously given to me? Is it you who believe me so infamous as to reclaim my word because I am, perhaps, about to possess a small patrimony?"

"The patrimony, my dear son, may be small—perhaps considerable."

"Father!" exclaimed Gabriel, with a proud and noble indifference, "were a king's fortune involved, I should speak as I now do. I claim a right to be be-
lieved; and I now utter my irrevocable determination. You tell me the company to which I belong is in danger; I will ascertain the nature of the evils which threaten it; if I find them imminent, spite of the fixed resolve which mor-
ally separates me from you, I will wait till the dangers have passed away before I quit the society. As for the inheritance you believe me so eager to obtain, I formally renounce it to you, as I have previously bound myself to do; all I desire is, that the wealth may be distributed among the poor and needy. I know not if the fortune be large or small; be it what it may, it belongs to the company. My word once passed is not to be recalled. I have already told you, father, that my only desire is to obtain an humble curacy in some poor village—the poorer the better, because there I could be useful. And now, father, when a man who has never told a lie declares that he longs only for an existence so humble, so disinterested, he ought not to be believed capable of reclaiming a gift which he has made."

At these words D'Aigrigny had as much difficulty to repress his delight as before to conceal his alarm; but, preserving an outward calmness, he said, in reply to Gabriel,

"I expected nothing less of you, my dear son;" then, making a sign to Rodin that he should join in the attack, the socius left his post by the fireplace, and, approaching Gabriel, leaned upon a table on which were an inkstand and materials for writing; then, beginning mechanically to drum on the table with his dirty, ill-shaped nails, he said to D'Aigrigny,

"All this is very well; but your dear son merely fortifies his promise by an oath, which is not worth much."

"Sir!" exclaimed Gabriel.

"Allow me to speak," said Rodin, coldly; "the law, not recognising the existence of our Order, will not take cognizance of donations made in favour of the company; you may, therefore, recall to-morrow what you have bestowed to-day."

"And my oath, sir!" exclaimed Gabriel.

Rodin looked at him fixedly, and replied,

"Your oath? You also took an oath of eternal obedience to the Order, from which you vowed never to separate yourself; and to-day how much virtue has that oath?"

For an instant Gabriel was embarrassed; but, quickly feeling how false was the comparison, he arose, and with calm dignity seated himself before the desk, and, taking a pen and paper, wrote as follows:

"Before God, who sees and hears me—before you, Reverend Father d'Aigrigny and M. Rodin, witnesses of my oath—I here renew, freely and voluntarily, the entire and absolute donation of all property to which I may be entitled, here-tofore made to the Company of Jesus in the person of the Reverend Father d'Aigrigny, whatever may be its value; and here I bind myself never to revoke or recall the gift, considering it conscientiously as the acquittal of a debt of gratitude and a pious obligation.

"This donation, being intended to repay past services, and aid in assisting the poor, can never be affected by any future events; and, because I know that I may be legally enabled to annul the promise I here make of my own free will, I declare that, should I ever, under any circumstances whatever, seek to revoke it, I shall merit the contempt and abhorrence of all good men.

"In witness whereof, I write this on the 13th of February, 1832, at Paris, at the moment when the will of one of my paternal ancestors is about to be opened."

"GABRIEL DE RENNEPONT."

[See cut, on page 542.]

Then, rising, the young priest gave the paper to Rodin without uttering a word. The socius read it with attention; then, cold and impassive as ever, he looked at Gabriel, and said,
"'Tis a written promise—nothing more."

Gabriel was amazed at the audacity of Rodin, who dared to tell him that a paper, in which he renewed the gift so freely, generously, and unequivocally, was not sufficient.

The socius was the first to break the silence, by addressing D'Aigrigny in his usual tone of calm assurance.

"One thing is certain: either your dear son intends that the donation shall be absolutely available and irrevocable, or—"

"Sir!" cried Gabriel, restraining himself with difficulty, and interrupting Rodin, "spare yourself and me a shameful supposition."

"Well, then," replied the still impassive Rodin, "since you are firmly resolved to make this promise binding, what objection can you have to its being legally attested?"

"None, sir," replied Gabriel, bitterly, "since written word and oath cannot satisfy you."

"My dear son," said D'Aigrigny, affectionately, "was it merely a gift you were making in my favour, I should prefer your simple word to any other guarantee; but the case is not so. I am here, as you have said, merely the representative of the company, or, rather, the guardian of the poor, who will profit by your generous abandonment: we cannot, therefore, for humanity's sake, take too many precautions to render the deed legal, that our poor brethren may enjoy a certainty instead of merely a vague hope, subject to be destroyed by any change of purpose. Besides, the Almighty may call you hence at any moment, and who can answer for it that your heirs may feel scrupulous as to the fulfilment of the engagement entered into by you?"
"You are right, father," said Gabriel, mournfully; "I did not think of the probability of death."

At this moment Samuel, opening the door of the chamber, said,

"Gentlemen, the notary is here; shall I show him in? At ten o'clock precisely you will be admitted into the house."

"We shall be so much the more pleased to see the notary you speak of," said Rodin, "as we have some matters to talk over with him: have the goodness to request he will join us."

"I will send him immediately," said Samuel, leaving the room.

"Now," said Rodin to Gabriel, "here is a notary; if you are in earnest, you may legally attest your donation in his presence, and so relieve yourself of all apprehension for the future."

"Sir," said Gabriel, "whatever may happen, I shall ever hold myself as much bound by this writing, which I beg you, father, to keep (here Gabriel gave the paper to D'Aigrigny), as I can be by the legal document I shall sign."

"Silence, my dear son," said D'Aigrigny, "the notary is here."

As he spoke, the notary entered the apartment.

During the conversation which ensued between the four, we will conduct the reader to the interior of the shut-up house.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RED CHAMBER.

As Samuel had said, the door of the walled house had been freed from the masonry, the sheet of lead, and the iron bars which had fastened it, and its carved oak panels appeared as fresh as on the day when they had been enclosed from the influence of air and time.

The workmen, after having concluded their demolition, had remained on the steps, as impatiently curious as the notary's clerk, who had watched over their labours, to see the opening of the door; for they saw Samuel come slowly up from the garden, holding in his hand a large bunch of keys.

"Now, my friends," said the old man, when he reached the lower step, "your work is finished, and this gentleman's employer will pay you; I have nothing to do but conduct you to the street door."

"But, my good man," exclaimed the clerk, "you would not think of such a thing? Here we are at the most interesting—the most curious moment; I and these good fellows, the masons, are all in a stew to see the inside of this mysterious house; and you cannot, surely, have the heart to send us away? That is impossible!"

"I regret very much being obliged to do so, sir, but I must. I must enter first, and alone, into the mansion, before I introduce the heirs for the reading of the will."

"But who gave you such ridiculous and barbarous orders?" said the disappointed clerk.

"My father, sir."

"A most respectable authority, no doubt; but, my good sir, my excellent guardian, my worthy guardian," said the clerk, "let us have just one peep through the half-opened door."
"Oh, yes, sir, only a peep," added the knights of the trowel, with a suppliant air.

"It is disagreeable to me to refuse you, gentlemen," replied Samuel; "but I will not open this door until I am alone."

The masons, seeing the inflexibility of the old man, descended the steps reluctantly; but the clerk made up his mind to dispute the ground, and exclaimed,

"I am waiting for my employer, and will not leave the place without him; he may want me; and whether I remain on the steps or anywhere else can be of no consequence to you, my worthy guardian."

The clerk was cut short in his entreaty by his employer, who, from the bottom of the court, called him hurriedly, saying,

"Monsieur Piston, quick! Monsieur Piston! come to me directly!"

"What the deuce can he want of me?" said the clerk, quite savage. "He calls me at the very moment when, perhaps, I might see something—"

"Monsieur Piston," repeated the voice, as it approached, "don't you hear me?"

While Samuel was showing the masons out, the clerk saw, at the turn of a clump of trees, his employer appear, hastening to him, bareheaded, and appearing very intent on something.

The clerk was then forced to descend the steps to answer the notary's call, and went toward him with a very ill grace.

"But, monsieur," said M. Dumesnil, "I have been calling for you this hour."

"Sir, I did not hear you," said M. Piston.

"Then you must be deaf. Have you any money about you?"

"Yes, sir," said the clerk, much surprised.

"Then go as quickly as you can to the nearest shop where they sell stamped paper, and bring me three or four large sheets for a deed. Run, for it requires despatch."

"Yes, sir," said the clerk, casting a look of despairing regret on the door of the shut-up mansion.

"Make haste, Piston," continued the notary.

"I don't exactly know, sir, where to go for stamped paper."
"Here is the person in charge of the premises; I dare say he can tell you," replied M. Dumesnil.

Samuel, who had then dismissed the masons, was approaching the house.

"Will you be good enough," said the notary, "to tell this young gentleman where he can obtain law stamps?"

"Close by, sir," replied Samuel; "at the tobacconist's, in the Rue Vieille du Temple, No. 17."

"You hear?" said the notary to his clerk; "you will get what is required at the tobacconist's, 17 Rue Vieille du Temple. Be quick, Piston! for the deed must be drawn up immediately, and before the opening of the will—and time presses."

"Yes, sir," answered the clerk, sullenly. "I will be as quick as I can." So saying, he followed his employer, who hastily returned to the chamber where he had left Rodin, D'Aigrigny, and Gabriel.

Meanwhile Samuel, ascending the steps, arrived at the door recently freed from the brick-work, iron, and lead which had blocked it up.

With deep emotion the old man, after having sought among his bunch of keys for the one required, applied it to the lock, and made the door turn upon its hinges.

A gust of cold, damp air, such as might issue from a vault suddenly opened, blew on the Jew's face. He passed on, and, having carefully closed and double locked the door from within, advanced into the hall, which was lighted by a fan-light over the door; but the panes had long since lost their transparency, and now wore the appearance of ground glass.

This hall, paved with diamond-shaped pieces of alternate black and white marble, was spacious and lofty, forming the approach to a wide staircase conducting to the upper story; the walls, of smooth, polished stone, exhibited not the slightest appearance of decay or damp; neither did the balustrade of wrought iron display the smallest spot of rust. It was let, at the first step, into a huge block of gray granite, supporting a statue of black marble, representing a negro holding a torch. The eyeballs of this singular figure were of white marble, and imparted a strange wildness to the countenance.

As the heavy step of the Jew resounded through the lofty cupola of this vestibule, a melancholy feeling stole over the grandson of Isaac Samuel, as he remembered that, in all probability, the last echoes called forth in that deserted abode had been when his progenitor closed the doors, a century and a half before; for the faithful friend to whom M. de Renneponth had made a fictitious sale of the house had conveyed it to the grandfather of Samuel, who had bequeathed it, as his own property, to his descendants.

To these thoughts was added the recollection of the light seen that morning issuing from the holes formed in the covering of the lookout, and, spite of the firmness of his character, the Jew shuddered as, again selecting a key from his bunch, on the label of which was written, Key of the Red Saloon, he proceeded to open a pair of folding-doors conducting to the interior apartments.

The window, which alone of all in the house had been opened, threw a strong light into the apartment, whose hangings of dark-purple damask did not appear to have sustained the least damage: a thick Turkey carpet covered the floor; large gilded arm-chairs, in the style of the age of Louis XIV., were ranged in exact order along the walls; opposite the door of entrance was a second, which, like the wainscot and ceiling, was white, ornamented with mouldings and ornaments of gold.

On each side of the door were two high stands of buhl-work, richly ornamented in brass, supporting vases of seagreen crystal; the window, heavily draped with fringed damask curtains, surmounted by a valance cut in sharp points, from each of which depended a silken tassel, was opposite the fireplace of deep blue marble, bordered with wrought brass: splendid candelabras, and a clock, of the same style as the rest of the furniture, were reflected in a large Venetian glass.
A round table covered with crimson velvet stood in the centre of the room. Approaching the table, Samuel found on it a slip of white vellum, bearing these words:

"My will shall be opened in this apartment; the other chambers will be kept closed until my last wishes have been duly read. M. de R."

"Yes," said the Jew, contemplating with emotion the lines so long since traced, "this agrees with the directions transmitted to me by my father; for it appears that the other chambers are filled with objects to which M. de Rennepont attached great price, not for their value, but for circumstances with which they were connected, and that the Chamber of Mourning is a strange and mysterious place. But," added Samuel, drawing from the pocket of his coat a book covered with black shagreen and furnished with a lock, from which he took the key, after placing the book on the table, "here is the cash account, and I am to place it in this room before the arrival of the heirs."

The utmost silence reigned in the saloon as Samuel laid the volume on the table; but all at once an occurrence, simple yet terrifying, roused him from his reverie. A clock in the adjoining room, in a clear, distinct note of silvery sound, struck the tenth hour.

Samuel’s good sense rejected the idea of perpetual motion, or of a clock going for 150 years; and he asked himself, with as much alarm as surprise, by what means this clock had been so long kept going, and more especially how it indicated the true time.

Instigated by a restless curiosity, the old man was on the point of entering this chamber; but, recalling the express prohibitions of his father, reiterated in those few lines traced by the hand of M. de Rennepont which he had just read, he stopped as he reached the door, and listened with almost breathless attention.
Not a sound was heard save the expiring vibrations of the bell.

After having long reflected on the singularity of the circumstance, Samuel, associating it with the no less extraordinary light he had that morning seen through the openings in the cover of the lookout, came to a persuasion that the two incidents were connected with each other.

If the old man could not explain the real cause of these singular appearances, he at least accounted to himself for them, by reflecting on the subterranean communications which, according to tradition, existed between the cellars of the mansion and distant places; mysterious and unknown persons might thus have entered two or three times in a century into the interior of this abode.

Absorbed by these thoughts, Samuel drew nigh the chimney, which, as we have said, was exactly opposite the window.

A bright ray of the sun, piercing through the clouds, shone on two large portraits, placed one on each side of the mantel-piece, which the Jew had not before remarked, and which, full-lengths and of the size of life, represented, one a female and the other a male.

By the colouring, at once subdued and powerful, of these paintings, by the bold and effective touch, it was easy to perceive that they were from the hand of a master.

It would have been, besides, very difficult to find models more capable of inspiring a great artist.

The woman appeared as from twenty-five to thirty years of age, and had a splendid head of brown hair, tinged with gold, which crowned a white, high, and noble forehead. Her headdress, very different from that which Madame de Sévigné brought into vogue during the reign of Louis XIV., recalled, on the contrary, that remarkable style which we observe in several of Veronese's portraits, being formed by large bandeaux, whose wavy braids, encircling the cheeks, are surmounted by a mass plaited like a crown at the back of the head; the eyebrows were beautifully arched over eyes of the brightest sapphire hue, whose look, at once haughty and melancholy, had, as it were, an appearance of fatality about them; the nose, finely shaped, ended in nostrils slightly expanded; a half smile, that was almost painful, slightly contracted the mouth; the oval of the face was long; the complexion pure white, tinted on the cheeks with a slight rose; the position of the neck and the carriage of the head announced a rare mixture of grace and native dignity. A sort of tunic, or robe of black and lustrous stuff, made what is styled à la vierge, reached high up on the shoulders, and, after having defined an elegant and graceful shape, fell down over the feet, which were entirely hidden by the full folds of the garment.

The attitude of the lady was full of nobleness and simplicity. The head stood out in bold relief against a dark gray sky, marbled in the horizon by some purple clouds which rested on the blue peaks of distant and shadowy hills. The arrangement of the picture, as well as the warm and deep tone of the outlines, which cut without blending into these deep shadings, made it evident that this female was placed on a height whence she could command a view of the whole horizon.

The physiognomy of the lady was deeply and sadly pensive, and there was especially in her look, half raised toward heaven, an expression of supplicating grief and resignation, which it might have been supposed almost impossible to delineate.

On the left side of the mantel-piece was the other portrait, as powerfully painted.

It represented a man of from thirty to thirty-five years, of tall stature. A very large brown mantle, with which he was nobly draped, displayed a sort of black pourpoint, buttoned to the neck, on which fell a square white collar. The head, grand and full of character, was remarkable for its strong and manly lineaments, which, however, did not conceal a masterly expression of suffering resignation, and especially of ineffable goodness. The hair, as well as the beard and eyebrows, was black; but these last, by a singular caprice of nature, instead of being
separated and arched over each eyelid, extended from one temple to the other in a single curve, and seemed to cross this man's forehead with a black mark.

The background of the picture represented a stormy sky, but beyond some rocks was the sea, which seemed to unite its dark waves with the horizon.

The sun shining full on these two remarkable figures, which, once having seen, it was impossible to forget, heightened their effect most singularly.

Samuel, starting from his reverie, and casting his eyes by chance on these portraits, was struck with surprise. They seemed to be living.

"What noble and beautiful countenances!" he exclaimed, approaching nearer, that he might examine them more closely. "Whose portraits are these? Not those of the Rennepont family; for my father told me they were all in the Saloon of Mourning. Alas!" added the old man, "by the deep sorrow imprinted on their features, they too, as it seems to me, might have been placed in that apartment."

Then, after a moment's silence, Samuel resumed:

"Let us now prepare for the solemn meeting, for the clock has struck ten."

So saying, Samuel placed the gilded arm-chairs about the circular table, and then said, with a pensive air,

"The hour is drawing nigh; and of the descendants of my grandfather's benefactor there is but this young priest with the angelic countenance. Can he be, then, the sole representative of the Rennepont family? He is a priest; and will that race, then, be extinct with him? Now, then, the moment is come when I must open the door for the reading of the will: Bathsheba will lead the notary hither. Some one knocks! 'tis she;" and Samuel, after having cast a last look at the door of the apartment in which ten o'clock had struck, hurried to the door of the vestibule, behind which he heard voices.

The key turned twice in the lock, and he opened the folding doors.

To his great chagrin, he saw on the steps only Gabriel, with Rodin on his left and Father d'Aigrignyon his right.

The notary, and Bathsheba who had conducted them, were behind the principal group.

Samuel could not repress a sigh, and said, bowing, as he stood on the threshold of the door,

"Gentlemen, all is ready; you may enter."
CHAPTER VII.
THE WILL.

EGIBLE on the countenances of Gabriel, Rodin, and Father d'Aigrigny were varying emotions, as they entered the Red Chamber.

Gabriel, pale and sad, felt a painful impatience. He was anxious to leave the house as quickly as possible, and felt relieved from a heavy weight when, by a deed, formal in all its clauses, and duly executed before M. Dumesnil, the notary to the succession, he had transferred all his rights to Father d'Aigrigny.

As yet it had not occurred to the mind of the young priest that, in bestowing on him the cares which he so generously remunerated, and in compelling him to the vocation by a sacrilegious lie, Father d'Aigrigny's object was to secure the full success of a dark intrigue.

Gabriel, in acting as he did, had not, according to his idea, yielded to any sentiment of exaggerated delicacy. He had freely made this donation several years before, and would have thought it base to retract it. It was cruel enough that he had been suspected of this baseness, and no consideration would have made him incur the smallest reproach for cupidity.

The missionary must have been endowed with a rare and admirable nature, for this flower of scrupulous probity had not been withered in the bud by the deleterious and demoralizing influence of his education. But, happily, as the cold sometimes preserves bodies from corruption, so the frozen atmosphere in which he had passed a portion of his infancy and youth had benumbed, but not vitiated, his nobler qualities, which were soon reanimated by the vivifying contact with freedom.

Father d'Aigrigny, much more pale and excited than Gabriel, had tried to explain and excuse his disquietude, by ascribing it to the chagrin which he felt at the rupture between his dear son and the Company of Jesus.

Rodin, calm, and perfectly master of himself, saw with silent anger the extreme emotion of Father d'Aigrigny, which might have excited strange suspicions in a man less confiding than Gabriel. Yet, notwithstanding his apparent sang froid, the socius was, perhaps, even more intensely impatient than his superior as to the result of this important affair.

Samuel seemed dejected; no heir but Gabriel presented himself. Unquestionably he felt a lively sympathy for this young man; but the young man was a priest, and with him would expire the name of the Rennepont family, and the vast fortune so laboriously accumulated would not be disseminated and employed according to the desire of the testator.

The different actors in this scene stood around the circular table.

At the moment when, at the notary's invitation, they were about to sit down, Samuel said, pointing to the register in the black shagreen case,

"Sir, I have been ordered to place that register here; it is closed, but I will give you the key immediately after the reading of the will."

"This circumstance is noted in a memorandum that accompanied the will," said M. Dumesnil, "when it was deposited, in 1682, with Master Thomas le Semelier, privy councillor, notary in the Châtelet de Paris, and then living Place Royale, No. 13."

So saying, M. Dumesnil took from a red morocco case a large envelope of
parchment, grown yellow by time. There was a note, also on parchment, fastened by a piece of tape to this envelope.

"Gentlemen," said the notary, "if you will be so kind as to sit down, I will read this note appended, which directs the forms to be observed at the opening of the will."

The notary, Rodin, Father d'Aigrigny, and Gabrielseated themselves. The young priest, having his back to the mantel-piece, could not see the portraits. Samuel, notwithstanding the notary's invitation, remained standing behind the chair of the latter, who read as follows:

"13th February, 1832, my will is to be taken to the Rue Saint François, No. 3. "At ten o'clock precisely the door of the Red Room on the ground floor shall be opened to my heirs, who, no doubt, having reached Paris long before, in the expectation of this day, will have had the necessary time to establish the proofs of their affinity."

"As soon as they are assembled, my will shall be read, and, when the last stroke of noon has sounded, the succession shall be closed and ended to the profit of those who, according to my request—perpetuated, I trust, by tradition, for a century and a half in my family from this day forward—will have presented themselves in person, and not by proxies, on the 13th of February, before noon, in the Rue Saint François."

After having read these lines in an audible voice, the notary paused for a moment, and then added, in a solemn voice,

"Monsieur Gabriel François Marie de Rennepont, priest, having established by notarial acts his paternal affinity and his relationship, a cousin by descent of the testator, and being at this hour the sole descendant of the Rennepont family who has presented himself here, I open the will in his presence as has been directed."

So saying, the notary drew from its envelope the will, which had been previously opened by the President of the Tribunal, with the formalities required by law.

Father d'Aigrigny bent forward, and, leaning on the table, could not repress a deep sigh. Gabrielprepared to listen with more curiosity than interest.

Rodin was seated a little away from the table, holding his old hat between his knees, at the bottom of which, half concealed in the folds of a dirty blue-checked cotton handkerchief, he had placed his watch.

All the attention of the socius was divided between the slightest noise he heard without and the slow progress of the hands of his watch, which his small and anxious eyes seemed to hasten, so great was his impatience for the hour of noon.

The notary, opening the sheet of vellum, read what follows:

"Hamlet of Villellemoues, 12th February, 1662."

"I am about to escape, by death, from the shame of the galleys, to which the implacable enemies of my family have condemned me as a relapsed heretic."

"And, besides, my life is too deeply imprecated, since my son has died the victim of a mysterious crime."

"Dead, at nineteen years of age! Poor Henry! his murderers are unknown; no, not unknown, if I may believe my presentiments."

"To preserve my property for this child, I had feigned to abjure Protestantism. So long as this beloved being existed, I have scrupulously observed all the Catholic appearances. This deception was hateful to me, but it was for my child's interest."

"When they killed him the constraint was insupportable to me: I was watched, accused, and condemned as a relapsed heretic; my property has been confiscated, and myself condemned to the galleys."

"Oh, what a terrible time I have endured!"

"Misery and servitude! fierce despotism and religious intolerance! Ah! how sweet it is to give up life—to see no more ills and griefs! What repose it will be!"

"And in a few hours I shall taste that repose!"

"I am about to die; let me, therefore, think of those belonging to me, who live, or, rather, will live, perhaps in better times."
"A sum of 50,000 crowns, deposited with a friend, alone remains to me of all my wealth.

"I have no other sons, but many relatives, exiled over Europe.

"This sum of 50,000 crowns, divided among all my kinsfolk, would be but a scanty amount for each. I have otherwise disposed of it.

"And I have done so in conformity with the wise counsel of a man whom I venerate; for his understanding, his wisdom, and his goodness are almost superhuman.

"Twice in my life I have seen this man, and under most disastrous circumstances; twice have I owed my safety to him: once the safety of my soul, once the safety of my body.

"Alas! perhaps he would have saved my poor child, but he arrived too late—too late!

"Before he left me, he tried to dissuade me from death, for he knew all; but his voice was powerless: I felt too much anguish—too many regrets—too great depression.

"A strange thing! When he was convinced that it was my settled purpose to put an end to my existence, a fearful exclamation escaped him, leading me to believe that he envied me my lot—my death!

"Is he, then, condemned to live? is he?

"Yes, no doubt condemned to live, that he may be useful and beneficient to humanity; and yet life oppresses him, for one day I heard him say, in accents of despairing weariness, which I never can forget, 'Oh, life! life! who will deliver me from thee?'

"Is it, then, a burden to him?

"He has left me, and his parting words have made me contemplate death with calmness.

"Thanks to him, my death will not be unprofitable.

"Thanks to him, these lines, written at this moment by a man who in a few hours will have ceased to live, may bring forth, perchance, great things in a century and a half. Ah, yes! great and noble things, if my wishes are piously attended to by my descendants, for it is to my future race that I thus address myself.

"That they may better understand and appreciate the last wish I make, and which I entreat them to fulfil, they who are as yet in the nothingness into which I am about to re-enter, they must know the persecutors of my family, that they may avenge their ancestor—but by a noble revenge!

"My grandfather was a Catholic: induced less by religious zeal than by perfidious counsel, he affiliated himself, although a layman, to a society whose power has always been terrible and mysterious—to the Society of Jesus."

At these words of the will, Father d'Aigrigny, Rodin, and Gabriel looked at each other almost involuntarily. The notary, who did not observe this, continued:

"At the end of several years, during which he had not ceased to profess for this
society the most entire devotion, he was suddenly enlightened by fearful revelations as to the secret end which it proposed, as well as to its modes of attaining it.

This was in 1610, a month before the assassination of Henry IV.

"My grandfather, alarmed at the secret, of which he found himself the depositary in spite of himself, and the signification of which was made complete afterward by the death of the best of kings—my grandfather not only broke with the Society of Jesus, but, as though Catholicism altogether appeared to him responsible for the crimes of the society, he abandoned the Romish religion, in which he had hitherto lived, and became a Protestant."

"Irrefragable proofs, attesting the complicity of two members of this company with Ravaillac—a complicity also proved by the crime subsequently committed by Jean Châtel the regicide—were in my grandfather's hands.

"Such was the first cause of the deadly enmity of this society against our family.

"Thanks to God, these papers are in a place of safety! My father transmitted them to me, and, if my last wishes are executed, these papers, marked A. M. C. D. G., will be found in the ebony coffer in the Room of Mourning in the Rue Saint François.

"My father was thus exposed to secret persecution: his ruin—his death, perhaps, would have been the consequence, but for the interposition of an angel in woman's form, for whom he preserved an almost religious worship.

"The portrait of this female, whom I also saw a few years since, as well as that of the man to whom I have vowed the deepest veneration, have been painted by me from memory, and are placed in the Red Chamber of the Rue Saint François. Both will be, I hope, the objects of a grateful respect to the descendants of my family."

For some moments Gabriel had become more and more attentive to the reading of the will: he was struck by the singular coincidence, that one of his ancestors had, two centuries before, severed himself from the Society of Jesus, as he himself had withdrawn from it within an hour, and reflected that this rupture, dating two centuries back, also gave date to the hatred with which the Company of Jesus had persecuted his family.

The young priest found it no less strange that this inheritance, transmitted to him, after the lapse of 150 years, by one of his ancestors, a victim of the Society of Jesus, returned, by the voluntary surrender which he had just made, to the same society.

When the notary read the passage relative to the two portraits, Gabriel, who, as well as Father d'Aigrigny, was sitting with his back to these paintings, turned to look at them.

Scarcely had the missionary cast his eyes on the portrait of the female, when he uttered a loud cry of surprise, and almost of affright.

The notary stopped reading the will, and looked at the young priest with uneasiness.
CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAST STROKE OF NOON.

At the cry uttered by Gabriel, the notary had suspended the reading of the will, and Father d'Aigrigny had drawn close to the young priest. Gabriel, standing and trembling violently, contemplated the portrait of the female with increasing amazement.

Then he said, in a low tone, and as if speaking to himself, "Is it possible that chance should produce such resemblances? Those eyes, at once so proud and sorrowful, are hers; and that forehead, that paleness, those features—yes, they are her features!"

"My dear son, what disturbs you?" said Father d'Aigrigny, as much astonished as Samuel and the notary.

"Eight months since," said the missionary, with a voice profoundly agitated, and his eyes fixed on the picture, "I was in the power of the Indians in the midst of the Rocky Mountains. They had placed me on a cross, and were beginning to scalp me. I was about to die, when divine Providence sent me unexpected succour. Yes, it was that woman who saved me!"

"That woman!" exclaimed at once Samuel, D'Aigrigny, and the notary. Rodin alone appeared completely unmoved by this episode of the portrait: his countenance was contracted with angry impatience, and he bit his nails to the quick as he contemplated, with anguish, the slow march of the hands of his watch.

"What do you mean? What woman saved your life?" inquired Father d'Aigrigny.

"Yes, that woman," replied Gabriel, in a lower and almost fearful tone, "that woman, or, rather, a female who resembled her so completely, that, if this picture had not been painted a century and a half ago, I should believe that it had been painted for her; for I cannot account for so striking a likeness being the effect of chance. But," he added, after a moment's silence, and heaving a deep sigh, "the mysteries of nature and the will of God are impenetrable."

And Gabriel fell back in his chair, overcome, in the midst of a profound silence, which Father d'Aigrigny soon broke, by saying,

"It is a wonderful resemblance, and nothing more, my dear son; but the natural gratitude which you feel toward your benefactress adds to this caprice of nature a great interest for you."
Rodin, devoted by impatience, said to the notary, by whose side he was sitting,
"It seems to me, sir, that all this little romance has nothing to do with the will."
"You are right, sir," replied the notary, again seating himself; "but the fact is so extraordinary, so romantic, as you say, that one cannot but share the gentleman's extreme astonishment."

And he pointed to Gabriel, who, leaning his elbow on one of the arms of the chair, hid his face in his hands, and seemed completely absorbed.

The notary then continued the reading of the will:
"Such are the persecutions to which my family have been exposed from the Society of Jesus.
"This society possesses my property by confiscation. I am about to die; may its hatred be quenched in my death, and spare my descendants!
"My descendants, whose fate is my sole, my last thought, at this solemn moment.
"This morning I have summoned to me a man of probity long tried—Isaac Samuel. He owes his life to me, and every day I rejoice that I was able to preserve to the world so honest, so excellent a creature.
"Before the confiscation of my property, Isaac Samuel had always taken charge of it, with as much intelligence as honesty. I have confided to him the fifty thousand crowns which a faithful depositary had restored to me.
"Isaac Samuel, and after him his descendants, to whom he will bequeath this debt of gratitude, will undertake to invest and accumulate this sum until the expiration of the one hundred and fiftieth year from this day.
"This sum, thus accumulated, must become enormous, and form a king's fortune, if events are not adverse to its management.
"May my wishes be heard by my descendants as to the division and employment of this immense sum!
"There arrive, unhappily, in a century and a half such changes of events, such variations, so many vicissitudes of fortune, among the successive generations of a family, that probably in one hundred and fifty years my descendants will belong to different classes of society, and represent the different social elements of their time.
"Perhaps there will be among them men endowed with great intelligence, or great courage, or great virtue; perhaps learned men—names illustrious in war or the arts; perhaps, also, obscure artisans—humble tradesmen; perhaps, also, great criminals.
"Whatever may happen, my most ardent, most anxious desire is, that my descendants will draw nigh to each other, and reform my family by a close and sincere union, by putting in practice among themselves those divine words of Christ, 'LOVE ONE ANOTHER.'
"This union would have a most salutary example; for it appears to me that from union—from the association of men with each other—must proceed the future happiness of humanity.
"The company which has so long persecuted my family is one of the most striking examples of the immense power of association, even when applied to evil.
"There is something so fertile, so divine in this principle, that it sometimes impels to good the worst and most dangerous associations.
"Thus, missions have thrown rare, but pure and noble lights, into this dark Society of Jesus, which was, notwithstanding, founded for the destructive and impious purpose of destroying, by a homicidal system of education, all will, all thought, all liberty, all intelligence among the people, in order to deliver them over, trembling, superstitious, brutalized, and defenseless, to the despotism of kings, whom the company would govern in their turn by their confessors."

At this passage in the will, there was a new and strange look exchanged between Gabriel and Father d'Aigrigny.
The notary resumed:

"If an evil association, founded on human degradation, fear, and despotism, and pursued by the curse of the people, has sustained itself for ages, and frequently governed the world by stratagem and terror, what might not an association effect which, emanating from fraternity and evangelic love, should propose to enfranchise man and woman from all degrading servitude, and lead to happiness here below those who have known in life only grief and miseries; to enrich and ennoble productive labour; to enlighten those whom ignorance has deprived; to favour the free expansion of all the passions which God in his infinite wisdom, in his inexhaustible bounty, has implanted in man, as so many powerful levers; to sanctify all that emanates from God, love as well as maternity, power as well as wisdom, beauty as well as genius: to make men, in short, really religious, and profoundly grateful to their Creator, by giving them knowledge of the splendours of nature, and their just share of the treasures which he has bestowed upon us?

"Oh, may Heaven will that, in a century and a half, the descendants of my family, faithful to the last wishes of a heart friendly to human-kind, may thus unite in a holy community!

"If Heaven wills that among them shall be charitable souls, full of commiseration for those who suffer—elevated understandings, loving freedom—eloquent and warm hearts, firm characters—females uniting beauty, mind, and goodness—how productive and powerful must be the union of all these ideas, all these influences, all these forces, all these attractions, assembled around this princely fortune, which, concentrated by association, and wisely regulated, may render practicable the most Utopian schemes!

"What a marvellous source of fruitful thoughts and generous impulses! what salutary and vivifying rays will incessantly dart from this centre of charity, emancipation, and love!

"What great things may be attempted, what magnificent examples given to the
world! What a divine apostleship! In a word, what an irresistible impulse toward good may be impressed on the whole of human nature by a family thus grouped, and wielding such means of action!

"And, then, that association for good may be capable of combating the fearful association of which I am the victim, and which, perhaps, in a century and a half will have lost nothing of its redoubtable power!

"Then, to this work of darkness, restraint, and despotism, which weighs so heavily on the Christian world, my race might oppose a work of light, expansion, and liberty.

"The genius of good and the genius of evil would confront each other.

"The struggle would commence, and God would protect the just.

"And, in order that the immense pecuniary resources which must give so much power to my family should not be exhausted, but renew with years, my heirs, attending to my wishes, will invest, under the same conditions of accumulation, double the sum which I have bequeathed; then, in another century and a half after them, what a new source of power and action for their descendants! What a perpetuity of effecting good!

"They will find, in the large ebony chest in the Room of Mourning, certain practical ideas drawn up on the subject of this association.

"These are my last wishes, or, rather, my latest hopes.

"If I require absolutely that my race should be in person in the Rue Saint François on the day of the opening of this will, it is that, being united at this solemn moment, they may see and know each other; then, perhaps, my words will strike them, and, instead of living divided, they will unite: their interests will gain by it, and my wish be accomplished. * * * * * *

"Sending as I did, a few days since, to those of my family whom exile has dispersed over Europe, a medal, on which is engraved the date of this meeting of my heirs in a century and a half from this day, I have thought it right to keep secret the real motive, only saying that my lineage had a great interest in being present at this meeting.

"I have acted thus because I know the cunning and pertinacity of the company whose victim I am; for if it could know that at this period my descendants will divide immense sums, deep-laid schemes, and, perchance, great dangers, would beset my family, for sinister orders would be transmitted from age to age in the Society of Jesus.

"May this precaution be efficacious!

"May my wish expressed on the medals be faithfully transmitted from generation to generation!

"If I fix the day and fatal hour at which my succession will be irrevocably closed in favour of those of my descendants who shall present themselves in the Rue Saint François on the 13th of February, 1832, before noon, it is because there must be a limit, and because my heirs will have been sufficiently informed for many years that they must not fail to be present at this meeting.

"After the reading of my will, the person who shall be the depositary of the accumulated funds shall declare their nature and their amount, that at the last stroke of noon the sums may be divided among the heirs assembled.

"Then the apartments of the house shall be opened to them. They will see therein things worthy of their interest, their pity, and their respect, especially in the Chamber of Mourning.

"My desire is that this house be not sold, but remain furnished as it is, and that it may serve as a place of assembling for my descendants, if, as I hope, they attend to my last prayer.

"If, on the contrary, there is division among them; if, instead of uniting to carry out one of the most generous enterprises that ever marked an age, they yield to egotistical passions; if they prefer a sterile individuality to a productive association; if in this immense fortune they only see the means of a frivolous dissipation or sor-
THE WANDERING JEW.

did accumulation, may they be accursed by all whom they might have loved, succored, and emancipated; let this house be destroyed and razed to the ground, and let all the papers, of which Isaac Samuel will have left the inventory, be, as well as the two portraits in the Red Chamber, burned by the guardian of the abode.

"I have said.

"Now my duty ends.

"In all this I have followed the advice of the man whom I venerate and love as the real image of God on earth.

"The faithful friend who saved for me the 50,000 crowns, the wreck of my fortune, alone knows how I mean to employ them. I could not refuse to his proved friendship this proof of confidence; but, at the same time, I have concealed from him the name of Isaac Samuel, for this would have been to expose the latter, and his descendants especially, to great dangers.

"In a short time my friend, who is ignorant of my intention to die, will be here with my notary, and it is to their hands that, after the customary formalities, I shall consign this sealed testament.

"Such are my last wishes. I submit their accomplishment to the superintendence of Providence. God will surely protect these wishes of love, peace, union, and liberty.

"This mystic* will having been freely made by me, and entirely written by my own hand, I trust and desire that it be scrupulously executed in spirit and in letter.

"Dated this 13th of February, 1682, one o'clock P.M.

"MARIUS DE RENNEPONT."

As the notary had continued the reading of the will, Gabriel had been successively agitated by various and painful emotions. At first, as we have said, he thought it a strange fatality that this immense fortune, coming from a victim of the company, should revert to this company by the donation which he had just renewed.

Then his charitable and elevated mind having made him perceive the admirable efficacy of the generous association so earnestly hoped for by Marius de Rennepont, he thought, with deep bitterness, that, in consequence of his renunciation, and the absence of other heirs, this vast idea was impossible of execution, and that this fortune, much more considerable than he had conjectured, would fall into the hands of an evil society, which might make it a terrible means of action.

But it must be said, the soul of Gabriel was so beautiful, so pure, that he did not entertain the slightest personal regret in learning that the wealth which he had renounced was so vast; he was rather pleased, by a touching contrast, on discovering that he had escaped being rich, in reflecting on the humble parsonage where he hoped soon to live, in the practice of the most holy evangelical virtues.

These ideas clashed in his mind confusedly. The sight of the female portrait, the sinister disclosures revealed in the will, the expansive views developed in the last wishes of M. de Rennepont, so many extraordinary incidents, threw Gabriel into a sort of stupor of astonishment, in which he was still plunged when Samuel said to the notary, giving him the key of the register,

"You will find, sir, in this register the actual position of the sums which are in my possession, in consequence of the capitalization and accumulation of the 150,000 francs confided to my grandfather by M. Marius de Rennepont."

"Your grandfather!" exclaimed Father d'Aigrigny, greatly surprised. "Is it your family, then, which has constantly invested these sums?"

"Yes, sir; and my wife will in a few moments bring the chest which contains the securities."

"And what may be the amount?" inquired Rodin, with a well-counterfeited air of indifference.

* This is the phrase used in French jurisprudence.
"As the notary will find by the account," replied Samuel, with perfect simplicity, as though merely referring to the 150,000 francs forming the original deposit, "I have now securities to deliver, amounting to 212,175,000—"

"What did you say?" exclaimed D'Aigrigny, without allowing Samuel to proceed, and caring very little for the odd money.

"Yes," cried Rodin, almost gasping for breath, and, for the first time in his life, losing his cool self-possession, "the figure—the amount—the total."

"I observed, sir," said the old man, "that I had now in hand 212,175,000 francs in securities, part to order and part to bearer; as you will find, Mr. Notary, for here comes my wife with them."

As he spoke, Bathsheba entered, bearing the cedar casket containing the securities. This she placed on the table, and, after exchanging an affectionate look with Samuel, left the room.

A stupor seemed to seize upon the persons present, as Samuel declared the immense sums in his charge.

Except Samuel, all believed themselves in the delusion of a dream.

D'Aigrigny and Rodin reckoned on 40,000,000; but even this enormous wealth was now declared to be quintupled.

Gabriel, as he heard the notary while reading the will speak of a fortune befitting a king, and ignorant of the prodigious effects of capitalization, had valued the bequest at three or four millions.

Well, then, might the amount overwhelm his ideas, which, spite of his pure and honourable mind, were almost thunderstruck by the conviction thus pressed upon him, that these boundless treasures might have been his own.

The notary, almost as much astounded as the rest, began examining the accounts laid before him, and seemed scarcely able to believe his eyes.

The Jew was silent and pensive, regretting that there was no other inheritor.

In the midst of the deep silence, the clock in the adjoining chamber began slowly to strike twelve. Samuel started, then heaved a profound sigh: a few seconds only remained before the fatal term would expire.

The agitation of D'Aigrigny, Rodin, and Gabriel was so great, that it did not occur to them how singular it was to hear a clock in a house so long deserted.

"Twelve o'clock!" exclaimed Rodin; and by an involuntary movement he hastily grasped the casket with both his hands, as if to take possession of it.

"At length!" cried D'Aigrigny, with an expression of joy, triumph, and intoxication impossible to describe; then he added, throwing himself into Gabriel's arms, and embracing him with extreme excitement, "Oh, my dear son, how
the poor will bless you! You are a Saint Vincent de Paul! You shall be

"Let us first thank Providence," said Rodin, with a grave and excited air, and falling on his knees; "let us thank Providence, who has permitted so much wealth to be employed to the greater glory of the Lord."

Father d'Aigrigny, after having again embraced Gabriel, took him by the hand, and said,

"Rodin is right. Let us to our knees, my dear son, and return thanks to Providence."

So saying, Father d'Aigrigny knelt, drawing with him Gabriel, who, giddy, confused, and no longer able to collect his thoughts, knelt mechanically.

The last stroke of noon struck. They all rose.

Then the notary said, in a voice slightly affected, for there was something extraordinary and solemn in the scene,

"No other heir of M. Marius de Renneponthaving presented himself before noon, I execute the will of the testator, by declaring, in the name of justice and law, Monsieur François Marie Gabriel de Renneponth, here present, the sole and only heir and possessor of the property, personal and real, and effects of all sorts, arising from the succession of the testator: of which property the heir, Gabriel de Renneponth, priest, has freely and voluntarily made gift, by notarial act, to Sieur Frédéric Emmanuel de Bordeville, marquis d'Aigrigny, priest, who, by the same deed, has accepted the same, and has thus become legitimate successor in the stead and place of the said Gabriel de Renneponth, by the fact of this donation, engrossed by me this morning, and signed Gabriel de Renneponth and Frédéric d'Aigrigny, priests."

At this moment was heard in the garden a loud noise of voices. Bathsheba entered hastily, and said to her husband, in an agitated voice,

"Samuel, a soldier, who insists—"

Bathsheba could say no more.

At the door of the Red Chamber appeared Dagobert.

The soldier was deadly pale, and seemed ready to sink; he carried his left arm in a sling, and leaned on Agricola.

At the sight of Dagobert, the flaccid and cadaverous eyelids of Rodin were suddenly injected, as if all his blood had then mounted to his brain.

Then the socius darted upon the casket with a movement of anger, and a grasp so ferocious, that it seemed as if he were resolved, by covering it with his body, to defend it at the peril of his life.
CHAPTER IX.

DONATION BY THE LIVING.

osine all recollection of Dagobert, and having never seen Agricola, Father d'Aigrigny for a moment did not comprehend the angry terror which Rodin exhibited; but he soon understood all when he heard Gabriel utter a cry of joy, and saw him throw himself into the arms of the smith, saying,

"Thou, brother! and you, my second father! Ah! it is Heaven itself that sends you!"

After having clasped Gabriel's hand, Dagobert advanced toward Father d'Aigrigny with a quick, though somewhat unsteady step.

Observing the threatening aspect of the soldier, the reverend father, strong in his acquired rights, and feeling himself at home since twelve o'clock had struck, receded a step and said, with an imperious air, to the veteran,

"Who are you, sir, and what do you want?"

Instead of making any reply, the soldier advanced some paces nearer, and then, stopping short before Father d'Aigrigny, he looked at him for a moment with so fearful a mixture of curiosity, contempt, hatred, and boldness, that the ex-colonel of hussars, for a time disconcerted, cast down his eyes before the pale face and keen eye of the veteran.

The notary and Samuel, struck with surprise, remained mute spectators of this scene, while Agricola and Gabriel followed with anxiety every movement of Dagobert.

As to Rodin, he feigned to lean upon the casket, in order to cover it with his body.

At last, overcoming the embarrassment he experienced from the unrelenting gaze of the soldier, Father d'Aigrigny raised his head and repeated,

"I ask you, sir, who you are, and what you want!"

"Then you do not remember me?" said Dagobert, restraining himself with difficulty.

"No, sir."

"Well, then," replied the soldier, with the utmost disdain, "you lowered your eyes with shame when, at Leipsic, where you fought with the Russians against the French, General Simon, covered with wounds, replied to you, renegade! when you demanded his sword, 'I do not surrender my sword to a traitor!' and dragging himself along the ground until he reached a Russian grenadier, surrendered his sword to him. By the side of General Simon was a soldier also wounded. I was that soldier!"

"Once more, sir, what do you want?" said Father d'Aigrigny, with difficulty mastering his anger.

"I wish to unmask you—you, who are a priest as infamous and as execrated by all, as Gabriel here is a priest admired and blessed by all!"

"Sir!" said the marquis, livid with anger and emotion.

"I tell you that you are a scoundrel," said the soldier, energetically; "to despise the daughters of Marshal Simon, Gabriel, and Mademoiselle de Cardoville of their inheritance, you have employed the most infamous contrivances."

"What do you say?" asked Gabriel; "the daughters of Marshal Simon—"

"Are your relatives, my dear boy, as well as that worthy young lady, Mademoiselle de Cardoville, the benefactress of Agricola, also. This priest," and he
pointed to Father d'Aigrigny, "has shut up one as mad in a lunatic asylum, and
immured the orphans in a convent. As to you, my dear lad, I did not hope to
meet you here, believing that they would keep you away as well as the others
this morning; but, thank God, you are here, and I have come in time. I could
not come earlier, because of my wound. I have lost so much blood that I have
been faint all the morning."

"Oh!" exclaimed Gabriel, with anxiety, "I had not remarked that you car-
ried your arm in a sling. How did you come by your wound?"

At a look from Agricola, Dagobert replied,

"It is nothing—I had a fall; but here I am, and now we will unmask all these
treacheries."

It is impossible to depict the curiosity, anguish, surprise, and fear of the
different actors in this scene, while listening to the threatening words of Dagobert.

But of all, the one most overwhelmed was Gabriel. His angelic features were
agonized, his knees trembled. Thunderstruck by the disclosure of Dagobert,
and learning the existence of other heirs, for some moments he could not utter
a syllable; at length he exclaimed, in a despairing voice,

"It is I, alas! it is I who am the cause of the spoliation of this family!"

"You, my brother!" said Agricola.

"Have they not also sought to rob you?" added Dagobert.

"The will," replied Gabriel, with increasing anguish, "bequeathed the prop-
erty to those of the heirs who should present themselves before midday."

"Well!" said Dagobert, alarmed at the emotion of the young priest.

"Noon has struck," replied Gabriel, "and I was the only member of my
family here present. Do you understand me now? The time has passed, and
the heirs are dispossessed by me."

"By thee!" said Dagobert, stammering with joy; "by thee, my dear child! Then
all is still saved!"

"Yes—but—"

"All is saved!" repeated Dagobert, radiant with joy, and interrupting Ga-
briel; "you will share it with the others—I know you."

"But I have surrendered all this property in an irrevocable manner," cried
Gabriel, with despair.

"Surrendered the property!" said Dagobert, petrified; "but to whom—to
whom!"

"To that gentleman," said Gabriel, pointing to D'Aigrigny.

"To him! to him!" repeated Dagobert, aghast; "to the renegade who has
always been the evil demon of the family!"

"But, brother," exclaimed Agricola, "did you, then, know of your claims to
this inheritance?"

"No," replied the young priest, overwhelmed; "no; I only knew it this
morning from Father d'Aigrigny, who had been, as he assured me, recently in-
structed in my rights by family papers, found upon me long ago, and handed by
our mother to her confessor."

The smith appeared struck with a sudden idea, and exclaimed,

"Now I see it all! They saw by these papers that you would be rich some
day, and so they took an interest in you, got you into the college, where we
could never see you, and afterward induced you by falsehood to take holy
orders; so that, by making you a priest, they ultimately induced you to make
this donation. Ah, sir!" added Agricola, turning to Father d'Aigrigny indignantly, "my father is right, and this is an infamous plot!"

During this scene, the reverend father and his socius, at first alarmed and
shaken in their audacity, had gradually resumed their perfect composure.

Rodin, still leaning on the casket, had whispered some words to Father d'Ai-
grigny, and when Agricola, unable to repress his indignation, had reproached
this latter with his infamous machinations, he lowered his eyes, and meekly
replied,
"It is our duty to forgive injuries, and offer them to the Lord as a proof of our humility."

Dagobert, overcome, stunned by all he had learned, felt almost as if his senses were leaving him; after so much anguish and so many difficulties, his strength failed him at this new and terrible blow.

The true and sensible remarks of Agricola, taken in connexion with certain parts of the will, suddenly enlightened Gabriel as to the end which Father d'Aigrigny had in view by taking charge of his education, and then inducing him to join the Company of Jesus. For the first time in his life Gabriel saw at a glance all the bearings of the dark intrigue of which he was the victim, and then indignation and despair surmounting his habitual timidity, the missionary, with sparkling eyes and cheeks inflamed with noble ire, exclaimed, addressing himself to Father d'Aigrigny:

"Thus, then, father, when you placed me in one of your colleges, it was not through interest or commiseration, but only with a hope of inducing me, one day, to renounce my share of this inheritance in favour of your Order; and it was not enough to sacrifice me to your cupidity, but it was requisite, besides, to make me the involuntary instrument of an infamous spoliation! If I alone were concerned—if it were but a question of my claims to this wealth which you covet, I would not reclaim it. I am the minister of a religion which has glorified and sanctified poverty. The donation to which I have assented is yours, and I do not ask—I never shall ask for any portion of it. But it has become a question of property which belongs to poor orphan girls, brought from distant exile by my adoptive father, and I will not allow them to be dispossessed; it has become a question of the benefactress of my adopted brother, and I will not have her
dispossessed; it has become a question of the last wishes of a dying man, who, in his ardent love of humanity, has bequeathed to his descendants an evangelic mission—an admirable mission of progress, love, union, and liberty, and I will not consent that this mission be stifled in its birth. No, no! and I tell you that this mission shall be accomplished, even if I should revoke the donation which I have made."

At these words Father d'Aigrigny and Rodin looked at each other, and shrugged their shoulders slightly.

At a sign from the socius the reverend father began to speak with unshaken calmness, and in a low and unctuous voice, keeping his eyes constantly cast down.

"With reference to this inheritance of M. de Rennepont, there are several circumstances, apparently complicated, which present themselves—several phantoms which seem menacing, while, in fact, nothing can be more simple, more natural than this whole affair. Let us proceed in order; let us cast aside all calumnious imputations for the present; we can revert to them hereafter. M. l'Abbé Gabriel de Rennepont—and I humbly beg him to contradict and rectify my words if I diverge in the slightest manner from the strictest truth—M. l'Abbé Gabriel, to evince his gratitude for the care which, in former days, he has received from the company to which I consider it an honour to belong, made to me, as the representative of this company, freely and voluntarily, a gift of the property which might at any time revert to him, and of the amount of which, as well as I myself, he was entirely ignorant."

Father d'Aigrigny looked at Gabriel as if to obtain his acquiescence to these words.

"That is true," said the young priest; "I made the gift freely."

"This morning, in a conversation of a most confidential nature, and on which I shall be silent, assured as I am of the approbation of M. l'Abbé Gabriel—"

"Certainly," said Gabriel, generously, "the subject of that conversation is unimportant."

"It was, then, in consequence of this conversation that M. l'Abbé Gabriel again manifested the desire to abide by this donation, I will not say in my favour, for terrestrial possessions touch me but little, but in favour of holy and benevolent works, of which our company would become the dispensing power. I appeal to the frankness of M. l'Abbé Gabriel, begging him to declare if he is or is not bound, not only by a most solemn oath, but also by a deed perfectly legal, drawn up and executed before M. Dumesnil, here present."

"It is true," replied Gabriel.

"The deed was drawn up by me," added the notary.

"But Gabriel only gave you what belonged to him," exclaimed Dagobert; "this noble boy could not suppose that you would make use of him to plunder the others."

"Do me the favour, sir, to allow me to explain," replied Father d'Aigrigny, courteously, "and then you may reply."

Dagobert, with an effort, repressed a movement of painful impatience.

The reverend father continued:

"M. l'Abbé Gabriel, then, has, by the double engagement of a deed and an oath, confirmed his donation. Nay, more," added Father d'Aigrigny; "when, to his excessive surprise, as well as our own, the enormous amount of this inheritance was disclosed, M. l'Abbé Gabriel, true to his extreme generosity, far from repenting of his gift, did, as we may say, again consecrate them by a pious movement of gratitude to Providence; for the notary will remember, no doubt, that, after having embraced M. l'Abbé Gabriel, and exclaimed that he was, in charity, a second Saint Vincent de Paul, I took him by the hand, and we thus knelt together to thank Heaven for having inspired him with the thought of making these immense riches subservient to the still greater glory of the Lord."

"That is true," replied Gabriel, frankly; "so long as I only was concerned,
notwithstanding a moment of extreme surprise, caused by the revelation of a fortune so immense, I did not think of reclaiming the donation I had freely made."

"It was at this moment," resumed Father d'Aigrigny, "that the hour struck at which the succession was to close. M. l'Abbé Gabriel, being the only heir present, was necessarily and perforce the sole and legitimate possessor of this enormous property—immense, unquestionably, and I, in my charity, rejoice that it is so immense; for, thanks to it, much misery will now have succour, many tears will be dried up. At this moment this gentleman suddenly appears (and Father d'Aigrigny pointed to Dagobert), and, under a mistake, which I excuse from the bottom of my soul, and with which I am sure he will hereafter reproach himself, assails me with abuse and menace, and accuses me of having concealed, I know not where, I know not what relatives, in order to prevent them from being here at the proper hour."

"Yes, I do accuse you of this infamy!" exclaimed the soldier, exasperated at the calmness and audacity of the reverend father; "yes, and I will—"

"Once more, sir, I entreat you be so good as to allow me to continue; you shall have your reply," said Father d'Aigrigny, humbly, and in soft and honeyed tones.

"Yes, I will reply and confound you!" cried Dagobert.

"Be silent, father! be silent!" said Agricola; "you shall speak presently."

The soldier held his tongue.

Father d'Aigrigny then went on with increased assurance:

"Unquestionably, if there are any other heirs than M. l'Abbé Gabriel, it is a sad thing for them that they did not present themselves here before the final moment. Yes, if, instead of defending the cause of the wretched and needy, I was defending my own interests, I should be far from taking advantage of this result due to chance alone. But as the representative of the great family of poor, I am compelled to insist upon my claims to this inheritance, and I doubt not but M. the notary will admit the validity of my rights, by putting me in immediate possession of that to which I am legally entitled."

"My only duty," said the notary, in a tone expressive of emotion, "is to carry out fully the will of the testator. M. l'Abbé Gabriel de Rennepons alone appeared within the time appointed for keeping the succession open; the act of donation is strictly according to law; I have, therefore, no grounds for refusing to place his donee in possession of the heritage."

At these words Samuel hid his face between his hands with a deep groan, forced to admit that the decision of the notary was in strict accordance with the law.

"But, sir," cried
THE WANDERING JEW.

Dagobert, addressing the notary, "this cannot be; you cannot thus suffer two poor orphan girls to be despoiled. I address you in the name of their father—their mother—I swear to you, on my honour—the honour of a soldier—that advantage has been taken of the weakness and confidence of my wife to place the two daughters of Marshal Simon in a convent, to prevent my producing them here this morning. This is so true, that I have been to lay my complaint before a magistrate."

"Well," replied the notary, "and what did he say?"

"That my deposition was not sufficient to warrant his removing the young persons from the convent in which they had been placed, but that the matter should be investigated."

"Yes," added Agricola, "the same answer was made to the application respecting Mademoiselle de Cardoville, who is forcibly detained in a private madhouse, although this young lady (who has also claims to the inheritance) is in full possession of her reason. I took the same steps in her behalf that my father took for the release of the daughters of Marshal Simon."

"Well?" inquired the notary.

"Unfortunately, sir," answered Agricola, "I also was told that my deposition was not sufficient to warrant any decided measures, but that the affair should be taken into consideration."

At this moment Bathsheba, having heard a ringing at the gate, at a sign from Samuel left the Red Chamber.

The notary then, addressing Agricola and his father, said,

"Far be it from me, gentlemen, to doubt your integrity; but, much to my regret, I cannot find in what you say, borne out as it is by no testimony but your own, sufficient grounds for staying the legal course of events; for it appears, by your own account, that the judicial authorities to whom you applied did not consider themselves warranted in acting upon your depositions; merely replying to your appeal by promises to make the necessary inquiries. Now I put it to you, gentlemen, how can I presume to do that which the magistrates felt their power unequal to attempt?"

"You can—you ought!" answered Dagobert, firmly; "justice and honour require it!"

"Such, sir, may be your opinion, but, according to mine, I am obeying the dictates of justice and honour in faithfully executing the last wishes of a dying man; besides, you are not without redress. If the persons for whom you are concerned conceive themselves aggrieved, they may institute proceedings against the party in favour of whom M. Gabriel de Rennepont has resigned his succession: but, in the mean while, it becomes my duty to place him in immediate possession of the funds. I should commit a great dereliction of my duty were I to act otherwise."

These observations of the notary seemed so completely in accordance with the injunctions of the law, that Samuel, Dagobert, and Agricola remained speechless.

Gabriel, who had been buried in deep thought, seemed to form a desperate resolution, and, addressing the notary in a firm voice, said,

"Since the law is in this case powerless to support the right, I shall have recourse to extremities; but, before doing so, I, for the last time, inquire of M. d'Aigrigny if he will be content to receive my portion alone of this fortune, upon condition that the other parts of the inheritance remain in safe hands until those who now claim to be admitted as participators shall have made good their title."

"To this proposition," said D'Aigrigny, "I must reply as I have already done. It is not an affair which concerns me individually, but the immense interests of charity; and I am therefore compelled to refuse this offer on the part of M. Gabriel, as well as to remind him of his engagements."

"Then, sir, you reject this proposition?" said Gabriel, in a voice of emotion.

"Charity compels me so to do."

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"You absolutely refuse?"

"I reflect upon all the good works that may be effected by means of this wealth, for the glory of God; and I feel neither the inclination nor the courage to make any concessions."

"Then, sir," resumed the young priest, in an agitated voice, "since you drive me to it, I revoke my donation; I disposed only of that which I considered as my own, not of that which belonged to others."

"Have a care, sir," said D'Aigrigny; "I must remind you that I have in my possession your written and formal oath."

"I know it, sir; you hold a paper in which I swore never to revoke this donation on any pretext whatever, under penalty of incurring the hatred and contempt of every honest mind. Well, sir," said Gabriel, with profound bitterness, "so be it! I will expose myself to all the consequences of my perjury, which you are at liberty to proclaim wherever you please. I may be despised and abhorred by all, but there is One above who will judge between us."

"Oh, fear not, my noble boy!" exclaimed Dagobert, in whose bosom hope once more sprang up; "all worthy people will be on your side."

"Good, brother—well done!" said Agricola.

"Mr. Notary," chimed in the sharp voice of Rodin—"Mr. Notary, have the goodness to make M. l'Abbe Gabriel understand that he may perjure himself as much as he pleases, but that the civil code is less conveniently violated than a promise merely sacred."

"Proceed, sir!" said Gabriel.

"You must know, then," replied Rodin, "that a donation by one party during his lifetime to another also living—like yours to the Reverend Father d'Aigrigny—is not revocable, except for three causes. Is it not so?" continued he, addressing the notary.

"Yes, sir," answered the latter; "three reasons."

"The first," said Rodin, "is in the event of issue being born after the execution of the deed; and I blush to apply this case to M. Gabriel. The second ground for revocation would be the ingratitude of the recipient; now, M. l'Abbe Gabriel may safely reckon upon our profound and eternal gratitude. The third would be a failure to carry out the wishes of the donor. Now, however unworthy may be the opinion M. Gabriel has suddenly conceived of us, at least we are entitled to ask for time to prove that the gift has been employed in undertakings having for their aim the greater glory of the Most High."

"It now rests with you, Mr. Notary," observed D'Aigrigny, "to declare whether M. l'Abbe Gabriel can revoke the donation he has made."

Just as the notary was about to reply, Bathsheba entered, followed by two new personages, who presented themselves in the Red Chamber almost at the same moment.
CHAPTER X.

A GOOD GENIUS.

The first of the two persons whose arrival had interrupted the notary's reply was Faringhea.

At the sight of this man's repulsive aspect, Samuel approached him, and said, "Who are you, sir?"

After having cast a piercing glance on Rodin, who shuddered imperceptibly, but soon resumed his habitual impassiveness, Faringhea replied, "Prince Djalma arrived a little while ago from India, in order to be here today, as he was required to do by the inscription on a medal which he wore round his neck."

"He, too!" exclaimed Gabriel, who, as we know, had been his companion, in his voyage from India, from the Azores, where the ship, coming from Alexandria, had put in; "he, too, an heir! I remember now that, during our passage, the prince told me his mother was of French extraction; but doubtless he thought it advisable to conceal from me the object of his voyage. Oh! he is a noble and courageous youth, the young Indian prince! Where is he?"

The Strangler cast another look on Rodin, and said, laying a slight emphasis on his words, "I left the prince last evening. He told me that, although he had a great interest in being here, it might happen that he should sacrifice that interest to other circumstances. I passed the night in the same hotel with him, and this morning when I went to his apartment they told me that he had already gone out. My friendship for him has made me come to this house, hoping that the information I could give relating to the prince might, perhaps, be useful."

Not saying a word of the ambush into which he had fallen the previous evening, or of the Rodin machinations against Djalma, and, above all, attributing the absence of the prince to a voluntary cause, the Strangler wished evidently to serve the socius, trusting that Rodin would recompense his discretion.

It is useless to say that Faringhea told a barefaced lie. After having contrived in the morning to escape from his prison by a marvellous display of cunning, skill, and boldness, he had hastened to the hotel where he had left Djalma. There he learned that a man and woman of middle age and respectable appearance, representing themselves as the relatives of the young Indian, had asked...
to see him, and that, alarmed at the fearful somnolence in which he seemed plunged, they had put him in their carriage, to take him to their own house, and pay him the attention he required.

"It is much to be deplored," said the notary, "that this heir also did not present himself; but he is, unfortunately, deprived of his rights to the immense inheritance in question."

"Oh! it is a question of an immense inheritance, is it?" said Faringhea, looking steadily at Rodin, who prudently turned away his face.

The second of the two persons we have mentioned entered at this moment.

It was the father of Marshal Simon: a tall old man, still active and vigorous for his years; his hair was white and short; and his face, which was healthily coloured, betokened at once ability, amenity, and firmness.

Agricola went to him with a rapid step.

"What, you here, M. Simon?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, my lad," said the marshal's father, shaking Agricola cordially by the hand; "I have this moment come from a journey. M. Hardy was to be here in a matter of an inheritance, as he supposes; but, as he is still absent from Paris for some time, he has authorized me to—"

"He, too, an heir—M. François Hardy?" exclaimed Agricola, interrupting the old workman.

"Why, how pale and disturbed you seem, my boy! what ails you?" inquired the marshal's father, looking about him with astonishment. "What is the matter here?"

"The matter here? why, one that concerns your little girls, whom they are seeking to despoil!" exclaimed Dagobert, despairingly, and going toward the superintendent. "And it was to be present at this infamous proceeding that I brought them from Siberia."

"You!" exclaimed the old workman, endeavouring to call to mind the features of the soldier. "Who, then, are you?"

"Dagobert."

"You—you—so generously devoted to my son!" exclaimed the marshal's father; and he clasped the old soldier's hand between his own with great warmth. "But did you not speak of Simon's daughter?"

"Daughters! for he is more happy than he yet knows," said Dagobert; "the poor girls are twins."

"And where are they?"

"In a convent."

"In a convent?"

"Yes, through the treachery of that man, who, by detaining them there, has disinherited them."

"What man?"

"The Marquis d'Aigrigny."

"My son's most deadly enemy!" exclaimed the old workman, casting a look of hatred on Father d'Aigrigny, whose boldness did not forsake him.

"And this is not all," added Agricola. "M. Hardy, my worthy and excellent employer, is also unfortunately deprived of his claim to this immense inheritance."

"What do you say?" exclaimed Marshal Simon's father. "But M. Hardy was ignorant that this was an affair of such deep importance to him, and departed hastily to rejoin a friend who was in need of his assistance."

At each of these successive disclosures Samuel felt his despair increase; but he could only vent his feelings in groans; for, unfortunately, the will of the testator was formal.

Father d'Aigrigny, impatient to put an end to this scene, which cruelly embarrassed him in spite of his apparent calm, said to the notary, in a grave and emphatic tone,

"Sir, all this surely must have an end. If calumny could reach me, I would reply to it triumphantly by the facts as they appear before us. Why attribute
to hateful plots the absence of the heirs in whose names this soldier and his son make such injurious accusations? Why should their absence be more unaccountable than that of this young Indian? than that of M. Hardy? who, as his man of business says, was ignorant of the importance which called him hither. Is it not more probable that the daughters of M. the Marshal Simon and Mademoiselle Cardoville have not been able, from some natural causes, to present themselves here this morning? Once again I say, this has gone on too long, and I believe the notary thinks as I do, that this revelation of new heirs really can effect no change in the question which I had the honour to put to him just now; that, as representative of the poor, to whom M. the Abbé Gabriel has made a gift of all he possessed, I remain, in spite of his tardy and illegal opposition, sole possessor of the property; which I have pledged myself, and I repeat that pledge in the face of all at this solemn moment, to employ for the greater glory of the Lord. Will you, therefore, sir, give a decisive opinion, and terminate a scene which must be painful to all?"

"Sir," replied the notary, in a solemn voice, "on my soul and conscience, in the name of justice and law, as faithful and impartial executor of the last wishes of M. Marius de Rennepont, I declare that, by the act of donation of M. l'Abbé Gabriel de Rennepont, you are—you, Monsieur l'Abbé d'Aigrigny—the sole possessor of this property, of which I put you in possession, in order that you may dispose of it according to the wishes of the donor."

These words, pronounced with emphasis, destroyed the last vague hopes which the defenders of the heirs could have left to them.

Samuel became paler than ever, and convulsively grasped the hand of Bathsheba, who stood beside him, while big tears flowed slowly down the cheeks of the old couple.

Dagobert and Agricol were plunged in deepest grief; struck by the reasoning of the notary, who said that he could give no more credit or authority to their claims than the magistrates had done, they felt that they had not a hope remaining.

Gabriel suffered most acutely of all: he felt bitter remorse, when he reflected that, by his blindness, he had been the cause and involuntary instrument of this abominable spoliation.

Thus, when the notary, after having assured himself of the amount of the securities enclosed in the cedar coffer, said to Father d'Aigrigny,

"Take possession of this casket, sir!"

Gabriel exclaimed, with deep despair,

"Alas! it would seem that an inexorable fatality weigh down all who are worthy of interest, affection, and respect. Oh, my God!" added the young priest, clasping his hands fervently, "your sovereign justice cannot permit the triumph of such iniquity!"

It would seem as if Heaven heard the missionary's prayer. Scarcely had he spoken, when a singular circumstance occurred.

Rodin, without awaiting the conclusion of Gabriel's invocation, had, according to the authority of the notary, taken the casket in his arms, unable to repress a loud aspiration of joy and triumph.

At this moment, when Father d'Aigrigny and the socius believed themselves at last possessors of the treasure, the door of the apartment in which they had heard the clock strike suddenly opened.

A woman appeared on the threshold.

At the sight of her Gabriel uttered a loud cry, and remained thunderstruck.

Samuel and Bathsheba clasped their hands and fell on their knees. The two Israelites felt reanimated by an inexplicable hope.

All the other actors in this scene remained motionless with astonishment.

Rodin himself retreated two paces, and replaced the casket on the table with a trembling hand.

Although there was nothing but what was very natural in this incident—a
woman appearing on the threshold of a door which she had just opened—there was a moment of silence—profound—solemn. Every breast was palpitating. All, at the sight of this woman, experienced a surprise mingled with a sort of fear—an indefinable anguish; for this woman appeared the living original of the portrait placed in this saloon a hundred and fifty years before.

There were the same headdress, the same robe, with its long hanging folds, the same features, impressed with a deep and resigned sorrow.

This woman advanced slowly, and without appearing to perceive the profound impression caused by her appearance.

She approached a sécrétaire inlaid with brass, pressed a concealed spring hidden amid the gilt mouldings, and a small drawer sprang out, whence she took an envelope of sealed parchment; then, advancing to the table, she placed this paper before the notary, who, till then mute and motionless, took it mechanically.

After having cast a long look, melancholy but kind, at Gabriel, who seemed fascinated by her presence, she went to the door of the vestibule, which was open.

As she passed by Samuel and Bathsheba, who were still kneeling, she paused for a moment, bent her beautiful head toward the old couple, looked at them with tender solicitude, and then, after having given them her hands to kiss, disappeared as slowly as she had appeared, having cast a parting look at Gabriel.

The departure of this woman seemed to break the charm under which all present had remained for some minutes.

Gabriel first broke silence by murmuring, in a broken tone,

"It is she! she again! here—in this house!"

"Who—she—brother?" said Agricola, alarmed at the paleness and almost distracted air of the missionary; for the smith, though he had not yet observed the singular resemblance of this woman to the portrait, shared, without being able to account for it, the general amazement.

Dagobert and Faringhea were in a similar state of mind.

"Who is this woman?" continued Agricola, taking Gabriel's hand, which was damp and cold.
"Look!" replied the young priest; "it is more than a century and a half since those portraits were placed there."

And he pointed to the two paintings before which he was then sitting. At Gabriel's movement, Agricola, Dagobert, and Faringhea raised their eyes to the two pictures, placed one on each side of the mantel-piece.

Three exclamations were heard at once.

"It is she! the same woman!" cried the astonished smith; "and her portrait has been here a hundred and fifty years!"

"What do I see? the friend and emissary of Marshal Simon!" said Dagobert, contemplating the portrait of the man. "Yes, that is the face of him who came to find us in Siberia last year. Ah! I recognise him by his sad and soft look, as well as by his black eyebrows, which unite in one."

"My eyes do not deceive me! no! it is indeed the man with the black band across his forehead, whom we strangled and buried in the banks of the Ganges!" muttered Faringhea, with a shudder of fear: "the man whom one of the sons of Bohwanie, last year, at Java, in the ruins of Tchandi, declared he had met after his murder, near one of the gates of Bombay! This accursed man, who, as they said, left everywhere after him death in his traces! And this painting was done a century and a half ago!"

And the Strangler, as well as Dagobert and Agricola, could not take his eyes from this remarkable portrait.

"What a mysterious resemblance!" thought Father d'Aigrigny; and then, as if struck with a sudden idea, he said to Gabriel, "But this woman is the same who saved your life in America?"

"It is the same," replied Gabriel, shuddering; "and yet she told me that she was going toward the north of America," added the young priest, speaking to himself.

"How came she in this house?" asked Father d'Aigrigny, addressing himself to Samuel. "Answer me, guardian: was this woman brought here before us, or by you?"

"I entered first and alone, when, for the first time in a century and a half, the door was opened," said Samuel, gravely.

"Then how do you account for this woman's presence here?" added Father d'Aigrigny.

"I seek not to explain," said the Jew: "I see—I believe; and now I hope," he continued, regarding Bathsheba with an indefinable expression.

"Still it is your duty to account for the presence of this woman," said D'Aigrigny, over whose mind a vague sense of uneasiness was stealing. "Who is she? how came she here?"

"All I can tell you, sir, is, that, according to what I have heard from my father, there are underground communications between this house and distant places."

"Ah! then all is easily explained," said D'Aigrigny. "We have now only to ascertain what motive this person could have for thus introducing herself into the house. As for her singular resemblance to the portrait, that is a mere freak of nature."

Rodin had participated in the general astonishment at the appearance of the mysterious female; but when he saw her deliver a sealed packet to the notary, the socius ceased to trouble himself respecting the strangeness of her coming, and thought only of leaving the place as quickly as possible with the treasure, now the property of the company: an instinctive dread made him fear the contents of the sealed envelope delivered to the notary, who still mechanically grasped it in his hands.

The deep amazement and profound silence which prevailed appeared to the socius to afford a favourable opportunity of escaping with the casket; he therefore lightly touched the elbow of D'Aigrigny, made a significant gesture, and, taking the casket beneath his arm, proceeded toward the door.

"One moment, sir," said Samuel, rising and intercepting his passage. "I
must request the notary to examine the paper just put into his hands; you can leave the room afterward."

"But, sir," said Rodin, striving to force his way out, "as the point has been finally decided in favour of M. d'Aigrigny, I will thank you to stand aside."

"And I tell you, sir," returned the old man, in a loud voice, "that I will not suffer that casket to be taken from the room until the notary has taken cognizance of the paper just delivered to him."

Samuel's words attracted universal attention, and the society found himself compelled to return; but, while passing the Jew, bestowed upon him such a look of implacable hatred as made the old man shudder, spite of his firmness. The notary, in compliance with Samuel's desire, proceeded carefully to examine the packet.

"Heavens!" he exclaimed; "what do I see? But so much the better."

At these words of the notary, all eyes were turned inquiringly upon him. "Read, sir! read!" cried Samuel, clasping his hands; "perhaps my presentiments will be realized."

"But, sir," said D'Aigrigny, beginning to share the disquietude of Rodin, "what paper is that you are perusing?"

"A codicil," replied the notary. "A codicil which leaves everything unsettled for the present."

"How, sir!" exclaimed D'Aigrigny, furiously, and approaching the notary. "Everything left undecided! and by what right?"

"Impossible!" added Rodin. "We protest."

"Gabriel! father! listen!" cried Agricola; "all is not lost; there are still hopes. Gabriel, do you hear? There are yet hopes."

"What is this?" asked the young priest, rising, and scarcely believing what he heard.

"Gentlemen," said the notary, "I will read the superscription on this packet, which changes, or, at least, defers, all the testamentary dispositions."

"Gabriel!" shouted Agricola, throwing himself into the arms of the notary; "everything is deferred, and nothing lost!"

"Listen, gentlemen," said the notary; and he read as follows:

"This is a codicil which (for reasons that will be found set forth within) adjourns and prorogues, till the 1st of June, 1832, the dispositions mentioned in the will made by me this day at one o'clock; without, however, changing any of them.

"The house will be again closed, and the funds left in the hands of the depositary, to be divided on the 1st of June among those having claims."

"MARIUS DE RENNEFONT.

Villemanoeuvre, this 12th February, 1832, at 11 o'clock in the evening."

"I protest against this codicil!" cried D'Aigrigny, livid with rage and despair.

"The female who gave it into the hands of the notary is suspected by us," added Rodin: "this codicil is forged!"

"No, sir," said the notary, sternly; "I have compared the two signatures, and they are the same. Besides, the remark I made some time since respecting the heirs not now present is equally applicable to you. You can dispute the authenticity of this document; but everything must remain in abeyance, and as not having yet come to pass—the time for closing the succession being deferred three months and a half."

By the time the notary had spoken these words, the nails of Rodin were bloody, and, for the first time, his pale lips were coloured with crimson.

"Oh, my God! thou hast heard my prayer," cried Gabriel, kneeling, and clasping his hands with religious fervour, while his beaming countenance was raised toward heaven; "thy sovereign justice would not permit the triumph of iniquity."
THE ORPHANS AND GABRIEL AT THE CHATEAU DE CARDOVILLE.
"What are you saying, my dear boy?" asked Dagobert, who, bewildered by sudden joy, scarcely comprehended the import of the codicil.

"All is put off, father!" exclaimed the smith; "the time for the presentation of the heirs is fixed three months and a half from this day. And, now that these persons (pointing to Rodin and D'Aigrigny) are unmasked, there is nothing more to be feared from them; we shall be on our guard, and the orphans, Mademoiselle Cardoville, my worthy employer M. Hardy, and the young Indian will all receive their just share."

We must renounce all attempt to paint the joy, the rapturous delight of Gabriel, Agricola, Dagobert, the father of Marshal Simon, Samuel, and Bathsheba.

Faringhea alone remained gloomy and silent before the portrait of the man with the remarkable eyebrows.

The rage of D'Aigrigny and Rodin, at seeing Samuel resume possession of the cedar casket, is beyond our power to describe; we renounce it, as a task of impossibility.

By the advice of the notary, who took the codicil with him, in order that it might be opened with all legal formality, Samuel determined, as more prudent, to place in the Bank of France the immense treasures of which he was known to be the guardian.

While the generous hearts, so lately bowed down by grief and despair, overflowed with joyful hope and happiness, D'Aigrigny and Rodin left the house, carrying rage and almost madness in their hearts.

As the Reverend Father d'Aigrigny entered his carriage, he said to the foot-
man, "To the Hôtel Saint-Dizier!" Then, overcome, exhausted, he threw himself back on the cushions, and, covering his face with his hands, uttered a deep groan; while Rodin, seated with him, surveyed, with mingled anger and contempt, the miserable and dejected creature beside him.

"The coward!" he said, mentally; "he despairs, while I—"

At the end of a quarter of an hour the carriage reached the Rue de Babylone, and drove into the courtyard of the Hôtel de Saint-Dizier.

CHAPTER XI.
THE FIRST LAST, AND THE LAST FIRST.

Let us accompany the carriage of Father d'Aigrigny to the Hôtel de Saint-Dizier.

While on the way thither, Rodin remained silent, contenting himself with looking at and listening to Father d'Aigrigny, who gave vent to the rage and agonies of his overthrow in a long monologue, interspersed with exclamations, lamentations, and indignation, at the pitiless blows of destiny which, in a moment, ruined the best-founded hopes.

When the carriage entered the courtyard and stopped at the peristyle of the Hôtel de Saint-Dizier, the face of the princess might be seen through the glass of one of the windows, half concealed by the folds of a curtain. In her intense anxiety, she had placed herself there to see if it was the Abbé d'Aigrigny who had arrived. Still farther, overlooking all ceremony, that great lady, whose demeanour was usually so reserved and formal, left the room hastily, and came down several of the stairs to meet Father d'Aigrigny, who was ascending them with an air of deep dejection.

The princess, when she saw the livid and depressed aspect of the reverend father's face, suddenly paused and turned pale, suspecting that all was lost. A rapid glance exchanged with her quondam lover left her no doubt on the result she so much feared.

Rodin humbly followed the reverend father. Both, preceded by the princess, entered quickly into a private apartment.

The door closed, the princess, addressing Father d'Aigrigny with intense anguish, exclaimed,

"What, then, has happened?"

Instead of replying to this question, the reverend father, his eyes sparkling with rage, his lips white, and his features convulsed, looked the princess full in the face, and said to her,

"Do you know the amount of this inheritance which we believed to amount to forty millions?" (£1,600,000.)

"I see now," replied the princess; "we have been deceived: this inheritance is reduced to nothing; you have been working only for a great loss."

"Yes, we have worked for a great loss," replied the reverend father, his teeth
clenched passionately, "a mere loss! And the inheritance was not forty millions, but two hundred and twelve millions!"

"Two hundred and twelve millions!" repeated the princess, receding a step in amazement; "that is impossible."

"I saw them in actual securities in a casket, and inventoried by the notary."

"Two hundred and twelve millions!" repeated the astonished princess; "why, that is an Immense, a sovereign power! And you have given it up—have not struggled, by every possible means, to the very last instant?"

"Madame, I did all I could, spite of the treachery of Gabriel, who this very morning declared that he renounced us—that he would dissociate himself from the company!"

"The ingratitude!" said the princess.

"The act of donation, which I had the precaution to have legalized by the notary, was so valid that, notwithstanding the re clamations of the savage soldier and his son, the notary had actually put me in possession of this treasure."

"Two hundred and twelve millions!" repeated the princess, clasping her hands. "In truth, it is like a dream."

"Yes," replied Father d'Aigrigny, bitterly; "for us this possession has been a dream, for a codicil has been found which postpones for three months and a half all the testamentary dispositions: but now the alarm is given, even by our own precautions, to the whole body of heirs. They know the vastness of the sum, are on their guard, and all is lost."

"Who, then, is the cursed creature who has made this codicil known?"

"A woman."

"What woman?"

"I do not know; some wandering creature whom Gabriel declares he met in America, and who saved his life."

"And how did this woman get there? How did she know the existence of this codicil?"

"I believe it was all concocted by a wretch of a Jew, the keeper of the house, whose family has been the depositary of the funds for three generations: no doubt he had some secret instructions in case it should be suspected that the heirs were kept back; for, in his will, this Marius de Rennepont anticipated that the company would keep watch over his descendants."

"But cannot you contest the validity of this codicil?"

"Contest! what, at such a time as this? Contest a will! Expose ourselves to a thousand clamours, without the certainty of success! It is already sufficiently injurious to us, that all these facts will be noise abroad. Ah, it is horrible! and at the very moment of success, after so much labour! an affair followed up so carefully, so pertinaciously, for a hundred and fifty years!"

"Two hundred and twelve millions!" repeated the princess. "It was not in a strange land that the Order would then have established itself, but in France—in the heart of France—with such vast resources!"

"Yes," responded Father d'Aigrigny, with bitterness; "and by education we should have got hold of the rising generation. It was, politically, of incalculable extent." Then, striking his foot angrily on the floor, he added, "I tell you it is enough to make one go mad with rage! An affair so skilfully, so sagaciously, so patiently conducted!"

"Is there no hope, then?"

"The only one is, that this Gabriel does not retract the donation of his share. That will be a considerable sum; it will amount to at least thirty millions!"

"That is a vast sum; almost as much as you expected. Why, then, do you despair?"

"Because it is evident Gabriel will appeal against this donation; however legal it may be, he will find some means of annulling it, now that he is free, has his eyes opened with respect to us, and is surrounded by his adopted family. I tell you all is lost; there is not a shadow of a hope left. I even think it prudent
to write to Rome for permission to leave Paris for a time. This city has become hateful to me."

"Yes, yes—I see it all; there is not a hope left when you, my friend, almost resolve to fly."

Father d'Aigrigny remained completely overwhelmed, unstrung. This heavy blow had broken every energy of his mind; crushed and annihilated, he flung himself into an arm-chair.

During this conversation Rodin had remained standing respectfully near the door, holding his old hat in his hand.

Two or three times, at certain passages in the conversation of Father d'Aigrigny and the princess, the cadaverous countenance of the sccius, who seemed a prey to concentrated wrath, was slightly coloured, his flaccid eyelids becoming red, as if the blood had mounted to his head in consequence of a violent internal struggle; then his inexpressive face resumed its usual character.

"I must write to Rome instantly, to announce this defeat, which becomes an event of the highest importance, inasmuch as it destroys such immense hopes," said Father d'Aigrigny, with a tone of despair.

The reverend father was still sitting; pointing to a table, he added, in an abrupt voice,

"Write—!"

The sccius, putting his hat on the floor, replied by a respectful bow to the order of the reverend father; and, with his neck stooping, his head lowered, and sidelong step, he went to seat himself in the chair placed in front of a bureau: then, taking pen and paper, he, silent and motionless, awaited the dictation of his superior.

"By your leave, princess?" said D'Aigrigny to Madame de Saint-Dizier.

She replied by an impatient gesture, which seemed to reproach Father d'Aigrigny for his ceremonious request.

The reverend father bowed, and dictated as follows, with a low and half-stifled voice:

"All our hopes, which had become almost certainties, have been suddenly crushed. The Rennepont affair, in spite of every care and all the skill bestowed upon it, has completely and hopelessly failed. The turn which matters have taken is, unfortunately, even worse than a want of success; it is an event most disastrous for the company, whose rights to the property were morally evident, for it had been fraudulently withheld when a confiscation had been made in favour of the company: but I have at least the consciousness of having done everything, up to the last moment, to defend and assure our rights. But, I repeat, we must consider this important affair as absolutely and forever lost, and think no more about it—"

Father d'Aigrigny dictated this with his back turned to Rodin.

At the abrupt movement which the sccius made in rising, and throwing his pen on the table, instead of continuing to write, the reverend father turned, and, looking at Rodin with profound astonishment, said to him,

"Well! what are you about?"

"There must be an end to this, incompetent man!" said Rodin, speaking to himself, and advancing toward the fire slowly.
"What! you leave your seat, and do not go on writing?" said the reverend father, much astonished. Then, turning to the princess, who participated in his surprise, he added, with a contemptuous glance at the socius, "Really, he has lost his wits!"

"Excuse him," replied Madame de Saint-Dizier; "it is, no doubt, the grief which the failure of this affair has caused him."

"Thank the princess, return to your place, and continue your writing," said Father d'Aigrigny to Rodin, in a tone of disdainful compassion, and pointing to the table imperiously with his finger.

The socius, entirely regardless of this new order, came close to the fireplace, to which he turned his back, elevated his drooping shoulders, stood erect on his legs, struck the carpet with the heel of his coarse oiled shoe, crossed his hands behind the skirts of his old greasy coat, and, raising his head, looked steadily at Father d'Aigrigny.

The socius had not uttered a word, but his hideous features, at the moment slightly suffused, revealed such a consciousness of superiority, and so sovereign a contempt for Father d'Aigrigny, an audacity so calm, that the reverend father and the princess were confounded.

They felt strangely controlled by, and under the domination of, this little old man, so ugly and so squalid.

Father d'Aigrigny knew too well the customs of his order to believe his humble secretary capable of suddenly assuming these airs of superiority without motive, or, rather, without positive right. Late, too late, the reverend father discovered that this subordinate might be, at the same time, a spy and a sort of tried auxiliary, who, by the constitution of the Order, had orders and authority, in certain urgent cases, to supersede and temporarily replace the incapable agent with whom he was placed, in the first instance, as overseer.

The reverend father was not deceived: from the general to the lowest rural subordinate, all the superior members of the company have near them, often concealed in functions apparently the most humble, men competent to fulfil their duties at a moment's notice, who, thus instructed, correspond continually and directly with Rome.

From the instant when Rodin had thus planted himself, the usually haughty demeanour of Father d'Aigrigny changed suddenly; and, although it cost him an enormous effort, he said, with a hesitation of manner, filled with deference, "You have, doubtless, the power to command me—me, who but now commanded you!"

Rodin, without reply, drew from his thick and shabby pocket-book a folded paper stamped on both sides, on which were written some lines in Latin.

After having read this, Father d'Aigrigny lifted it respectfully, reverentially to his lips, and then, restoring it to Rodin, made him a low bow.

When he raised his head, it was purple with spite and shame. Notwithstanding his habit of passive obedience and immutable respect for the commands of his Order, he experienced a bitter and violent sensation of anger at finding himself so suddenly deposed. This was not all: although, for a very long time, all amatory relations between himself and Madame de Saint-Dizier had ceased, she was not the less a woman in his eyes; and to undergo this degrading check before a woman was doubly galling to him, who, despite his Order, had not yet entirely ceased to be a man of the world.

Besides, the princess, instead of seeming pained, shocked at the sudden metamorphosis of a superior into a subaltern and a subaltern into a superior, looked at Rodin with a sort of curiosity, mingled with interest.

As a woman—and a woman, too, inordinately ambitious, seeking to attach to herself all powerful influences—the princess loved such contrasts. She found it curious and interesting to see this man, almost in rags, mean, and ignobly ugly, and but just now the most humble of subordinates, spring at once into the mastery over Father d'Aigrigny, a nobleman by birth, elegant in his manners, and
so eminent in the society. From that instant, as an important personage, Rodin completely effaced Father d'Aigrigny in the mind of the princess.

The first sentiment of humiliation passed, D'Aigrigny, although his pride was hurt to the quick, exerted all his self-love and tact to redouble his courtesy to Rodin, become his superior by so sudden a stroke of fortune.

But the ex-socius, incapable of appreciating, or, rather, of recognising these delicate shadings, established himself at once, coarsely and imperiously, in his new position, not by the reaction of wounded pride, but by the consciousness of his actual value: a long connexion with Father d'Aigrigny had revealed to him the inferiority of the latter.

"You have thrown away the pen," said D'Aigrigny to Rodin, with extreme deference, "while I was dictating to you this despatch for Rome. Will you favour me by informing me in what respect I have acted wrongly?"

"Instantly," said Rodin, in a sharp and cutting tone. "For a long time, although this affair appeared to me wholly beyond your abilities, I refrained: yet what blunders! what poverty of invention! How coarse the means employed to reach the wished-for end!"

"I can hardly comprehend your reproaches," responded Father d'Aigrigny, softly, although a secret bitterness pierced through his affected submission. "Was not success certain but for the codicil? Have you not yourself contributed to the measures for which you now blame me?"

"You then commanded, and I obeyed; and, moreover, you were on the point of succeeding, not because of the means you employed, but, in spite of those means, of clumsy conduct and deplorable stupidity—"

"Sir, you are severe," said Father d'Aigrigny.

"I am just. Does it require any vast ability to shut a person up in a room and then double lock the door? Eh? Well, what else have you done? Nothing! The daughters of General Simon? Imprisoned at Leipsic, shut up in a convent in Paris. Adrienne de Cardoville? Shut up. Couche-tout-Nu? In prison. Djalma? A narcotic. The only piece of ingenuity, and a thousand times more sure, because it operated morally and not materially, was employed to get M. Hardy out of the way. As to your other arrangements—pooh! bad, uncertain, dangerous! Why? Because they were violent, and people meet violence with violence; then it is no longer the struggle of clever, skilful, resolute men, who see the road they take, though it is in shadow, but a contest of wrestlers in open daylight. What! though acting incessantly, we ought, above all, to keep ourselves out of sight; and yet you hit upon nothing more clever than to call attention to us by means of horrible coarseness and disturbance! By way of being more mysterious, it is the guard, the commissary of police, and jailers whom you select as your accomplices! It is really pitiable, sir; and a remarkable success alone could excuse you for such poverty-stricken invention: but this success you have not acquired!"

"Sir," said Father d'Aigrigny, deeply wounded, for Madame de Saint-Dizier could not disguise her admiration at the plain and cutting language of Rodin, and looked at her former lover with an air which seemed to say, he is right!

"Sir, you are more than severe in your judgment, and, spite of the deference due to you, I tell you I am not used to such language—"

"There are many other things, indeed, to which you are not used," said Rodin, harshly, and interrupting the reverend father; "but you will get used to them. Up to this time you have had a false estimate of your own value; there is in you still some old leaven of the soldier and the man of the world, which works upon you, and deprives your reason of the coolness, clearness, and penetration which it ought to have. You have been a gay, gallant officer, all fine and scented; you have run through a course of war, fêtes, pleasures, and women—they have used up the better half of you. You will now never be anything but a subaltern. You have been tried and found wanting. You will always lack that vigour, that concentration of mind which controls men and events. If I have this vigour, this concentration of mind—and I have it!—do
you know why? It is because, devoted solely to the service of our company, I have always been ugly, dirty, an ascetic—yes, an ascetic; and in that consists my strength."

As he said these words with a proud cynicism, Rodin was fearful. The Princess de Saint-Dizier thought him almost handsome in his boldness and energy. Father d'Aigrigny, feeling himself mastered unconquerably by this fiendish being, resolved to try one last effort at revolt, and exclaimed,

"Well, sir, these vauntings are no proofs of worth and power; we shall see you at work."

"You shall see me," replied Rodin, coldly; "and do you know what work?" (Rodin was partial to this interrogative formula.) "At that which you have thrown up in so dastardly a manner!"

"What do you say?" exclaimed the Princess de Saint-Dizier, for Father d'Aigrigny, appalled at Rodin's audacity, could not utter a syllable.

"I say," replied Rodin, slowly, "I say that I will undertake to carry out the affair of the Rennepont inheritance with success, which you consider desperate!"

"You?" exclaimed Father d'Aigrigny; "you?"

"I!"

"But all our plans are unmasked!"

"So much the better; we shall be compelled to invent others more skilful."

"But they will mistrust you!"

"So much the better; difficult enterprises are the most sure."

"How? Do you hope to make Gabriel consent not to revoke his donation, which may, moreover, be illegal?"

"I will bring into the coffers of the company the two hundred and twelve millions of which they seek to defraud us. Is that clear?"

"It is as clear as it is impossible."

"And I tell you it is possible—that it must be possible. Do you hear? But you do not understand, as you are shortsighted!" exclaimed Rodin, becoming so animated that his cadaverous features were slightly suffused with red. "You do not understand that there is no middle course; the two hundred and twelve millions will be ours, and then we are assured of the re-establishment of our sovereign influence in France, for with such sums, in these times of venality, a government is to be bought; and if its purchase is too dear, or it is troublesome, we can kindle a civil war and overthrow it, and restore legitimacy, which, after all, is our true ally, and which, owing all to us, would surrender all to us."

"That is evident," said the princess, clasping her hands in admiration.

"If, on the contrary," continued Rodin, "these two hundred and twelve millions remain in the hands of the Rennepont family, it will be our ruin, our annihilation—it is to create a host of inflexible, implacable enemies. You have not yet comprehended the execrable wishes of this Rennepont on the subject of that association which he desires to be formed, and which, by an unheard-of fatality,
his accursed race may marvellously realize! Think of the immense power which will concentrate itself around these millions! Marshal Simon acting in the name of his daughters; that is to say, the man of the people made a duke, without being vain of it, which assures his influence with the masses; for the military spirit and incarnate Buonapartism still represent honour and national glory in the eyes of the people. Then we have this François Hardy, the liberal, independent, enlightened citizen, type of the extensive manufacturer, bent on the progress and well-being of the working classes! Then there is Gabriel, the good priest, as they call him, the apostle of the primitive gospel, representative of the democracy of the Church, opposed to the aristocracy of the Church—the poor village curate against the rich bishop; that is to say, in their jargon, the labourer of the holy vineyard against the idle pluralist; the born propagator of all ideas of fraternity, emancipation, and progress, as they also call him; and that, not in the name of any revolutionary or incendiary system, but in the name of Christ, in the name of a religion all charity, love, and peace, to speak as they speak. Next, we have Adrienne de Cardoville, the type of elegance, grace, and beauty, the priestess of the senses, which she undertakes to spiritualize by refining and cultivating them. I do not speak to you of her talents, her audacity, for you know these too well. Thus nothing can be so dangerous for us as she may become—she, a patrician by blood, a democrat in heart, and a poet in imagination. Then comes Prince Djalma, chivalrous, bold, ready for everything, because he does not know anything of civilized life; implacable in his hatred as in his affection, a terrible instrument for the hand that knows how to wield him. In short, there is not one in this detestable family, down to the wretched Couche-tout-Nu, who, isolated, is insignificant, but who, purified, elevated, regenerated by contact with these generous and expansive natures, as they call them, may have a large share in the influences of this association, as representing the artisan. Now do you believe that if all these persons, already exasperated against us, because, they say, we seek to despoil them, follow out—and they will follow out, I will answer for it—the hateful wishes of this Renne-pont; do you think that, if they concentrate around this enormous fortune, which will add a hundred fold to its strength; do you believe that, if they declare a war of extermination against us and our principles, they will not be the most dangerous antagonists we have ever had? But I tell you that the company has never been more seriously threatened; yes, and it is now a question of its life or death. At this moment we have not to defend, but to attack, in order to annihilate this accursed race of the Renne-ponts, and obtain possession of these millions."

At this picture, presented by Rodin with a feverish animation, the more impressive as it was so rare, the princess and D'Aigrigny looked at him in amazement.

"I confess," said the reverend father to Rodin, "I had not thought of all the dangerous consequences of this association for good, advised by M. de Renne-pont; but I think that these heirs, from their characters, which we know, will have a strong desire to realize this Utopia. The peril is very great, very threatening; but how to avert it? What are we to do?"

"What, sir? You have to act upon ignorant, heroic, and exalted natures like Djalma; on sensual and eccentric, like Adrienne de Cardoville; simple and ingenuous, like Rose and Blanche Simon; upright and frank, like François Hardy; angelic and pure, like Gabriel; brutalized and stupid, like Couche-tout-Nu; and yet you ask, 'What are we to do?'

"I really do not understand you," said Father d'Aigrigny.

"Of course you do not; that is evident from your past conduct," replied Rodin, contemptuously. "You have had recourse to coarse and material means, instead of acting upon so many noble, generous, elevated passions, which, one day combined, would form a mighty band, but which, now divided and isolated, will be open to every surprise, every seduction, every inducement, every attack. Do you understand now? no! What! not yet?" and Rodin shrugged his shoulders. "Well, then, do people die of despair?"

"Yes."
"The gratitude of happy love will, perhaps, go to the last limits of most absurd generosity?"
"Yes."
"Are there not deceptions so horrid that suicide is the only refuge against fearful realities?"
"Yes."
"May not the excess of sensuality conduct us to the grave in slow and voluptuous agony?"
"Yes."
"Are there not in life circumstances so terrible that the most worldly, firm, or impious characters will blindly throw themselves, broken and exhausted, into the arms of religion, and abandon the greatest possessions of this world for the hair-cloth shirt, the prayer, and the holy rapture?"
"Yes."
"Are there not, in short, a thousand circumstances in which the reaction of the passions leads to the most extraordinary transformations, the most tragical issues, in the existence of man or woman?"
"Doubtless."
"Why, then, inquire what we are to do? What would you say if, for instance, the most dangerous members of this Rennepont family were to come, before three months, and on their knees implore, as a favour, to enter into this company, which they now have in horror, and from which Gabriel has to-day severed?"
"Such a conversion is impossible!" exclaimed Father d'Aigrigny.
"Impossible? and what were you, then, fifteen years ago, sir?" said Rodin; "a worldly-minded, impious debauchee! and yet you came to us, and your property became ours. What! we have subdued princes, kings, popes; we have absorbed—extinguished in our unity the most exalted understandings, which, apart from us, shone out too brilliantly; we have controlled almost the two worlds; we have perpetuated ourselves vigorous, rich, and redoubtable to this day, in spite of all hatreds and proscriptions; and shall we not get the better of one family which threatens us so vitally, and whose property, filched from our company, has become to us of paramount necessity? What! shall we not be skilful enough to obtain this result without clumsy violence and crimes that compromise? Are you, then, so ignorant of the immense resources of annihilation, mutual or partial, which are offered by the play of human passions skilfully combined, opposed, crossed, over-excited? and, above all, when, perhaps, thanks to an all-potent auxiliary,—" added Rodin, with a strange smile, "these passions may double their ardour and violence—"
"What auxiliary?" asked Father d'Aigrigny, who, as well as the Princess de Saint-Dizier, experienced a sort of admiration, mingled with affright.
"Yes," continued Rodin, without replying, "for this dread auxiliary, if it come to our aid, may bring with it overwhelming transformations, make cowardly the most daring, credulous the most impious, fierce the most gentle!"
"But what is this auxiliary?" exclaimed the princess, oppressed with vague alarm; "this auxiliary, so powerful, so dread—what is it?"

"If it does arrive," resumed Rodin, pale and impassive as ever, "the youngest, the most vigorous will be at each moment in danger of death as imminent as that of the dying man at his last moment."

"But this auxiliary?" exclaimed Father d'Aigrigny, more and more alarmed; for the more Rodin darkened the gloomy picture, the more cadaverous did his countenance become.

"In a word, this auxiliary may decimate the population, enclose in the shroud which it drags at its heels a whole accursed family; but it will be forced to respect the life of a great, immutable body, which is never weakened by the death of its members, because its mind—the mind of the Society of Jesus—is imperishable!"

"But—but this auxiliary?"

"Well, this auxiliary," continued Rodin, "this auxiliary, which advances, advances by slow paces, and whose terrible advent is announced by fearful and widely-spread foretokens—"

"It is—"

"The cholera!"

At this word, pronounced by Rodin in a harsh and piercing tone, the princess and Father d'Aigrigny turned pale and shuddered. Rodin's look was gloomy and chilling—his appearance was corpse-like.

For some seconds the silence of the grave reigned in the apartment. Rodin first broke it. Still impassive, he pointed with an imperious gesture to the table, at which, some minutes before, he, Rodin, was humbly sitting, and said, in a harsh voice,

"Write!"

The reverend father at first started with surprise; then, remembering that from superior he had become subaltern, he arose, bowed to Rodin, passed in front of him, seated himself at the table, took up his pen, and, turning to Rodin, said,

"I am ready."

Rodin dictated, and the father wrote as follows:

"Through the mismanagement of the Reverend Father d'Aigrigny, the affair of the Renuepont inheritance has been to-day seriously compromised. The amount of the inheritance is two hundred and twelve millions. Notwithstanding this check, we are of opinion that we can still formally undertake to prevent the Renepont family from doing any injury to the company, and obtain for the said company the restitution of the two hundred and twelve millions, which legitimately belong to it; only we must have the most complete and ample powers to act.*****

A quarter of an hour after this scene Rodin left the Hôtel de Saint-Dizier, brushing his old greasy hat against his sleeve, and taking it off to acknowledge, by a very low bow, the bow of the porter.
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