

THE \$1,000 PRIZE STORY.

THE ALPINE GUIDE;

OR,

THE VETERAN OF MARENGO.

AN HISTORICAL TALE OF THE NAPOLEONIC EMPIRE.

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THE ALPINE GUIDE.

BY PAUL PRESTON.

CHAPTER I.

THE FETE OF SAINT THERESE.

"HULLO! nobody at home!" shouted a young villager, as he entered the basement chamber of the chalet of Jean Claude, picturesquely situated at the base of Mount Cenis in Savoy. "Dame Genevieve is doubtless within her chamber, and perchance Jean Claude is likewise there also."

The young Savoyard, familiarly known to the villagers of the hamlet, at the base of Mount Cenis, as Petit Pierre, was one of those hardy, active and enduring peasants, whose integrity and courage have rendered the name of his countrymen a proverb for zeal and probity. Noiselessly he opened one of the lateral doors and exclaimed in a low voice, "Hold! there he is sleeping amid the fern leaves! The poor fellow may have toiled wearily yester-night; well," he continued as he deposited upon the table of the little apartment, or rather interior court, an ample supply of freshly gathered flowers, glistening with the dew of early morn, "Genevieve has already prepared the Chapel of Saint Therese and hung up her garland; I will go to work in filling up the vases."

True enough, it was upon the fete of Saint Therese in the year 1795, when the Savoyard devoutly prosecuted his work of adorning the domestic shrine of his patronal Saint. By the way of further enlivening his proceedings he sang a characteristic song of his nation, with that tuneful melody, for which the hardy mountaineers are noted. Of a verity! the free air of the hills gives an extra zest to the poetic outpouring of humble, yet independent, souls.

The peasant had scarce finished the opening stanza of his song when a figure emerged through the doorway he had previously opened and advanced towards him. The man bore all the appearance of a soldier, still his clothes were rough and destitute of ornament, especially the

over-coat from which its owner shook off the particles of fern leaves, adhering to it from pressure of his body, during a rude slumber, with an air of solicitation.

"Well, mine host," quoth the new comer, "things breathe an air of refreshing gaiety, this morning."

"Eh?" returned Pierre, stopping short in his minstrelsy, "how?—this is not Jean Claude."

"Hold!" ejaculated the stranger, examining the peasant with a rapid scrutinizing glance; "this is not Jean Claude. Ah! from your actions, my fine fellow, I should be inclined to believe you a gay and joyous friend of the family."

"That indeed am I," continued the peasant, resuming his labors in the tasteful distribution of his flowers, "and moreover I am the god father of their child—still I have never seen you here before."

"That don't astonish me at all," good-humoredly responded the new comer, who appeared a hale, hearty and benevolent man, "I lost my way last night in the mountains; Jean Claude, whom I encountered accidentally, has, perchance, saved me from falling into some abyss and offered me a look in his hospitable cottage, where I have slumbered soundly to this hour."

"I can recognise the work of Jean Claude in that," joyfully exclaimed Petit Pierre, evincing an infantile admiration for his new mountain friend, who had honored him by the sponsorship of his child.

"Has he gone hence?" inquired the unknown.

"I should judge so," replied the peasant, taking his vase filled with flowers and disposing of them with much taste upon a side-board at the end of the apartment.

"Ah! my friend," quoth the stranger, gaily, "then to day is a holy day, a religious festival."

"This day is the fete of Saint Therese," quickly responded the young peasant, "and upon this day not an inhabitant of the mountain fails either to offer a bouquet to the Saint or a prayer at her shrine. Hence, this very morning, at the break of day, I have rang the bells, yes, a double set of chimes."

"Then you are the bell ringer?" familiarly remarked the stranger, whose manners exhibited him a man of quality.

"Bell ringer and wooden shoemaker at your service," respectfully responded the Savoyard. "It was I who rang the chimes at the marriage of Jean Claude."

"I trust he has taken unto him an excellent wife," returned the stranger.

"As excellent as she is kind," frankly replied the peasant, "and beautiful as she is excellent."

The light tread of a female disturbed the conference, and both turning around, beheld a young woman at the further end of the chamber.

"You can judge for yourself," whispered the Savoyard to his companion. Then advancing to the young woman, he saluted her kindly;

"Madam Genevieve." "Good morning, Pierre," answered she, in a musical voice.

The guest gazed upon the wife of Jean Claude, and was astounded at the surpassing beauty of the woman whom he expected to find an ordinary peasant of the country. Genevieve was a young girl evidently of Italian extraction, of purely classic features, with a full black eye and a Madonna-like expression of countenance. Although garbed in the common costume of the Savoy, the chastity of the material, the artistic manner of its make, and above all the exquisite elegance of her own mien, evoked a semi-audible expression of surprise from the stranger, as he scrutinized her personal appearance. Rarely had he encountered a being more beautiful!

"I have been impatient," observed the unknown, advancing politely to the wife of the Alpine Guide, "to offer to you, Madam, as well as to your husband, my grateful thanks for your most unexpected and opportune hospitality—"

"Poor enough, indeed," modestly interrupted Genevieve; "still, such as it was, I assure you it was offered in full sincerity of the heart."

"What, what, what!" interrupted Pierre, warmly, "who has a more sincere heart—"

"I pray thee, my friend," in turn interrupted Claude's wife, "do not speak so loud—you will wake the sleeping child."

"Pardon," replied the young Savoyard, considerably, "pardon, the dear little Jane sleeps—yes, we must speak lower."

"Ah!" exclaimed Genevieve, as she turned and beheld the flowers with which Petit Pierre had garnished the sideboard, "what most beautiful bouquets!"

"Nothing, Madam Genevieve," modestly replied the peasant, "nothing but two handfuls: I could not find the chaplet of good mother Marianne."

"Jean Claude, who has gone to the Grand Bourge," responded his wife, "has taken it with him to have it blessed."

"Then your husband has gone to the Grand Bourge?" inquired the stranger.

"But he will return," replied Genevieve.

"Unfortunately too late," resumed the unknown guest, "for me to be able to shake his hand before I will be compelled to take my departure. I am really sorry."

"Are you going to Chambery?"

"Not that way," replied the stranger; "on the contrary, in quite an opposite direction. I am desirous of traversing over Mount Cenis."

"But, sir," remonstrated Genevieve, gently, "you cannot at this present moment travel up the mountain."

"And for what reason?" politely inquired the guest.

"For one good reason," interrupted Petit Pierre, "because in this month we mountaineers only navigate during the night; for, you see, during the day the sun melts the snow, which comes down in torrents to our village."

"Well! it's all the same," energetically replied the unknown, as if determined to have his own way, "I will attempt—"

"To drown yourself to reach it the sooner," quoth the deep voice of Jean Claude, as the Alpine Guide entered the apartment, amid a general exclamation of delight and surprise.

"I counsel you against any such rashness," continued the mountaineer, shaking the dirt and dust off his garments. Then addressing his wife, he continued gaily: "Good morning, Genevieve! eh! and you here, my little Pierre!" With this salutation the Guide shook his friend's hand warmly.

"Yes, I am here," laughingly replied the peasant, pointing to his shoes; "I put on my new boots to pay you a visit."

"How fresh you are this morning!" replied Jean.

"Because I am dying with hunger," retorted Pierre.

"Then let us have some breakfast," gaily added the Guide, who turned to his guest: "Await until evening, it will then be practicable—now it is impossible."

Thus speaking, Jean Claude, accompanied by his wife, walked to the domestic shrine and attached to it a chaplet.

"I am much annoyed at the impossibility of my departure," remarked the unknown, addressing the Guide.

"There is no use swearing," returned Jean Claude, frankly; "it cannot be helped, and I will tell you the best thing to do—"

"What is that?" inquired the stranger.

"To set the table, and make an excuse of breakfast," replied Jean.

"Agreed!" gaily answered the stranger, and without more ado the entire party set them at work arranging the table for the simple, yet nutritious meal which was to be spread before them.

"Hold, wife," observed Claude to Genevieve with a suppressed sigh as they walked apart at the end of the apartment; "you perceive that our golden medallions have been changed into pewter."

"It is all the same," gently responded the young woman, as she passed the string of a locket over her neck, "as long as the souvenir they contain remains unchanged."

"And now I have six crowns to set us right," remarked the Guide affectionately; "and how is our little darling?"

"She was as gay this morning," joyfully responded the wife, "as the newly risen lark."

"And now!" inquired Jean with a sigh of inquietude.

"She sleeps like a little hedge-hog," laughingly replied his wife.

"And perchance," continued the Guide anxiously, "the fever will return no more."

"I pray to God that it would not," fervently returned Genevieve.

"Come, the table is set!" gaily shouted Jean, "to breakfast."

"I am there!" ejaculated Pierre, taking his seat.

"Stop!" quoth Jean, seizing the stranger, who appeared about to leave, "an unexpected guest upon the day of St. Therese—it is a sign of good luck to our family! Now serve us, Genevieve," he continued as the stranger assumed his place.

"And now we are all seated," interrupted Pierre, "I must tell you that I have bought something by the way of dessert."

"What is it?" inquired Jean, as he observed the bell-ringer drawing from his pocket a piece of printed paper.

"The account of the taking of Montmotre by the French," returned Pierre triumphantly.

"It is the bulletin of the 14th of this month," remarked the stranger.

"Genevieve will read it to us," exclaimed Jean, joyfully, "for Genevieve knows how to read, to write and to make sums. Read to us, my dear wife, for we are all ears."

In compliance with the request, Genevieve read as follows:

"Upon the evening of the 14th the action commenced. After a combat of two hours, General Colti, who had succeeded in gaining the plaine, threatened to envelope the French, held in check before Mount motte, where Colonel Roger, finding an opportunity for manœuvring the cavalry, hitherto idle, charged at full gallop with his regiment upon Colti's division. The enemy was evidently shaken and the Commander-in-chief, General Bonaparte, profited by the extraction of the left wing to order the assault. The victory was complete, and the general-in-chief has named Colonel Roger to be a general of brigade upon the battle-field."

"Again a victory!" enthusiastically proclaimed Jean Claude.

"Colonel Roger has gained his epaulets as a general!" exclaimed the bell ringer gaily, "let's drink his health? Madam Genevieve," filling her a glass, "Here, is the health of the brave General Roger!"

"His health," responded Genevieve, "he has my best wishes."

"Unfortunately each victory leads to fresh combats," remarked the unknown. "The Austrians, who have received fresh reinforcements, have closed all the roads to Mount Cenis."

"Yes, after the French passed," responded Pierre: "they have done as the worthy fellow, who bought a lock after the horse was stolen."

"Yes," resumed the unknown, arising from the table, "the God of battles will never desert the French!"

"Oh! I would so delight in war," exclaimed Pierre, "if I had no fear of the great big cannons."

"The noise of the cannon then is more dangerous than that of the big bell," responded Genevieve, smilingly.

"Thank you!" rejoined Petit Pierre, rising from his seat, "you have put me in mind that I have to ring the bells for vespers. But I will return in the evening, Jean Claude."

"And bring your new boots with you?" jocularly replied the Guide, smiling at his allusion to the wooden shoes.

"These boots," rejoined the bell ringer, "are of famous leather, however, both sole and uppers are of one piece. This leather, you perceive, sometimes cracks but never rips.—To-night then—"

"To-night then, my little Pierre," replied Jean Claude as the peasant emerged hastily to attend to his duties.

"Hark! I hear the child cry," remarked Genevieve as she abruptly arose to quit the apartment, and to attend to her babe.

"Go, my wife, and bring it, hither," interrupted the Guide, "I will take it into the fields with me—The air is pure outside—"

"And I," interrupted the stranger, "will be pleased to see it."

"I will go and bring it," replied Genevieve, "only I must dress it."

"Dress it," smilingly replied Jean; "ever the way with mothers! To show you her babe, she must exhibit its clothing. Yes," he continued to the stranger, "it is a weakness mothers have who admire their offspring;" then added in a low tone to Genevieve, "put on its new clothes and pretty little cap."

"Be at your ease," confidentially responded the young wife as she hurriedly left the apartment.

"Ah! my comrade," observed the Guide, a moment after the departure of Genevieve, "you appear to be very sad."

"No," replied the unknown; "I was thinking how surprising it is that, in this country, you could have found a woman like your wife; Genevieve—"

"Has an education;" interrupted the delighted husband. "You are not the first, who have been thus astonished, and I will explain the reason. I was very young when an avalanche caused a terrible catastrophe in this region. Two days after this calamity, my mother, Marianne Thibaut, returned to the house in the evening, bringing a female child which she had found in the snow. It was cold as an icicle, but its little heart beat, and my mother soon succeeded in restoring it to warmth. We could see from its little embroidered shoes, and the necklace of pearls that it was an Italian. Well, both father and mother were dead, and we never heard of them afterwards. My mother searched everywhere, showing the pearl necklace; one day she said to me, 'the little one belongs to rich people, and not people of evil and misery like us, for a jeweler of Chambéry tells me that the necklace is well worth a hundred pistoles. I have sold it to him, as it is necessary that Genevieve—(we called her Genevieve)—shall be well brought up and not suffer from having been accidentally thrown among poor people. This money will serve to clothe her and educate her, and as to daily bread she will divide with us while the Good Deity gives it us.' Then my mother paid the pastor of the hamlet to teach Genevieve to read the Bible, and I became a wagoner, walking from town to town to gain sufficient money to last us during the winter. After I had made a good many journeys Genevieve had become both learned and beautiful, and my mother said to me, 'Jean Claude, Genevieve is now seventeen years of age, and our family needs a protector. You, my son, have labored hard, and let us now expend our earnings upon four acres of ground, and through Heaven's mercy we will never be forced to leave it.' From that hour I remained with them and we have been happy until about three years ago, when our poor mother died and went the way of all good souls."

"Then you lost your benefactor," remarked the stranger.

"And I mourn her loss deeply," resumed the Guide, "for the world is ever unjust. Soon was I forced to say to Genevieve, 'you know we are not brother and sister, and there are scandalous tongues—the good mother is no longer with us, and for the sake of your honor, we must needs separate; you, Genevieve, keep the cottage—as for me, I will make a fortune in some distant spot.' Genevieve commenced weeping, and I found it impossible to leave her. Then we found a means to silence scandalous tongues, and when two days after the curate of Saint Martain married us, something in my heart told me that Genevieve was not created for one so poor as I am."

"It seems, on the contrary," interposed the stranger, "that your marriage had been decreed in advance."

"I know not!" resumed the Guide. "The first year of our union the blessing of heaven descended upon us. Heaven has given us a little girl an angel like her mother. Still, for two years back we have had but little prosperity."

"How comes that?" inquired the unknown.

"At first the child was ill," rejoined Jean Claude, "and during the past year hail destroyed our crops. Luckily we had some savings—but this year the Austrians, in passing through this place, have done more damage than all the storms. Our savings have been exhausted to the last penny. There is no means of selling our bit of land, for the war has driven away all purchasers. And now behold us forced to seek for work in large cities, which grieves me, as Genevieve never served anybody. Now since our daughter has recovered sufficiently to travel with us, nothing remains but to depart upon our pilgrimage—"

"But to undertake your journey," interrupted the stranger, "you will have need of money—and—"

"I have enough," replied Jean. "Yes, when we were in prosperity I purchased two golden medallions, because, you see, necessity often compels me to be absent to sell our hemp—and then we had a mutual souvenir to console us in our absence. This may appear to you strange, but we have such ideas in this country, where we love one another so dearly."

"And I," interrupted the unknown, "ever wear mementos of my wife and son."

"Then we can understand each other," remarked Jean in continuation, "this morning I was at the Grand Bourg to exchange my gold for pewter, as you see, but the souvenir is not changed. Mine contains the hair and writing of Genevieve. In hers there is my hair, but not my writing for the reason—Hush! here comes Genevieve, do not speak to her of our journey, it renders her so sad."

"Have I kept you long waiting?" inquired the young wife as she entered and presented to him his angelic babe.

"You have been long enough to dress yourself for a wedding," laughingly ejaculated the Guide.

"What a lovely babe!" instinctively spoke the stranger.

"And if you knew how cunning it is!" affectionately quoth the

husband; "and now to the fields, where the little one can play until evening."

The Savoyard tenderly shouldered his child, and gaily danced it in the air.

"What are you to do in the fields?" inquired the stranger.

"To dig out the ditches the Austrians have filled up," responded the Guide.

"Shall I lend you a helping hand," interposed the unknown.

"Willingly, my friend," replied Jean Claude.

"Au revoir, Dame Genevieve," kindly said the stranger.

"Are you happy and content?" quoth the Guide to the child in his arms, "my little Jane, that your father carries you into the fields, as he gaily sings:

"' Youp ! youp ! laliretto !
Youp ! youp ! lalirou !"

Come, comrade—now to the green heather."

"Take care and do not stumble over the stones," quoth Genevieve affectionately, as the Guide and his guest departed.

"No danger," gaily responded Jean, renewing his mountain song as he led the way to the broken ditches.

CHAPTER II.

A LESSON IN MYSTERY.

"Poor Jean," soliloquized Genevieve, after her husband had left her to commence his daily labor; "how happy is he with his treasure in his arms! and yet we are poor—true the riches of the heart dispel not misery, and we are soon to commence our journey. Well, we must not grieve, for it is God's pleasure! let us hasten to arrange everything for a departure."

While Genevieve set about clearing away the breakfast things, and in arranging the apartment with neatness,

"Pardon, Madam," quoth a stranger, who unexpectedly entered the cottage, "but am I far from Saint Martin?"

"Two leagues," affably returned the young wife.

"Still two leagues," muttered the traveller.

"Are you fatigued?" anxiously inquired Genevieve.

"I have walked for over three hours," replied the stranger, who, from his dress and manners, appeared a man of good social standing. "I have come from the Grand Bourg, and have yet to go to Saint Martin."

"Then allow me to advise you to rest awhile," quoth the young wife, with an air of solicitude; "the house of Jean Claude is situated nearly half way."

"This, then, is the place," murmured the traveller to himself; and

speaking more loudly, he continued: "I willingly avail myself of your hospitality."

"And if you would say a prayer to the saint," resumed Genevieve, pointing to the chaplet hanging against the wall, "that chaplet is made of fragments from the grey rock."

The traveller seated himself and continued the conversation.

"Is this, then, the grey rock, so celebrated throughout Savoy?"

"The rock of Saint Therese," replied the Guide's wife.

"I know nothing of its history," frankly answered the stranger.

"Truly!" exclaimed Genevieve, with unaffected astonishment.

"It is stated that during the religious war, when slaughter and famine desolated this country, Saint Therese descended from heaven to bestow bread upon the little children. The grey rock on which she reposed, sank beneath her to such a degree that even now can be seen the impression of her feet and of the folds of her long white robe."

"And the beads of this chaplet," quoth the traveller, going up to it and examining it seriously, "are of this rock?"

"It is not to be doubted," replied Genevieve, "for the chaplet was given by a monk of Saint Bernard to the mother of my husband."

"To the mother of Jean Claude?" inquired the stranger.

"Then you know his name?" remarked the wife of Claude.

"I know yours likewise," resumed the stranger.

"I am named Genevieve," frankly replied the young wife.

"Genevieve is the name given to you by the mother Marianne," returned the traveller complacently, "but it is not that which you you received from your father and mother."

"And you know the names of my parents?" anxiously inquired the young mother.

"Your father," commenced the stranger, "Emanuel Loredan, marquis of Ferrars, and your mother, were swallowed up, with you and two domestics, by a terrible avalanche. You alone, a small child, was saved by Dame Marianne, who found you by the roadside. At twenty years, you married the son of Dame Thibaut, who died a little while previously."

"And how know you this?" inquired Genevieve.

"I know it from your uncle, Antonio Loredan," replied the traveller. "He discovered a pearl necklace, with a Jew of Ferrara, who had purchased it from a jeweller of Chambéry. He recognized the necklace as the one he placed around your neck at the time of your baptism, and had the jeweller questioned, who revealed what Jean Claude had told him; and thus was convinced of the existence of his niece."

"My uncle!" exclaimed Genevieve, in astonishment.

"Although ill, and well advanced in years," returned the stranger, "he desired to traverse Italy to seek after you in Savoy, but his expectation was deceived. Forced to stop at Milan, he died, leaving a will of which I have an exact copy, which I will read to you—"

"Is this aught but a dream?" murmured Genevieve.

The Italian took from his pocket a document, which he perused as follows:

"I constitute as my sole heir, my niece and god-daughter, Maria Loredan, of whose existence I am recently apprised, upon the express condition, however, that she will inhabit my palace of Ferrara and resume the names and titles of her ancestors, after having annulled her marriage with Jean Claude Thibaut, the Alpine Guide——"

"Never!" emphatically exclaimed the young wife.

"If, contrary to these provisions, Marie Loredan refuses to fulfill these expressed conditions, the estate will revert entire, at the end of a year and a day, to the monks of the Convent of the Barnabites of la Concordia, where I desire to be buried. Signed at Milan, this twentieth of April, one thousand seven hundred and ninety five, by me, Antonio Loredan, Count d'Este and Provveditor of Venice."

"Still all that is but a test, an invention, a mockery," responded Genevieve, at a loss to realize the truth of the document.

"If this were not the truth," remarked the stranger, "think you I would have journeyed so far out of my way to communicate with you. Should you desire positive proof, you have but to follow me, without confiding your secret to Jean Claude; in four days, we will reach Venice, where you will be received by a family expecting your arrival impatiently, and who fears seeing the palaces of the Loredans become the property of monks. There, you will find all proofs, incontestably clear; you will obtain the annulment of your marriage, by you contracted in ignorance of your birth—and instead of being poor in the Savoy, you will be rich in Venice."

"And my husband?" inquired Genevieve, "my daughter?"

"We will secretly carry the child away with us," responded the stranger, "for there is nothing in the will against it. As to your husband the terms of the will are express."

"I have listened to you, Sir, calmly," proudly returned Genevieve, "and I do not find myself insulted for I am not the woman, in search of whom you are. Maria Loredan has perished amid the snows; I am Genevieve, who never had other family, save that of the Dame Marianne, who adopted me in my helplessness, and of Jean Thibaut, whom I love and who is the father of my child. To enjoy the rights of Maria Loredan, I would have to abandon my husband; but if I am Maria Loredan, I can unconditionally enjoy the heritage of my father."

"Your father," continued the stranger, "dissipated his fortune in a passion for traveling; your uncle, who has husbanded his, died thrice a millionaire—and you know at what price you can obtain possession of this immense fortune."

"And if I refuse," remonstrated Genevieve.

"It will enrich the monks of La Concordia," replied the Italian.

"Then let the monks," continue the young wife, "erect a tomb of marble and fine gold to him who has so greatly enriched them."

"Still—" interrupted the Venetian.

"You will say to my relative in Venice," resolutely resumed the

wife of Jean Claude, "that Genevieve has refused to quit the cottage where she has lost her second mother, where her brother had cherished her, and where her husband daily blesses her."

"I conceive but one thing," returned the stranger, "affection renders you indeed blind."

"Say, rather it enlightens me," responded Genevieve.

"I will not insist longer in advising you," replied the stranger, pacing the apartment, and returning to the young woman, he continued: "I will return when you have deeply reflected."

"Oh, no!" remonstrated Genevieve, "my husband may encounter you. For Heaven's sake remain here no longer; avoid his sight—he may know you—he may have a suspicion."

"He knows me not," returned the Italian, "I assure you, I have only an inclination to converse with you in private."

"And I," resumed the Guide's wife, "have no desire to see you."

"That will not answer my purpose," murmured the Venetian, as he gazed upon the pensive Genevieve. "By accidentally, as it were, leaving my valise, I will have a legitimate excuse for my return." Then he continued in a loud voice.

"I am about to continue my journey. You have nothing to say to me, Madame."

"I have only," returned the young wife, "to inquire who you are?"

"A Venetian Nobleman," was the response.

"What interest has guided you in this mission?" inquired the afflicted wife.

"No personal interest whatever," responded the stranger; "I love adventures, and I have believed it my duty to inform Genevieve Thibaut that she can resuscitate a noble heritage."

"Genevieve has not the power of doing so," returned the wife of the Guide; "a clause in the will precludes her doing so."

"You will be a better judge ere long," retorted the traveler, as he emerged from the cottage.

"Is this not a dream?" soliloquised Genevieve, as she meditated upon the strange relation which had been made to her. "Yes, Dame Marianne has often told me that my family was rich, and of Italian parentage. And what have they offered to me? Does a mother await me? Is it a father who calls me? No! it is gold in exchange for my affection, gold in exchange for the existence of my husband—for if Jean, returning here some day, were to find the cradle empty, and the house vacant, he would lose his reason, he would emerge hence and go forth, shouting for us, until he would fall down, worn out by fatigue, or dead from grief. But no, my good Jean Claude, the weeping Genevieve loves thee too deeply from the bottom of her heart."

"Genevieve," quoth Jean, in a suppressed tone of voice as he entered bearing the child in his arms, "the child is fast asleep, now put her to bed tranquilly."

"Yes," murmured the young wife.

"As for me," rejoined the Guide, "I have come for the two pick

axes with which we will finish our work. But what ails thee, Genevieve? you have been weeping?"

"No," replied Genevieve, taking the child into her arms.

"No," ejaculated the Guide, "I can notice it myself, what has caused you this trouble?"

"Nothing," replied Genevieve, "I assure you nothing."

"But," said Jean Claude looking around him, "what is this?" he continued as he stumbled over the valise.

"A valise," said Genevieve, in astonishment, "forgotten by a stranger, who rested himself here awhile."

"What is that written upon this?" inquired the Guide, pointing to a brass plate attached to the valise.

"Luidgi of Venice," read the obedient wife.

"Luidgi of Venice," repeated the Savoyard, "has he told thee aught which has given you pain?"

"In no wise," replied Genevieve, "while he rested, I showed him the chaplet of the grey rock. He was ignorant of its history, which I related to him."

"Is that all?" anxiously inquired the Guide.

"That is all, my friend," returned Genevieve, "I will go and put our little Jane to bed."

"Go, Genevieve, go, for sleep will do her good," replied Jean, as his wife glided noiselessly out of the apartment with the sleeping child tenderly embraced within her arms.

CHAPTER III.

THE WAGES OF COURAGE.

JEAN CLAUDE placed the valise upon the table, and fell into a deep meditation upon the cause of the untoward incident he had noticed. Vainly could his gentle wife deny the fact of her sorrow; the traces of grief were too palpable to be concealed. Poor Jean heaved a deep sigh; greatly as he admired the resignation of his wife, his heart was embittered to think that she should pine in solitude and tears when he was absent from her. The mystery of her grief surpassed his comprehension.

"Well, my friend, I'm waiting for you," quoth the stranger, who had accepted the morning's hospitality—now entering the room.

"Oh!" responded Jean, earnestly, "I beg your pardon, comrade upon entering here I found my wife had been crying, which, as you may say, riveted me to the spot."

"And why was she crying?" kindly inquired his guest.

"She would not tell me," replied Jean, "but I know what it is. She was weeping because it grieves her that we must so soon start upon our journey after work."

"But tell me," interposed the stranger, with unostentatious kind-

ness, how much money will it require for you to remain here until next summer?"

"A sufficiently large sum," returned Jean; "in this country the cold lasts a length of time and wood is dear, hence at the commencement of the winter we had forty crowns surplus, and to-day I had to sell my gold medallions to celebrate the day of St. Therese—there is no help for it, we must make that sum before the close of the summer. Well, I must get the jackasses, and then we will go again to work."

As the industrious peasant glided out of the room, in search of the implements, the military stranger feeling in his pockets, drew forth some golden coins, which, after some hesitation, he slipped into the drawer of a table he noticed standing at the further end of the apartment.

"Forty crowns," he soliloquized, "will afford these poor people a deal of happiness. I do not know of any better use to which I can put this prize money. And who knows, but that this may again return to the enemy, whence it has been taken?"

"Come, comrade," quoth the Savoyard returning with a couple of pick-axes upon his shoulder, "take this one. Come, I will now show you the rocky mountain which you must turn to find the route to Suze." Opening the door he continued to the guest who had now shouldered one of the implements, "do you see that bunch of stunted trees beneath the heavy cloud?"

"Yes, I perceive them," responded his companion.

"Come, the other landmarks can only be seen from the broad meadow land," resumed the Guide, as they both passed the door.

No sooner had Jean Claude and his companion departed for the meadows than the Italian nobleman retraced his steps to continue his interview with Genevieve. Luidgi had encountered more obstacles in his mission than he had calculated upon. The obstinacy of the young wife, her affectionate adherence to her marital duties, her determined self-sacrifice not only annoyed, but absolutely disconcerted him. However he thought, upon mature reflection, that her reason might be convinced if it was impossible to excite her cupidity, and therefore he resolved upon again offering further temptations to the unhappy woman. The emissary possessed a strong personal inducement to ensure the return of Genevieve to her relatives. A banished outlaw, an exile from Venice, he had been promised by her influential family, a revocation of his banishment, were he to succeed in his attempted restoration of the girl: and this consideration of his individual advantages stimulated a renewal of his project, after her first and decisive refusal to accompany him.

While engaged in his meditations, he was disturbed by the heavy fall of rain. Going to the door he perceived two men running at full speed to gain shelter beneath the roof. Trembling to be seen to emerge from the *chalet*, and dreading to encounter the husband of Genevieve, the Italian determined upon hiding himself in one of the adjoining apartments, until the cessation of the storm would again

allow him to seek a conversation with Genevieve, after the departure of her husband.

The Venetian had scarce acted upon the suggestion of his naturally ingenious mind when the Guide and his guest entered the cottage tolerably drenched by the passing storm.

"What weather!" exclaimed the hardy Savoyard.

"Hail, rain and tempest," quoth the stranger.

"The rain enters even here, let's shut the door," responded Jean Claude, closing the only outlet to the building, which precluded any possibility of retreat for the Italian.

"It won't last long, for I saw the blue sky by the side of the vine yards," remarked the Guide, "besides it will give us time to rest ourselves—so take a seat, comrade."

The guest readily acquiesced in his wishes.

"Well, now what shall we do?" resumed Jean; "by the way, you know how to read?"

"Yes, but what then?" returned the guest.

"Read to me again about the French victory," replied the Guide.

"Willingly, what have you done with the bulletin?" inquired the stranger.

"I'm hunting after it," remarked Jean, turning over the valise upon the table—"hold, this Italian Luidgi has not come back. Don't lose your patience while I look for the paper."

"But why do you love the French?" inquired the stranger.

"Because," replied the Guide, continuing his search, "I am French—my parents came from Chambéry, but I was born at Saint Genis; beyond the Rhine—I am Swiss; still I come from the right side—the French side. Where can Genevieve have put that paper? Perhaps in this drawer. What's this?" he continued, as he opened the drawer and perceived money in it—"how came this money here?"

"The discovery is premature," thought the stranger.

"What can this mean?" resumed Jean, greatly perplexed. "The traveller who was here in our absence, has probably entrusted Genevieve with this money. She said nothing to me about it, and I will go question her about it."

"No! that is useless," replied his guest.

"Still——" urged Jean, pacing towards her chamber.

"I know where the money came from," resumed the stranger, "for it was I who put it in your drawer."

"You!" exclaimed the Savoyard, with evident perplexity.

"Yes, my friend," rejoined the unknown; "still I hoped you would not discover it till after my departure, when you could have disposed of it without regret. As for me, I am a soldier, and in my trade you know victory pays when the cannon regulates our accounts. Thus I had money—which you had need of, when I had none—that explains everything."

"Your actions betray an excellent heart," quoth the Guide, moved at the generosity of his guest, "they are worthy of a soldier—still I must frankly tell you that I cannot accept your money."

"And why not?" earnestly inquired the stranger.

"Neither would Genevieve accept it," continued Jean, "for we have done nothing to earn it."

"But yesterday, you saved my life," rejoined the stranger; "without you——"

"Oh!" interrupted the Guide, bluntly, "those things are nothing in our mountains. He who is set aright in his road, says thankee, and he who has befriended him trusts to a return of the good on some future occasion; both shake hands, and the matter is ended. Therefore I pray you to take back your money——"

"And should I furnish you an opportunity to earn the amount?" interposed the soldier.

"Ah! that would be a different matter," replied the Guide, dubiously—"but how?"

"At first," continued the guest, "it is necessary to know my name."

"Certainly, if we make a bargain," responded Jean.

"Then know, that I am General Roger," said the unknown, confidentially.

"You!" ejaculated Jean, with an outburst of incredulity.

"Then," resumed the general, taking no notice of the Guide's surprise, "if you must know the reason of my disguise. The general-in-chief is ignorant of the enemy menacing his outposts, and as the route to Suze is closed, the intelligence can only reach him by the paths over Mount Cenis."

"The Austrians are in possession of them," replied Jean.

"Yes," resumed the gallant Roger, "but as a detachment could not penetrate thither, I thought a single man might be able to pass along unperceived."

"I understand," interposed Jean Claude.

"It was in attempting to carry out my scheme yesterday," said the general, "that I lost my way; and I am afraid of going astray again. Consent to guide me, and soon General Bonaparte, warned that the enemy seeks to surround him by means of the route of Sule, instead of exposing himself to a dubious conflict, will retire to the plain for a pitched battle."

"It is perfectly correct," responded the Guide, mechanically.

"And when," continued the general emphatically, "you have aided in avoiding a useless and perilous combat, in which thousands of men would perish, think you not that you have honestly earned your forty crowns?"

"Then," enthusiastically replied Jean Claude, "I would have no longer a fear of their bringing misfortune upon us."

"No traveling for your wife," continued Roger, "no more danger for the health of your little one."

"We will start," solemnly said the Guide. "The sun is already down; in an hour the road will be in good order. Do you swim?"

"Yes," replied the gallant officer.

"Then we will cross a little stream," rejoined the Guide, "and thus save two good hours upon the march."

"And you trust that by to-morrow—?" inquired Roger.

"We will have gained the bridge St. George," replied Jean firmly. "whence can be seen the French camp."

"And may God be with us!" piously ejaculated the general.

"Poor Genevieve will await me all night long!" murmured the Guide, as he thought of the kind woman's affection.

"Come, we will notify her," rejoined the general, moving towards the stair-way leading to her chamber.

"No," quoth Jean, stopping him, gently, "in witnessing her tremble for my safety, I would lose all courage. She must be ignorant of my journey, and I will soon return and my presence will quickly dispel her inquietude. Let each of us take a staff and forward."

"March then," quoth the general gaily.

"Oh! Great God!" suddenly ejaculated the Guide halting in front of the domestic shrine erected to St. Therese.

"What ails you?" tenderly inquired the soldier.

"Should I never return—" murmured Jean, despondently.

"You are afraid!" exclaimed the general.

"No! general," replied Jean in a tone of decision, "it is my duty—I should strive to gain repose for Genevieve, let us start," then stopping near the door he paused. "Still I think—"

"Of what, friend?" inquired the soldier.

"We will take with us the chaplet of grey rock," replied the Guide as he took the relic from the wall and hung it around his neck. "It will protect us against the evil spirits of the mountain. And now to our work!"

The Alpine Guide and his brave companion crossed the threshold of the cottage and soon disappeared among the shades of the night, falling fast upon the bleak snow-covered side of the tall mountain, at whose base the little hamlet was situated.

The Venetian noble from his hiding place became an involuntary confidant of the general's schemes. In order to perfect the designations of the persons, the spy crept out to take a complete view of the departing individuals. He particularly noted that Claude was clothed in a grey over coat, while his superior companion wore a cape and piedmontese hat. These particulars he treasured in his memory in order to communicate their appearance and intentions more fully and especially to the Austrian videttes, who might therefore capture them with greater certainty. He was well aware that the Austrians spared no prisoners and therefore was assured that should they fall into the enemies hands both would be massacred and thus the marriage of Genevieve would be annulled. But before arriving at the final resolution of their betrayal, he determined upon consulting with Genevieve in the hope that her sober second thoughts would spare him such an alternative. While he was cogitating upon these subjects, Genevieve descended the stair way with a lamp in her hand, as the shades of evening had by this time enveloped the cottage in complete darkness. She placed the lamp on the table and commenced knitting as the memory of Jean recurred to her mind.

aggrated the suspense and anxiety in which she was placed. A sudden noise revealed to her the presence of the Italian traveller.

"I have come, Madam," said Luidgi, "to seek after a valise, which I have forgotten here."

"There it is, sir," responded Genevieve pointing to it.

"Thanks, madam," replied the Italian, "I trust that your resolution."

"Is irrevocable, sir," firmly responded the Dame.

"You have not then reflected," continued the stranger, "that your high lineage requires irremedial exigencies?"

"And do you, sir, not believe that the ties of consanguinity like wise boast theirs?" retorted Genevieve.

"Are you ignorant," continued the Venetian, "that you have no right to renounce a fortune for which you have to render account to your innocent daughter?"

"Have I not moreover to render account to her for the existence of her father?" inquired the wife of Jean.

"Then," reiterated the Italian, "do you formally refuse to separate from Jean Claude?"

"I will never separate myself," replied the young wife, calmly, "from him, even if he should command the sacrifice."

"This is no longer affection," murmured the Venetian, "it is sheer madness. Madame, I withdraw—"

The face of Genevieve expressed her joy.

Still the Italian internally vowed that despite herself she should become both rich and the Marchioness of Ferrara. Halting near the door he added: "May Heaven grant you repentance."

"Heaven is just!" exclaimed Genevieve, exaltedly.

"It will be done!" solemnly said the Italian as he gained the threshold where tarrying an instant he saluted Genevieve respectfully and retired into the darkness without.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GUIDE'S RETURN.

IN a little cottage, close beneath the eaves of the village church of Saint Martin, fifteen days after the events we have described sat the disconsolate Petit Pierre, toiling away upon one of those contrivances he was wont to hew for the accommodation of the human foot.

Upon this occasion Pierre's mechanical skill was evidently at fault, for the result of his labor gave little satisfaction.

"Come," he soliloquized, as he gazed upon his *sabot*, in course of construction, "that is cut down too much," then, taking up a pair for the sake of comparison, he continued: "I have made both for the same foot—there is that clock again, it only wants that bell to put me into an infamous humor."

As the bell rang forth its peal the mechanic dashed the incomplete sabots violently in the corner and resumed his meditations even more pensive than before.

"That bell torments me now, as greatly as it once gave me pleasure," he continued in soliloquy. "It recalls to me the sayings of Jean Claude, who used to tell me, when the wind is fair, the sound of the bell would reach the house as if to say to Genevieve and me, here is Petit Pierre sending us news. Poor Jean Claude, he is no longer at the cottage to hear the sound! And since he has gone I have lost eating, drinking, sleep and labor—everything gone. I have given my place to another. And Madame Genevieve is going too. The little house of Jean Claude has no more attractions for me, for her rich relatives are there waiting for her. Poor friend, how happy I was to carry her garlands and flowers to the field, but now her rich relatives have brought her trinkets of jewels and of gold, and it appears to me that when I take some flowers they wither in my hand and die."

"Are you the man they call Petit Pierre?" interrupted the Italian, whom we have heretofore encountered.

"Yes," replied the wooden shoemaker, "still there are other people in the country who have the same name."

"I come on behalf of Madame Thibaut," resumed the Venetian.

"That's me, then!" joyfully replied Pierre, "for I was the tried friend of her husband—it must be me."

"Yes," returned the Italian, "Madame Thibaut informed me that you dearly loved the unfortunate Jean Claude."

"As if he were my best beloved brother," returned the bell-ringer.

"He is now unfortunately dead," rejoined Luidgi.

"Shot by the Austrians!" replied Petit Pierre.

"He paid dearly," resumed the Venetian, "for his imprudence."

"It was not imprudence, but courage," returned Pierre. "He exposed himself to earn bread for his family. Had he been able to have given his family millions upon his death, he would have prayed the Austrians to have taken his life. You said, sir, you came on behalf of Madame Genevieve?"

"Yes, my friend," replied the Italian, "as she is coming to hear mass at Saint Martin she begged me to charge Pierre to have two candles in the church, one at the shrine of Saint Mary, the other in that of St. John."

"Yes, for Jean Claude," warmly returned the bell-ringer, "the other for Marianne; you say she will be here at mass?"

"She desires," resumed Luidgi, "before leaving the Savoy that her child should be blessed by the curate of Saint Martin, who administered to her the rites of baptism."

"The baptism!" ejaculated Petit Pierre, "that indeed was a joyous day for us—I was the godfather. I purchased a new suit at the fair of Saint Pons, and a capful of sugar-plums. We could not foresee at that time—but excuse me, sir, I hasten to complete the mission of Genevieve."

While the mechanic was absent, the Italian paced the floor in a state of nervousness, as he meditated upon the success of his schemes.

"Eight days ago," he soliloquized semi-audibly, "the cousin of Maria Loredan, faithful to his promises, has brought me a revocation of my order of exile, and I, who burn to return to Venice, I must follow to Milan, the heiress of the Loredans. Thus circumstances change resolutions. I remarked to-day that Maria Loredan must contract a new marriage to forget the name of Jean Thibaut; I am the Count d'Arezzo—I am still young; I and her relatives are alone aware of the will of the Count d'Este, and the past history of Genevieve, beside I am almost one of the family. A few months have scarce elapsed, since, ruined at gaming, and exiled from Venice, I would have yielded in despair. To-day I dream of realizing a fortune! Crazy indeed not to foresee and mould his fortune, a man is but a grain of sand, and chance is the unforeseen wind which carries us along."

"The candles are burning on the altar, and the curate awaits to perform mass," announced Petit Pierre reappearing.

"Good, my dear fellow," returned Arezzo, "Madame Genevieve must be near by, I must precede her—so console yourself."

"That is impossible," quoth Pierre.

"Time will come to your aid," resumed the Venetian.

"So every one says," tranquilly remarked the bell-ringer.

"I should go to the mass," meditated the Savoyard after the departure of the Italian, "but I have no courage to gaze upon poor Genevieve in her black garments. No, I will go to the pond and try my shrimping net; it will kill time somehow."

As Petit Pierre took down his piscatorial implements, he heard the voice of Jean Claude on the outside summoning him by name, distinctly and repeatedly.

"Holy Virgin!" ejaculated the terrified bell-ringer, "I hear a voice—am I haunted by evil spirits?"

"There is some one at home," murmured the Alpine Guide, as he entered the cottage. Then noticing Pierre he saluted him:

"Ho! have you grown deaf during the past month, ho! Pierrot?"

"Jean Claude!" ejaculated Pierre. "Is that you?"

"It is me!" responded the Guide.

"Then the Austrians have not killed you?" inquired Pierre.

"Not quite," responded Jean, "they thought they did and I too."

"What! not dead!" again exclaimed the astounded Pierre.

"Why no!" replied the Guide, "here I am solid flesh and blood."

"Hurrah! my old Jean Claude," shouted Pierre, tossing his cap into the air and then rushing into the arms of his friend.

"Now tell me, how is everybody—Genevieve—my child?" inquired Jean, as the enthusiasm of Pierre subsided.

"Genevieve," Pierre replied in hesitation.

"Well?" nervously reiterated the Guide.

"Fifteen days ago, the poor woman assumed mourning for you," responded Petit Pierre agitatedly.

"Poor Genevieve!" muttered her husband, "how she must have suffered!"

"I thought she would have died," continued Pierre, "had it not been for the sake of her darling daughter."

"I was well assured," returned the Guide, "that here you would grieve for poor Jean Claude."

"And we found your coat, pierced with fifteen balls," quoth Pierre.

"Alas, my friend," mournfully responded the Guide, as a tear dropped from his eye, "I loaned it to general Roger who had lost his in the briars of the ravine, and he wore it when upon nearing the valley we were captured by the Austrians. We had been betrayed, Pierre, some one had given particulars concerning us as they admitted."

"Who could it have been?" murmured Pierre.

"I have no doubt," resumed Jean, "but that the spy was concealed in my house."

"That may be possible," replied Pierre, meditatingly, "for upon the night of your departure, as I arrived at your house——"

"Well?" nervously interrupted the Guide.

"I observed a stranger come out," returned the bell-ringer, "and Genevieve told me that it was a Venitian who had returned to seek after——"

"A valise he had forgotten!" ejaculated Jean Claude.

"Precisely," returned Pierre.

"It was he then!" savagely spoke forth the Guide, the blackness of of this treachery in violating the sanctity of Alpine hospitality recurring forcibly to his mind, "this wretch! and you would know him again. Well, the Austrians commenced an assault, and after having trampled us into the dust, they allowed us but five minutes to pray to God. The general asked as a favor of the Austrian chief to tell him whether we were betrayed by a Frenchman—the chief answered us it was by a Venitian——"

"It was that fellow!" firmly reiterated Pierre.

"A smile of consolation," continued the Guide, "reanimated the veteran's face; the general gave the command himself, and he fell to the earth dying like a brave man as he was."

"And you saw all," marvelled Pierre, "you, Jean Claude?"

"Yes, Pierre," resumed the Guide, "while awaiting my turn; whilst I was praying, I heard a great cry and confusion above my head."

"What was that?" inquired the tremulous Pierre.

"Oh! Heavens!" replied Claude in tones of grateful thanksgiving, "it was the French, alarmed by the noise of the fusillade."

"Ah! ah! ah!" shouted Pierre in triumphant excitement.

"Oh, my friend," continued the Guide graphically, "had you only seen them—they fell upon the Austrians like an avalanche. You would have said that the mountain was on fire—it sounded deeper even than thunder—it was more beautiful than the tempest—when suddenly I could neither see nor hear anything. Some days after I

found myself in the French camp where they had carried me; a surgeon extracted from my wound a ball penetrating to my heart, and they told me that the brave General Bonaparte could not restrain a tear when he learned of the massacre of gallant general Roger."

"And what became of the Venitian traitor?" inquired Pierre.

"They are searching for him even now," replied the Guide, "I told them truly that I had seen the name of Luidgi upon the valise, but this appears to be but a baptismal name. At the end of fifteen days I was cured: I had regained my strength when a great man of the army, whom they called Massena, asked me whether I would not continue in the wars, but I thought of Genevieve, of my child, of you, Pierre, and I started for home. For two days I ran the entire distance; I had just turned the border of the great lake, when I heard the bell of Saint Martin; then I said to myself, there is little Pierre calling me, and instead of following my straight road, I turned off into the cross roads, and here I am. Now that I have seen you, embraced you—I must hurry to console Genevieve and nurse the baby in my arms, while they weep or laugh at seeing me safe and sound."

"Stop," interrupted Petit Pierre, as the Guide was about hurriedly to quit the habitation, "first you must know something."

"Well, what is it?" inquired Jean, returning to his companion.

"I must tell you," resumed the bell-ringer, "or rather you know that when the dead come to life they will see great changes. There have been wonderful things here since you have gone."

"What are they?" inquired the Guide, with a presentiment of evil.

"Then listen to me with all your ears," continued the peasant.

"I am listening," said Jean Claude, nervously.

"Then you know," stammered forth Pierre, "or rather, you don't know, that Genevieve has been discovered by her family."

"Can that be so?" murmured the perplexed Savoyard.

"Yes, my friend," proceeded the mechanic, "her father and mother were Italian nobles, dead long ago, but an uncle remained to her, who found the pearl necklace of her infancy—and the jeweller at Chambéry, whom they questioned, told them all——"

"And then?" inquired the Guide in breathless.

"The uncle, who had no children, died last month, and left all his property to Genevieve."

"Can it be true?" musingly muttered Jean Claude.

"And they say," stammered forth the bell-ringer, "that she is the richest lady in Ferrara—a countess or a marchioness——"

"A marchioness!" exclaimed the astounded Guide.

"Still there is a condition," hesitating proceeded Pierre, "a condition attached to the will, that——"

"She leaves me—me, Jean Claude?" anxiously interposed the Guide.

"How know you that?" inquired the astounded bell-ringer.

"Heaven told me that in advance," responded the disconsolate Jean throwing himself upon a rude bench. "Yes, ever since Genevieve has been my wife, I have a presentiment of some misfortune like this. And Genevieve knows all this?"

"She knew it well before your departure," replied Petit Pierre.

"How was that?" inquired Jean Claude.

"Yes," rejoined the bell-ringer, "they came while you were from home; they brought her the will; they advised her to leave; still Genevieve had but one answer:—'I am,' she said, 'the adopted daughter of Dame Marianne, and the wife of Jean Claude; without him I would perish in a palace—with him I could live in a humble cottage; his affection is my wealth, and I will not barter happiness for gold—go therefore and return no more.'"

"And thus spoke she?" enthusiastically exclaimed the Guide.

"But they persisted in coming back," continued Pierre, "and Genevieve begged us to go hide ourselves until your return. But you came not, and when we found the fragments of your coat in the valley and they told us the general and Jean, his Guide, had been shot—the cousins of Genevieve brought the news—they came again to carry her hence."

"And still they came," murmured the disconsolate husband.

"Yes," proceeded Pierre in his narration, "because death dissolves all marriages. They found the poor woman pale and ill; but these people, who have their carriages, soon sent for a physician from Chambéry, who has restored her to health. Yes, Jean Claude, these are the wonderful things which have happened since your departure. But God be praised! Jean Claude still lives, and Genevieve will resume her distaff; remain with us, send away the rich relatives and the great legacy. We will talk no further on the subject."

The Guide was lost in deep meditation, and apparently turned a deaf ear to the consolations of his kind and honest friend.

"I wished," resumed the bell-ringer, advancing kindly to his silent comrade, "that you should know everything before reaching the cottage, and now if you wish it, I will accompany you—yes, let us go forth together—come, let us go, I say——"

"Pierre!" said Jean Claude, recovering his former resolution, as he arose and extended his hand to his faithful companion, "farewell, Pierre, farewell forever!"

"Where are you going?" inquired the peasant warmly.

"To rejoin the army; to mingle again amid the roaring cannon—farewell!"

"Jean Claude!" exclaimed Pierre, attempting to restrain him.

"Now do you not see," quoth the Guide, his speech growing more and more animated as he continued, "that I am one too many in the world? Can I reappear unto Genevieve? Can I deprive her of a fortune and perchance of life, to reduce her to poverty and labor, which will now cause her death——"

"Still!" vainly interposed the bell-ringer.

"And were that wound," continued Jean in a melancholic strain, "which I have received, to open again; were I unable to toil with my arms—would I then behold Genevieve, a discarded heiress, scrape the ground to nourish me?"

"But the fact is, that you are thoroughly cured," added Pierre, by way of explanation.

"I am not sure of it," responded the Guide. "The snow and hail, the storms of heaven, may again be a scourge to us. And think you that to-day, after Genevieve has seen a fortune disappear before her, I could say to her: 'Come, wife, put the child upon your back, the times are hard, but the world is large; come, let us find some means of gaining a morsel of bread.'—No? that would be impossible, Pierre—in returning to my mother's house, I will experience nothing but cold and hunger, misery and pain——"

"And who told you that riches will bring happiness to Genevieve?" shrewdly interposed Pierre. "Do you think, then, with a house full of gold she can buy a friendship like thine?"

"Oh! no! no!" muttered the Guide.

"Thou knowest well, contentment surpasses wealth," resumed the argumentative manufacturer of wooden shoes.

"It is true, Pierre; you are right," responded Jean.

"Come then, Jean Claude," entreated the bell-ringer, "let us go and seek Genevieve once again."

"Still," hesitatingly replied the Guide, "if I make my reappearance, her fortune will be sacrificed!"

"What will that signify?" remonstrated Pierre.

"And then if our poor child, who is not strong," resumed Jean, in depth of meditation, "should chance to die, perchance, Genevieve, as she laid it in the cold ground, would mourn in silence that we had not wealth to have saved her. Then I would be guilty of a crime in causing her murder—better for me to die like a brave man with the battle cry of France upon my lips—farewell."

"Await for me, then," resolutely responded his comrade, "I will accompany you hence, yes, a long way hence—and perhaps you will change your ideas."

"Come!" reiterated the Guide.

"Wait!" whispered Pierre, as he opened the door.

"Why so?" inquired Jean.

"Genevieve is coming out of church," replied the bell-ringer.

"Genevieve!" exclaimed the Guide.

"She has been to church to hear mass," rejoined Pierre, "and perhaps she will come in here."

"In heaven's name!" ejaculated Jean Claude, "conceal me."

"And whatever happens," continued Jean, "do not speak to me."

"Not a word!" said the bell-ringer, as he closed the door upon him, "I will not say I have seen you. Now, Holy Saints, guard us!"

The worthy Pierre, rude and humble soul as he was, disposed of his furniture to avoid suspicion and calmly awaited the coming of his expected visitor.

CHAPTER V.

THE HUSBAND'S SACRIFICE.

GENEVIEVE entered the room, pale, trembling and careworn. She was modestly attired in deep mourning, and the grief of her heart seemed indelibly printed upon her beautiful countenance.

"Good day," she said, advancing in a most friendly manner to the confused and excited bell-ringer.

"Ah, Madame Genevieve!" quoth the humble artizan, "you have come to visit me," and he endeavored to stifle his emotions.

"I have come from church," resumed Genevieve; "I have many serious matters to speak to you about."

"Madame," responded the peasant, "I am at your service."

"At first, my friend," quoth the lady, taking a seat upon a stool, "it is necessary for me to bid you a long farewell."

"You leave us then?" inquired Pierre.

"It is necessary," returned Genevieve. "My relatives inform me that I should appear at Naples to assure possession of the inheritance to which misfortune gives me title. I have no longer Jean Claude, whose labor gave me a living. I am now compelled to accept a large fortune to guarantee my daughter against misery, which alone I could buffet. I am about to yield up to the curate of Saint Martin the four acres of heather land to aid in the relief of the poor—and I bring you, my friend, the forty crowns for which your poor companion lost his life."

"To me, Genevieve?" tremulously inquired Pierre, as the weeping Dame placed in his hand a leather purse, containing the coin.

"You will not refuse," reiterated Genevieve, giving vent to her sad emotions by a copious flood of tears. "It is your share of the inheritance and a souvenir of your best friend."

"Thousand thanks!" gratefully replied the bell-ringer.

"The money will be well spent, but keep the purse—it was his travelling purse for many a year," sadly rejoined Genevieve, arising from her seat and placing a key in his hand: "Here is the key to the cottage of Jean Claude. Be the master and guardian of it; and if you desire to inherit it——"

"Oh, no!" warmly responded Pierre, "I could not think of living there without you, without him. No, wealth has closed the poor cottage for a long while to come."

"May heaven grant that the wealth which has cost me such a pang," resumed the still weeping lady, "will aid me in preserving my sole treasure—my dear daughter. Did you only know, my friend, how much during the absence of Jean Claude, I have held her, either burning or cold from fever upon my knees; how many times I have prayed God, and God heard my prayers, that her ills would cease be-

fore the return of her father, to whom I have never whispered concerning the past afflictions, for my child was the mainspring of my life. Poor Jean Claude, Heaven knows that had he lived, I would have labored for his happiness." The lady sighed deeply and wiped the tears from her eyes.

"I'm almost tempted to call Jean Claude," murmured the bell-ringer to himself, touched at the sincerity of the poor wife.

"And during my sorrows, Pierre," continued the Dame, "I have a shadow of consolation in his being able from on high to say to himself as he sees her growing up: Genevieve can now protect our child from the blasts of autumn, the snows of winter, and she will grow to womanhood beneath a genial sun."

"Still I dare not summon Jean," ruminated Petit Pierre.

"Farewell, Pierre," said the lady, shaking her friend warmly by the hand; "you can still say that Rich Genevieve of Farrara will always be considered as a valuable friend."

"You are too good, Madame," gratefully replied the peasant, "and I shall ever love you truly; still I would be unable to live among the great people, who summon you to them; I could only compare myself to a thistle among the flowers of a garden."

"In the valley it may bloom unnoticed, but among dainty plants never! But how long before you start upon your journey?"

"In an hour, perhaps," returned the lady "and now farewell and may your life be a successful and a happy one."

Madame Thibaut extended her hand to the humble friend of her infancy, who pressed it to his lips and bedewed it with his tears. The poor fellow, warned as he had been by the reappearance of his ancient comrade, viewed the departure of Genevieve as a personal calamity embittering the casual comfort of his bleak and solitary existence, with stammering accents he mumbled forth an affectionate, heart-felt farewell.

No sooner had Genevieve quitted the apartment than the Guide stepped cautiously from his place of concealment as if to catch a glance of his wife's retreating form.

"Now," murmured Jean Claude addressing his companion, "you must understand why I am one too many in this world."

"Yes," stammered Pierre—"that is so!—you must not be in a hurry—there must be some time for reflection."

"She will take the child to some more genial clime," quoth the Guide, pacing the apartment nervously. "Now then will I have courage to face the brunt of battle—I can willingly die of my wounds!—Thanks to heaven, that before closing my eyes in death, I have seen them on the road to a happy future. Come, let us start, Pierre, my head burns and I must hasten—"

At this moment the bell of Saint Martin commenced ringing for the close of service.

"Hold!" exclaimed the bell ringer, "the bell announces the close of mass—church is coming out—Genevieve will pass the house."

"But should she enter," interposed Jean tremulously.

"I will bolt the door," rejoined Pierre, suiting the action to the word by forcing the bolt. "She will think that I have gone out—now perfect silence until the bell ceases."

"Could I but see her for the last time," murmured Jean.

"Shall I draw the bolt?" insinuated Petit Pierre.

"No!" firmly responded the Guide, designating with his finger a lateral window opening upon the street. "I see the people upon the road way, strangers—they are her rich relatives—yes Genevieve is among them bearing my child—my little Jean, my only treasure! Yes, they bear away my child, my everything!" still he added in perfect delirium: "they cannot rob a father of his daughter's love."

"No!" composedly responded Pierre.

"It is a sacrifice," continued Jean, "perchance repugnant to the will of God, on high."

"Yes, repugnant to the will of God!" repeated Pierre, "certainly it is,—I will go call Genevieve."

"No!" firmly responded the Guide, "I would seek her myself, still—were I to be assassin of my child!—is my brain turned, or has my wound re-opened—I feel my head swim—my breath fails me.—Oh! Pierre, you know not what sorrow is concealed within my heart."

The Guide fell overpowered with grief and sorrow upon the breast of his ancient comrade, and shed his tears freely, as the bell continued to ring forth the closing chimes of the service.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HOUSEHOLD SPY.

EIGHTEEN years elapsed after the departure of Genevieve from her mountain cottage of the Savoy. Many serious changes had transpired during that period of time, and the general, for whose relief Claude the Guide had ventured his existence was hailed as the great Emperor of martial France.

It was, therefore, in the year 1813, that the domestics of a newly decorated mansion in the Rue de Verneil were lounging out of the windows to catch a glimpse of the imperial cortege, as it defiled through the Rue de Bac. One by one curiosity impelled them to desert their labors so that the main saloon of the mansion was deserted by all save one, who, availing himself of the absence of his master, was about to imitate their example when he discovered his exit precluded by the entrance of a gentleman of middle age, costumed with the taste and brilliancy distinguishing the new born aristocracy of that period.

"Simon," said the incomer, as he almost jostled against the domestic, who was about passing out, "are you here alone?"

"Yes, Monsieur Morel," respectfully returned the servant.

"Well, my boy," familiarly quoth the gentleman as he closed the door cautiously and advanced to the domestic, "you have not forgotten that two months ago when I placed you in the house hold of the Count d' Arezzo, I promised you—"

"That you would double my wages," interposed the affable Simon.

"Upon condition——" "That I would inform you of everything transpiring here," replied Simon, with signal effrontery of manner.

"There are two Napoleons," continued Morel, throwing to him two glittering pieces of gold.

"Thanks, sir," replied Simon; "now for your questions."

"First," resumed Morel, "where is the Count?"

"He is undoubtedly at the Treasury," answered the domestic, "where his duties as Treasurer of the Venetian contributions should demand his presence."

"No. I have come from the Treasury," said the gentleman. "Has he gone out for the night?"

"Yes," replied Simon, pointing to a mask, which lay upon a piece of furniture; "probably he has gone to the masked ball at Frascati's. I found this mask and cloak in the room early this morning."

"A masked ball!" meditated the gentleman; "he would not miss one of the fetes of Frascati—he gambles heavily." Then he continued aloud. "And the Countess?"

"Has gone out," replied the servant; "Mademoiselle Jane remains alone in the hotel."

"Is there a continual dispute as to her marriage?" continued Morel with an air of nonchalance.

"More than ever," continued the confidential spy, "although we do not hear much about it."

"Perhaps," interrupted the visitor, "The Count and Countess have had an explanation?"

"No," responded Simon, "the Countess will come to no understanding with her husband."

"He still persists in withholding his consent," remarked Morel.

"It may be deferred until Mademoiselle Jane attains her majority," observed the well instructed Simon.

"Oh, but that is far distant," continued the gentleman.

"She will be of age in ten days," quoth Simon correcting him.

"She will be of age in ten days," said Morel, reflectingly; "are you sure of that?"

"I can assure you," observed the domestic confidentially, "that Mademoiselle Jane attains her legal majority."

"He will probably then demand all accounts, due during her minority," remarked Monsieur Morel.

"That is a natural consequence," said Simon.

"Who has told you all this?" inquired the gentleman.

"No one," responded Simon, shrewdly. "A domestic, troubled with curiosity, learns everything naturally; a word on one side and a hint on the other, an intercepted letter—in a word you pay me or information; I pick it up—I instruct you."

"I have not a moment to lose," resumed Monsieur Morel, "it is necessary for me to see the Count this very day."

"Will you wait for him?" inquired Simon.

"No! I have two calls to make," returned the visitor; "at what hour is it probable he will be here?"

"I cannot say," replied the domestic; "often when we believed him at a distance, he is in this very chamber: I sometimes believe he comes through the walls."

"I must make haste," observed the visitor. When near the room door he suddenly stopped; "Is there a cab-stand here?"

"In the Rue de Bac," replied Simon.

"Thank you," rejoined Morel; "when I return, let me in." "Let you in," responded Simon in a hesitating manner, "that was not agreed upon."

"I will treble your wages," quoth Morel, taking his departure hastily.

"Is that man the friend or the enemy of the Count de Arezzo?" soliloquized Simon as he watched the gentleman leaving the apartment. "Is he a debtor or a creditor? In faith, he can be one or the other, provided he does not pass counterfeit money. A carriage at the door!" He continued, as he went to look out the window; "the Count, perhaps; no, the chariot of the Countess. And I have forgotten to deliver to Mademoiselle Jane the result of the commission she entrusted me with. I must hasten to her."

"I was just going to speak to you, Mademoiselle," he continued as a young and lovely woman entered the apartment.

"I was out of patience waiting for you," returned the lady.

"I have been to the post," replied the domestic; "there are no letters from Italy for the Countess."

"He has not written then," murmured the girl to herself, "fifteen days, and without a letter!"

"She appears annoyed," musingly observed Simon.

"Henri does not love me as dearly as I love him," quoth the girl to herself.

"Is Mademoiselle aware," interposed the cautious Simon, "that her mother, the Countess, has returned to the mansion?"

"Think you so?" observed the lady abstractedly.

"The horses are already unharnessed," replied the servant.

"I was ignorant of it," remarked the young woman, about to take her departure from the chamber.

"Jane," interposed the Countess, entering the room in her carriage costume, "I have been seeking for you everywhere—what are you doing here?"

"I came to ask a question of Simon," modestly responded the fair girl to this inquiry of her still young and handsome mother.

"But what ails you?" inquired the Countess with an air of solicitude, "you have a distressed looking air—has anything unusual occurred, Simon?"

"Nothing, Madam."

"Have you seen the Count?" tenderly inquired the mother. "Has he been conversing with you?"

"No," disconsolately replied the young woman: "still, I have been thinking that fifteen days have elapsed without any news from Italy."

"And that grieves you," remarked the Countess, as she seated herself upon one of the lounges, "my poor child, reassure yourself, dry up your tears, and dream that Colonel Henri thinks more of you than he does of himself."

"In the first place," rejoined the daughter, assuming a seat affectionately by the side of her mother, "that is an impossibility, besides his silence does not prove his love. About an hour ago, I saw a servant come hither with a letter—oh! how my heart beat, but I was deceived. It was a letter from the Marshal's wife, who invites us upon the fifteenth of this month to attend the soiree given before her departure to the country."

"Yes, I am aware of it," responded the Countess, "I have just quitted the lady; she will call shortly to take you with her to the chateau."

"What! me?" inquired Jane.

"Yes," resumed the Countess, "to-day there is musical mass in the chapel; the marshal's wife has two places in the gallery reserved for ladies of honor; one she has placed at your disposal, and will take you in her company. Hence, my child, make all speed, call your waiting-maid, and arrange yourself beautifully—"

"And you?" affectionately inquired the fair daughter.

"I," responded her mother, "will profit of your absence, and endeavor to speak to the Count rationally concerning your marriage."

"Listen, mother," entreated the beautiful Jane; "I am too heart-sore to dress myself, and think upon the vanities of fashions. Permit me to write a line thanking the duchess, and suffer me to remain by your side the rest of the day."

"Should I permit you," retorted the Countess, smilingly, "you will repent of it before long."

"Why?" sweetly inquired the young lady.

"Because I trust you will see," responded the Countess, "some one at the Chapel, who will dissipate your melancholy."

"Who?" anxiously interrupted Jane.

"A person arriving from Italy," replied the Countess.

"Who brings tidings from Colonel Henri?" quoth the young girl.

"And who knows the reasons," continued her mother, "why he has not written for the last fifteen days?"

"Who knows the reason!" ejaculated the young lady.

"I do," replied the Countess, "because he told it me."

"And you have concealed it from me?" said Jane.

"You gave me no time to communicate it to you," answered her mother. "The Colonel has not written for the reason that the weariness of separation pressed so heavily upon him that he solicited an appointment near the Emperor."

"To return to France?" interrupted the younger lady.

"Which he has obtained," continued the matron, joyously, "he started for France forthwith, and now he is in Paris."

"Henri, here?" ejaculated Jane, drying her tears readily.

"Yesterday he was received by the Emperor, and to-day he will be present at the mass in the chateau," quoth the Countess.

"And is this all true?" anxiously inquired Jane, almost beside herself at this joyful revelation, "all you have told me?"

"Quite true, my child," returned the Countess, "now will you not go and thank the Duchess."

"And have you seen him?" anxiously inquired the fair girl.

"We have not time to enter into details," affectionately replied her mother, "now hurry and dress yourself."

"I will not be long for my heart urges me to the task," and with these words the beautiful creature was about to bound out of the room, when she noticed the entrance of the step-father, at whose aspect her joy was suddenly changed into a re-assumption of her previous melancholy.

"Well, Jane," quoth the Count d'Arezzo, upon his entrance, "you seem to have dropped your good-humor. Are you afraid of me?"

"No, father," timidly responded the young girl.

"In truth," continued the Count, "you almost make me believe it to be so. Preserve your gaiety, my girl, for it suits you admirably, and do not disguise it in my presence, who was but a moment ago thinking of you."

"Is it possible, father?" musingly asked the blooming Jane.

"Yes," responded the Count, "I have just left one of our most wealthy diplomatists who has a son attached to the department of finances, and I thought that——"

"You are well aware, my father," interposed Jane, energetically, "that I am promised to Colonel Henri."

"I am aware that the Countess, your mother," responded the Count, "has been guilty of the weakness of encouraging the hopes of this young man to whom I am a stranger, and I should be much pleased to have a conversation with you upon the subject; will you therefore do me the favor of taking a seat?"

"Jane has it not in her power to comply with your request," interrupted the Countess, interposing her person between the speakers.

"At this moment the duchess is expected to arrive to convey her to the Chateau."

"I regret that my daughter can not sacrifice to me.——" resumed the Count.

"It is impossible," repeated the Countess, "the duchess will be here, and Jane will be behind time—Go, my child, and haste thee."

"Poor mother," musingly whispered the young girl, "to leave thee alone to *ennui*——"

"Nay, trouble yourself not on my account," affectionately responded her mother; "go, be happy, and make haste."

The beautiful Jane smiled and quitted the chamber noiselessly.

CHAPTER VII.

THE COUNT D'AREZZO.

"I HAD trusted, Madame," quoth the Count, as he deposited a mass of documents upon the table, "that in assigning an hour in advance for my daughter, I might have reckoned upon her attendance."

"I am astonished, that you should solicit, at this hour, an interview you have avoided for the past six months," proudly retorted the Countess.

"It was because I concluded you had resolved to discountenance a project of alliance, my silence disapproved of."

"And why this silence? upon what grounds do you base your disapprobation?" sternly inquired the Countess.

"Upon an interest for Jane's welfare," replied the Count; "and therefore it is my duty to resist the dangerous allurements of an affection which has completely bewildered you."

"You are laboring under a delusion, sir," retorted the Countess.

"But happily, I deem it proper to interpose my prudence," the Count rejoined.

"Or rather, your hatred," resumed the lady.

"Hatred! for whom?" ironically asked the nobleman.

"My daughter," solemnly spoke the Countess.

"I entertain hatred against her?" exclaimed the Italian.

"You are aware, sir," responded the lady, "that I had sworn to remain a widow, when the monks of La Concordia contested my inheritance, after I had been in possession over two years."

"I remember that," nervously added the nobleman.

"You should moreover remember," resumed the Countess, "that I was subsequently informed that you instituted these unjust and illegal proceedings."

"It was a calumny!" warmly said the Count.

"You are still further aware," proceeded the Countess, energetically, "that the Sovereign Council of Venice, unto whom I had recourse, promised me its protection upon the condition of contracting a second marriage with some Italian nobleman, who would become at the same time my husband and the adopted father of my child."

"That is all true," remarked the Count.

"I had no choice but between the future of my child and of the existence of her father; my duty was plain," continued the Countess. "You were near me, and contrived to take possession of my confidence, and when, to preserve the fortune of my daughter, I became your wife, we signed a contract, recognizing the right of Jane to one-half her property, and constituting you her tutor. You even exacted by the same instrument, that this fortune should belong to you, should my daughter chance to die, and I yielded to the emergency, for after her loss the world would be valueless to me. From that day you have up to this time surrounded Jane with every care and precaution—now you dissimulate no longer—you have thrown off the mask."

"I, Madame!" ejaculated the Count.

"When the First Consul," continued the heroic mother, "having conquered Italy, summoned you to France as a Venitian envoy, did you not endeavor to separate my child from her mother, and prevent her from following us hither?"

"I would have withdrawn from the Countess d'Arezzo," returned the Italian, "a child which seemed perpetually to recall the name of her former husband, Jean Claude."

"The name of Jean Claude Thibaut will always be enshrined in my heart," warmly responded the Countess.

"You are welcome to your divinity," sneeringly observed the Count.

"Shortly after our arrival in Paris," resumed the Countess, paying no attention to the sarcasm of her husband, "did I not see my poor child fall ill, and speedily decline, overwhelmed by your neglect, and wearied by domestic quarrels of which she was the object? Did not the most skilful physicians prescribe for her travelling? Have I not proof that your continued injustice was the cause of her malady, since after a month of calmness and repose, she recovered her health; and when, after a two-years sojourn in Italy, Jane and I hastened to obtain your consent to her marriage with Colonel Henri, whom we knew at Florence, and to whom I pledged my word, have you not for six months placed obstacles in the way of this marriage, without explanation of your motives, as if you had a secret pleasure in tormenting Jane, and in anticipating dread of her happiness? And now, tell me, if you do not hate my daughter, in what way do you show your love?"

"Madame," responded the Count, with an affectation of calmness, "I cannot reply to accusations, which can be excused, probably, by the agitation of your mind, for I will not say from your anger, only by averring that it does not suit me to authorize the union of my step-daughter with I know not what young unknown Colonel."

"Who bears a name the army venerates," returned the Countess, "for he is the son of General Roger."

"I never before heard of that general," resumed d'Arezzo, with a profound affectation of ignorance.

"I have already told you," responded the Countess, excitedly, "that General Roger was shot upon Mont Cenis—with Jean Thibaut, the companion in his misfortune. Do you not find, sir, that in the union of the children of these two men, murdered in the same cause, can be seen the hand of Providence?"

"It assuredly is very romantic," replied the Count, "still quite impossible, for I also have a project for the alliance of my daughter."

"You?" inquired the Countess.

"I desire," returned the Count "that her marriage will connect us more intimately with the Court of France; beside, I have not as yet relinquished my double duties as guardian and tutor."

"After having trampled," resumed the afflicted mother, "my poor Jane to the earth by disdain, and indifference for over twelve years,

you, at this late period remember that you are her step father, because it suits you to dispose of her at your will, to sacrifice her for some dormant scheme of ambition—Sir! that would be a crime?"

"Madam, I am astonished!" exclaimed the Italian.

"To find in me some resolution!" calmly returned the Countess. "In fact, that should astonish you; I have ever been, if not submissive, at least resigned, but my resignation ceases when the future of my child is concerned. On your account, I have seen her a child, weep; I have seen her a girl, weep, and on your account, I have no wish to see her, a wife weep; and therefore I tell you this marriage shall be accomplished because I believe her happiness, her life depends upon it. It is time that Jane should live in consolation, for I have no wish that the shade of Jean Claude, who died for us, shall come to the Countess to inquire what she had done for the existence of the child of Genevieve. And were I, in this struggle against you, to encounter even death—I swear to you that I will face it without changing color—"

"You desire then," replied the Count, "War to the knife!"

"No, sir," responded the Countess haughtily, "I merely desire to solicit your approbation of this marriage."

"Never, Madam!" firmly answered the Italian.

"Time has devoured space, sir," continued the mother, "in ten days Jane will be of age."

"And then?" nervously inquired the Count.

"Free, mistress of her own actions," responded the Countess calmly, "she will contract a marriage which heaven has blessed in advance, and institute her return to power by demanding a statement of your accounts."

"What, madam," exclaimed the Count in consternation, "would you brave scandal fearlessly—?"

"The devotion of a mother to her daughter's welfare," returned the Countess, "can never give rise to scandal—"

"In ten days, Madam," resumed the Count, "you will seek to employ a rigorous exercise of right, I will therefore use all means left to me during the ten days to come."

The Countess smiled, for she had resolved to remove her daughter from his supervision during the remainder of the period of his legal tutelage of the young and interesting girl.

"I desire," continued the Count, "to interrogate my child, in order that her disobedience may be removed, then, madam, you can profit by my hatred, for it would be justifiable, still—I am convinced that Jane will recognize—"

"Force may compel her obedience in a word," returned the matron, "but at heart never."

"To-morrow we shall know all," responded the Count.

The Countess smiled again, for she had determined that her daughter should be far distant ere the morrow's dawn. Then she continued loud: "Have you come to a decision, Count?"

"Yes, Madam," replied the Italian affirmatively.

"Then I will withdraw," haughtily returned the Countess, as she reiterated to herself her determination to send Jane out of the reach of her rapacious and treacherous father-in-law.

"I have procrastinated too long," soliloquized the Venitian as he paced the room in nervous agitation, "I have suffered this explanation to remain until too late—I was a fool for my remissness. If I cannot obtain Jane's consent by persuasion, by intimidation, I must devise some means to procrastinate the marriage. Should she compel me to account for her monies—I will be not only ruined, but absolutely dishonored. Well! I have yet ten days to arrange matters; ten brief days. Luckily the hero of this adventure is four hundred leagues hence. Let me see, I have friends at Florence, one above all, skilful, intriguing and daring—while I am at work here I will set him in motion at Florence—he will introduce himself to the Colonel, quiet his suspicions, allay his doubts, and plant the seeds of revengeful jealousy, while I poison the match here.

"Yes," he continued rubbing his hands, and ringing his chamber bell, "I will write to him, explaining my plan, and give him cause to be interested in our success."

"Did your excellency call?" modestly inquired Simon, who had entered the apartment in answer to the Count's summons.

"Yes," replied the Venitian, "let the horses be put up, I shall not go out again."

"Certainly, your Excellency," returned the domestic, "but I would inform you—"

"What?" inquired the Count, impatiently.

"That Monsieur Morel—" answered the servant.

"I cannot receive him," remonstrated the Count, "I have no time at present—"

"But, sir, he insists upon it," reiterated the servant.

"Send him away," said the Count, raising his voice to a high pitch—"I cannot—I am too busy—"

"And so am I, your Excellence!" interposed Monsieur Morel, forcing his way into the apartment.

"He's done it!" murmured Simon, gleefully, as he left the room to indulge in a hearty outburst of laughter at the superlative impudence of the Count's mysterious visitor.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL.

"I am terribly annoyed at disturbing you," quoth Morel, throwing himself into an arm-chair, without awaiting an invitation from the Count, "yet I am enchanted to see you."

"What do you want?" inquired the Count, indulging in a vehement outburst of rage.

"Merely to give you notice," replied the visitor, "that I have de-

posited in the bank your note at sight, subscribed to my order, for the sum of one hundred and twelve thousand francs for which you are indebted to me."

"Well, sir," responded the Count, continuing the composition of a letter, and paying but indifferent attention to his creditor, "you will have the trouble of taking it out of the Bank again, for I cannot at present pay it."

"You have the funds," replied Morel, "and I can wait no longer."

"And why this haste, at this emergency?" inquired the Count.

"Simply while you are absorbed in gaming," answered his visitor leaning over the table, so as to address him in a low tone of voice, "you see not difficulties arising on all sides of you. In ten days Mademoiselle Jane will be of age; she will make the customary demands upon you and after a notice of fifteen days will insist upon her accounts, and as your affairs are disordered I have thought proper to claim a preference among creditors."

"And then, Monsieur Morel," returned the Count arising and laying aside his correspondence, "you believe that I have not foreseen this state of matters—that I have provided nothing to guarantee myself. Such a thought is as outrageous in my case as audacious and ungrateful in yours."

"What are your expectations?" inquired Morel.

"In the first place, learn," replied the Count, "that this marriage cannot be accomplished under six months, if it is at all. Accord me three months and then—luck will not forever run against me; this very night my vein of good fortune has commenced. A party of twenty determined gamblers were assembled at Frascati's; we were afraid of being known, beside the rules allowed masked gambling. I had three thousand napoleons before me when the day broke, and interrupted our game."

"Wonderful!" ejaculated Morel.

"Twenty times," continued the Count, "I held the queen card, the knave of diamonds."

"Twenty times?" repeated the visitor incredulously.

"Yes, twenty times!" reiterated the gambler.

"If you could only give me one on account," quoth Morel, extending his hand towards the noble.

"Pooh! nonsense," replied the Count, "that would appear like confounding you with my contractors."

"Well," returned the guest, "I do not mind that."

"But," responded the Count, taking his friend's hand, "I have too high an interest in your case for that. Well, this return of luck will return and last as long as has my want of success. I will moreover have before long other resources to pay you. Agree therefore to an extension of three months and leave me."

The Count conducted his visitor to a door at the further end of the apartment and continued: "I am desirous of finishing an important dispatch for Florence with regard to Colonel Henri."

"Colonel Henri is in Paris," replied Morel, laying his hand upon

the knob of the door, and addressing the Count, who had resumed his seat at the table and recommenced his writing.

"You are mistaken," remarked the Venitian nobleman.

"Not at all," replied Morel returning to the table. "I am certain of it, I heard of it at the Club. Yesterday he was received by the Emperor, and this morning he was present at the review."

"It is evidently an error," resumed the Count obstinately; "The Countess whom I have just seen, would not fail to have informed me."

"She is either ignorant of the fact," replied Morel, "or has some good reason for desiring to conceal it."

"You are crazy," insisted the Count, "it is impossible."

"Your excellency," quoth the domestic, Simon, appearing at the door, "Colonel Henri Roger desires the honor of an interview with the Count d'Arezzo."

"He is in Florence, is he?" sarcastically observed Morel.

"Well, Morel," quoth the Count blandly, "I am delighted to meet him face to face, for no business is transacted better than in person. Take a seat, Morel, I will receive him in your presence and in such a wise that his marriage will be broken off this very day."

"That's your game," responded the visitor, seating himself.

"I am in the humor," observed the nobleman as he issued the order to Simon to introduce the young Colonel.

A moment afterwards a gallant young soldier, the very beau ideal of one of those chivalric heroes, who had raised themselves to honor and renown in the army of the great Napoleon, entered the apartment with a manly, yet respectful mien.

"Will the Count do me the honor of receiving my salutations?" respectfully said the soldier, after the fashion of the Empire.

"What, sir, is the object of your visit?" harshly inquired the Italian.

"You are not ignorant," resumed the Colonel, "that I aspire to the hand, in marriage, of your step-daughter. I have taken the liberty of addressing you several letters from Italy, which, to my regret, have remained unanswered."

"Which should have instructed you, sir," replied the Count haughtily, "that I could not accede to your request."

"I feared so, sir," modestly responded the soldier; "but as my future happiness depends upon this marriage, I have determined to solicit your approbation."

"I conceive it to be, sir, exceedingly strange," answered the Venitian, gruffly, "that you have ventured hither, when everything assured you, in advance, of a refusal, which I now declare to be irrevocable."

"That's clear, and to the point," murmured Morel.

"And now, Count, I come," resumed the Colonel, discarding all tone of inferiority or supplication, "as the bearer of a message, which may probably influence you to alter your previous determination."

"A message!" quoth the Count, arising from his seat.

"But before employing a means repugnant to my honor," continued

the young soldier in a milder tone of voice, "allow me, sir, to explain to you my situation——"

"You stated that you were the bearer of a message," harshly interrupted the Venitian noble, "now, what is it? give it me."

"No, Count," remonstrated the Colonel, "I do not desire to employ any influence——"

"I am waiting for the message," insultingly rejoined the Count.

"For mercy's sake," remonstrated the soldier, "just listen to me."

"The message, sir," imperiously demanded the Count, "or I retire."

"Since you have forced me to deliver it, here it is," responded the Colonel, presenting to him an epistle.

"I am curious to know," remarked the nobleman haughtily, "who dares boast power to overawe my inclinations."

"And so am I," murmured the other visitor.

The Count leisurely tore open the letter, and read with an air of indifference, as follows:

"Monsieur the Count: the Countess d'Arezzo has promised the hand of her daughter in marriage to Colonel Roger. This young soldier is the son of one of my companions in arms; I approve of the marriage, and will be most happy to sign the contract."

"NAPOLEON."

"The Emperor!" ejaculated the enraged Italian, crushing the letter within his palsied hands.

"The game's blocked!" muttered Morel significantly.

"The desires of the Emperor," quoth the Count in evident confusion, "are orders in my case—still, it is—a determination imposed on me, a forced consent—I must avow to you, sir, that thus taken by surprise, I have need of some days—to prepare myself——"

"We will wait, sir," responded Colonel Roger, "and during the interval you will learn to appreciate me; shortly, perchance, I will owe to your free action a favor, for which I am at present indebted but to the intervention of the Emperor. Then we will forget this message, of which, sir, I never should have availed myself, had not your cool reception rendered such a step necessary. I will retire, sir, without visiting the Countess, and without divulging the secret of this interview. I depart, sir, contented, for I believe that which had its origin in constraint will terminate in friendship."

The young man, as he spoke, extended his hand to the Count.

"I doubt it," stubbornly said the Venitian, refusing to accept the courteous offer, "farewell, sir."

"No, Count, not farewell—we will meet again shortly, then *au revoir*."

The soldier then respectfully took his leave.

"Well, Morel?" ejaculated the Count, disconsolately.

"Well," responded that gentleman, arising from his seat, "let your Countship get out of that if you can. As for me, I have the honor of wishing you good-bye."

"Where are you going?" hastily inquired d'Arezzo, as he noticed his creditor, with hat in hand, moving to the door.

"To hasten the presentation of my note for five hundred and twelve thousand francs," coolly replied Morel.

"Stop!" retorted the Count, "are you not aware that in ruining me, you cause your own ruin likewise?"

"Please, sir, how is that?" ironically inquired the creditor, about to open the door.

"Because," growled, as it were, the Italian, "I have arranged in case the matter should turn out thus."

"In what way?" resumed Morel, retracting his steps.

"You are in debt to me for a fortune," responded the Count d'Arezzo, in a low, threatening tone of voice, "which you have acquired within a year through my protection. You would never have made such enormous profits had it not been that I, with whom important sums have been deposited, have assisted you in illegal transactions, which I dared not undertake myself. Thus I have taken care to secure your responsibility, that my ruin will lead you straight way to the tribunals of justice."

"It has then been a set trap!" exclaimed Morel.

"No, sir," replied the Count, "but an act of foresight."

"You are an infernal scoundrel!" said the infuriated visitor.

"Bless me!" calmly ejaculated the Italian, "and you are another, as I will prove in good time. But as we have no time to waste upon compliments, let us cogitate how to get out of this embarrassment."

"Your difficulty in no wise concerns me," responded the infuriated Morel; "you subscribed an obligation, relating in no wise to our arrangements. It is strictly according to law." And the visitor attempted to leave the room.

"I subscribed to the order of Morel," replied the Count, impending his passage, "and your name is not Morel—"

"Not Morel!" replied the creditor.

"No!" continued the Venetian, "you assumed that name, after escaping from Florence where you were to be tried as a counterfeiter of the public money."

"What! you are then aware——" interposed the visitor.

"That upon the same day you would annihilate my credit," resumed the Venetian; "I will give you over to the Florentine envoy, who will take you off my hands."

"Should that occur," responded Morel, altering his tone materially, "I will join my destinies so intimately to your own that we will be mutually compromised."

"Now," continued d'Arezzo, calmly, "we understand each other most clearly."

"You are right," responded Morel, "what shall we attempt?"

"Anything tending to salvation," rejoined the Count.

"Tell me, Morel! when I saw Jane, dying, given up by her physicians——"

"After her death," interrupted the creditor, "you will have to account to her heirs."

"I am, by agreement," replied the Venetian, "her sole heir, and

"The Devil!" muttered the Florentine, "you have all the cards."

"And now to sweep the board," continued the Count, "but the time has not yet come; besides I have some combinations to work out. If you could attach yourself to the track of the Colonel—provoke a quarrel—a duel——"

"No, thank you," replied Morel, dubiously, "he would kill me, and I love life a little too well. Still we could, by aid of lying, scandal——"

"I leave the Colonel to your ingenuity," interrupted the Count, "to-morrow, I will hold my step-daughter in my power."

"To-morrow!" quoth Morel, "she will be far from here."

"Far from here?" inquired the Count.

"Her mother sends her hence to-night," replied the visitor, "the matter is all arranged."

"Who told you this?" marvelled the Venetian.

"I know not," answered his companion, "but I can convince you of the truth of my assertion."

"In what way?" anxiously inquired the Count.

"In the first place," replied Morel, "do you know of a man named Ambroise, who resides at Chaillott?"

"Yes," responded the Italian, "an old servant of the Countess, whom I turned away for considering he had the right to interfere in her disputes——"

"The Countess has preserved relations with him," continued Morel, "for immediately after leaving you, she addressed a letter to him."

"And what does that prove?" interrupted the Count.

"Read the letter," replied Morel, handing him a note, "and you will learn all."

"How came it into your hands?" suspiciously said the Count.

"Simply," responded the Florentine, "because one of your servants was entrusted to put it in the post by the Countess, who sold it to me, while I was in the ante-chamber."

"Which one of my servants?" inquired the Count, foaming with rage.

"What difference does that make?" quietly resumed the Florentine, "read first, and get angry afterwards."

"Excuse me, Monsieur Morel," said Simon, who entered the apartment, bearing some lighted candles.

"What's wanted?" warmly demanded the Count.

"The hackman, whom Monsieur Morel has left at the door of the house," said Simon, apologetically, "wishes to know if there is any further need for him."

"Let him wait," replied Morel, "I will leave shortly."

"No," interrupted the Count, "let him go." Then whispering to Morel, he continued: "I have need of you to-night—the hours are most precious."

"But they are waiting for me at home," returned Morel.

"Give them notice," said the Count, resuming his writing.

"Where is the hackman?" inquired Morel of the servant.

"In the ante-chamber," responded Simon.

"Show him in," ordered Morel, resuming his seat, while Simon disappeared to execute his mission.

"It is truly the hand writing of the Countess," murmured the Italian, as he opened the note and glanced over its superscription and contents.

CHAPTER IX.

JEAN, THE HACKMAN.

THE door opened, and, in entered the coachman, a fine-looking man of middle age, whose figure, although costumed in the dress peculiar to his professional calling, evinced a manly independence and martial bearing, at once announcing him to have been a veteran of of the Empire.

"Excuse the liberty, sir," quoth the hackman, known among his associates as Jean the Mountaineer, holding his hat in his hand respectfully, "but I have the habit of giving notice—we are too often forgotten—and there is discontent for time goes on according to law."

"You can go," replied Morel.

"Then I did right in notifying you that the coach was below," responded the hackman; then looking at his watch, he continued: "You engaged me at half-past four; it is now half-past nine; five hours exactly."

"And I owe you?" interposed Morel.

"Forty sous the first hour," replied Jean, "and thirty sous each hour after; it is easy to reckon: eight francs exact."

"Here are ten!" answered Morel, giving him the coin.

"And here are two in exchange," responded the coachman, taking out his purse.

"It is unnecessary," interposed the Florentine.

"Thank you, sir!" said Jean retiring towards the door.

"Hold!" quoth Morel, "you are carrying money you have not fully earned."

"Pardon, sir, but I thought——" apologized the hackman.

"You will go to the Place des Vosges, number seven, and inform them that the master of the house will not be home to-night," quoth Morel, laying stress on the direction.

"Yes, sir," murmured Jean. "Place des Vosges—still another course——"

"What are you saying?" inquired Morel, bluntly.

"I was saying that it was another course," responded the hackman frankly. "It may not be for other cabmen, who put up at Piepus or Sainte Antonine—but I live at the Barrièrdes Bonnes Hommes, and in going from the rue de Verneuil to Passy, the Place des Vosges is not exactly the shortest cut."

"That's well enough," interrupted the Count impatiently; "dispense with your reflections—you are paid—go!"

"The gentleman is too polite, for one not to hurry on his errand," returned the hackman, placing his hat upon his head.

"What's your number?" inquired Morel.

"Two hundred and twenty-six, sir," replied Jean.

"Well," responded the Florentine, "if I find, to-morrow, that you have not done my errand, I'll have you put in the workhouse—now, go!"

"No danger," replied the Hackman, "I owe you a course, even if I make it on foot."

Then as the mountaineer departed from the room, he was almost tempted to return the money and request his employer to secure the services of some other of his companions. A fear, alone, of the commissary of police, prevented this ebullition of spleen on his part, so he emerged the apartment with a determination to make the most of a bad bargain.

"Well!" said Morel, arising and going to the Count.

"You have read this letter?" inquired the Italian.

"I merely cast my eyes at its contents," replied Morel.

The nobleman handed him the note, which read:

"Ambroise: The Count d'Arezzo-wishes to employ the last hours of his authority over Jane to torture her—and I can do no better than concealing her with you. At ten o'clock precisely Jane will leave the mansion, going down the rue de Verneuil to that of du Bac. Hasten; be at the corner of these streets, where you will meet her. Conduct her first to your house at Chaillot—on the morrow depart for Fontainebleau, where you must remain for ten days. Do not write; the letters may indicate your retreat; in everything else Jane will counsel you."

"It now wants but a few minutes of ten," quoth Morel drawing out his watch and making a calculation.

"I have no time to prevent this departure," resumed the Count, walking in agitation. "No! I should not desire to do so, now I am instructed of it. More! can I not join Jane, and see her without dread of her mother's intervention?"

"You can, I suppose," tranquilly responded Morel.

"Instead of tearing her from me," continued d'Arezzo, "the Countess has thrown her in my arms, and I shall be annoyed should she change her plan—let us see what passes."

The Count went to the window, and withdrew the curtain, while Morel concealed the burning candles behind some pieces of furniture, that their forms might not be seen before them.

"No one in the Countess' apartments," whispered the Count as he gazed out through the window; "yes, some one opens the vestibule, the door opens; the Countess embraces her daughter; Jane leaves her; the door has closed—Jane has gone!"

"Perhaps, not meeting Ambroise, she will return to the mansion," suggested Morel.

"No!" replied the Count in agitation; "she will continue on to Chaillot, expecting to meet him—it is ten o'clock?"

"Yes, Count," returned Morel.

"Morel," resumed the Count, earnestly, "should we not prevent this marriage, think you I will be imprisoned after the fifteen days of notification?"

"I am certain of it," responded his companion.

"And the slightest confusion in my case will seriously compromise you with me," quoth the Italian.

"That is what I dread," moodily answered Morel.

"Morel," said the Count in a tone of decision, "we must follow upon the trace of Jane—we have not a minute to spare."

The Count d'Arrezzo summoned Simon to him and gave directions to bring fresh candles, alleging as a reason that Morel and he had a long series of accounts to arrange, which would require their attention all night. Particularly cautioning them not to suffer them to be disturbed in their nocturnal work, the Count dismissed his domestic and cautiously bolted the door after him: an operation Morel viewed with astonishment.

"Come, Morel," continued the Count after finishing all his precautions, "let us hasten after her."

"You told your people," interposed the Florentine, "that you were to remain here locked up all night, and now they will see you go out."

"No!" replied the Italian opening a secret door in the wall, "this conducts us to the garden, whence we can pass into the street unseen."

"Very well," said Morel, taking his hat, while the Count produced a couple of masks, from a drawer in one of the pieces of furniture.

"Take this mask," the Count continued, "and I will use this one."

"A mask!" remonstrated Morel, "why a mask!"

"For prudence sake," responded the Italian.

"What are you going to do?" inquired Morel hesitating.

"I have not made up my mind," said the Count; "we will think of it as we go along."

"Still," remonstrated Morel.

"Will you leave all traces of Jane?" inquired the Count.

"No," replied his companion.

"Then let us start," nervously said the Venitian.

"I am ready," sullenly responded Morel.

As an act of further precaution the Count took off his rings, which he usually wore, and cast them upon the table. In a moment after the two passed through the secret door and disappeared as it closed solemnly upon its hinges.

CHAPTER X.

THE HACKMAN AT HOME.

THE main feature of the habitation of Jean, the owner and driver of carriage No. 226, situated at the Barrier des Bonnes Hommes, upon the top of one of those steep hills whence the citizens of Passy are accustomed to gaze down upon the Parisian metropolis, was a huge cellar the ordinary receptacle of the appliances belonging to his culling. In this emporium of things necessary, Jean found him hard at cogitation upon some occurrences which had marked his eventful career. In the open court yard stood his bright green hack, while in the remote corner of the subterranean apartment tranquilly dozed one of his companions, an occasional member of Jean's household, which was managed and controlled by the Dame Champagne, an aged and half deaf woman, a kind neighbor he maintained from charitable motives, for Jean leaving the mountains, still maintained an inkling of their generous hospitality.

"Hullo, you there, Dame Champagne," quoth Jean, perceiving the old lady upon the stair way leading to the inhabited quarters of Jean's mansion, "wait a moment, I have something to give you for the young lady."

Jean went out into the court yard and the Dame, whom he had forgotten to be afflicted with deafness, disappeared up the stair-way and left her host in possession of the deserted premises, holding in his hand a little package which he had taken from the hack with a deal of precaution.

"Well," soliloquised Jean, depositing the package upon a piece of furniture, "It will do at some other time. The old lady's deaf, and I shouldn't speak loud for fear of waking Pierre, who has worked hard at his shop during the fête of St. Cloud, and the fellow wants sleep. He'll stay here until Sunday, then he will go and amuse himself, according to his habit, at the criminal courts. Well, every man to his taste."

The hour of opening the public fountain having arrived, the hackman took his buckets and started to water his horse, and thus save himself a superfluous journey to the Seine.

Jean had not expended many moments upon this branch of his labors ere the occupant of the straw gave signs of animation and finally leaped to the ground with a somerset of decided agility.

"Only a fly," muttered the sleeper, who was no less a personage than the ex-bell ringer of the Savoy, as he gazed out and noticed

the carriage of Jean in the court-yard, "Jean has come back! yes, there's the green hack and I hear the Negress and Marengo munching their oats in the stable like happy beasts as they are; but where is Jean? I will seek him in his chamber."

Petit Pierre was about to ascend the stair-case when he remembered that Dame Champagne had informed him that it was in the occupation of an unknown lady. So the Savoyard halted and prosecuted his researches elsewhere.

"Ho, my little Pierre," shouted Jean, appearing at the entrance of the cellar with his buckets in his hands, "what, up and kicking as well as ever?"

"Yes, Jean," replied the peasant, "light a candle."

"What woke you there?" inquired the Hackman.

"A fly," responded Petit Pierre, scratching his nose.

"Hold!" quoth Jean, looking into the stables, "old Marengo has spelt the fresh water; coming, old boy, coming."

"That's right!" responded Pierre, "give Marengo fresh water, he will never drink it younger; as for me I'll take a bite."

Pierre went to the cupboard, took out a loaf of bread and cut off a slice.

"Everybody served! nobody wants anything!" gaily said the Hackman, as he entered his depository. "Pierre, I have not seen you since your return."

"At six o'clock this morning," replied Pierre, beating upon his hand, "you had gone—when I had got back."

"I was on the stand," rejoined Jean, as he commenced blacking the traces hanging against the wall, "at five in the morning; that gives me time to rest the horses in the middle of the day. But tell me, are you content with your little journey?"

"The end was good," replied the Savoyard. "I sold my portraits; see, there only remain a Monsieur and Madame Denis, and one Napoleon and two old rabbits." As he spoke he opened the cupboard and drew forth some plaster images which he placed upon a board to regarnish, then he continued; "I must fix up my store—still the two first days from a continual rain."

"Oh, yes," interrupted Jean continuing at his labor, "I thought of you and said to myself, if we only knew it would turn out so, Petit Pierre would not have started for two days."

"You may believe it," resumed Pierre, intent upon the work of restoring his images from damage, "for then my figure would not have been wet, and I could have been present at the sentence of the pretty bar woman, tried for having two husbands."

"She has been condemned," responded Jean, toiling at the traces, "that pretty bar woman, to ten year's imprisonment."

"Ten years!" exclaimed Pierre. "How I should like to have been there, I, who had listened to all the interrogations."

"You were there then?"

"No!" replied Jean, "I heard it yesterday, at the Prefecture."

"What were you doing at the Prefecture?" said the Savoyard.

"To deposit there a pocket book," responded the hackman, "which a young man forgot in my cab. I could not find out where his home was, for I set him down at the gate of Luxembourg, so I took it to the place for reclamations, where I heard about the pretty woman and her two husbands."

"Do you think it right?" inquired Pierre.

"Yes, it is right," responded Jean, "but there are many who have two husbands—still it is the law—that's all we can say!"

"That's all we can say," reiterated the peasant, "and you, my poor Jean, you have been thrown into the water?"

"How do you know?" smilingly inquired the hackman.

"This morning, also, when I came," rejoined Pierre, "I was going up to your room, when I met that venerable youth—the Dame Champagne, who told me something—but the young girl said you saved my life—that she owes it to you—"

"No, to Marengo," responded Jean.

"Marengo!" ejaculated Pierre, mysteriously.

"I was returning Thursday evening from the place des Vosges," quoth Jean, leaving his work to narrate the adventure, "I wanted to take Champs Elyses, but Marengo turned to the left to take the river's edge—that was not my idea but his—and as I was not engaged, I would not disappoint the poor beast and we took the side of the river. When we arrived by the height of the Bridge of Jena, I heard something fall into the water. As the waters are low, I drove close to the edge of the pier and then I could plainly see a woman, struggling in the river. I soon sprang over a pile of wood and thence drew forth the poor creature—not a single passer-by to aid me."

"Not a single one," replied Pierre, deeply interested.

"None," resumed Jean, "for it was going on midnight—but old Marengo—you know he follows me like a dog—well, he dragged the Negress after him and there they stood about fifty steps to come up to me. I put the poor creature in the hack, for the hospital was far off and my house was near. I was soon here, I woke up our neighbor, Dame Champagne, and the doctor, and what a night we passed. The next day she was no woman, but mad—devoured by the fever—and I would not leave her a moment with Dame Champagne, fearing each convulsion would be the last. However, during the night, she became calm; and yesterday the doctor told us that the crisis would not return again, and that she was saved. Then, you could not imagine my happiness, to have gazed upon that beautiful young girl—so near perishing—and to know her out of danger. At that moment above all I thought of you, and I said to myself: 'Here is a piece of joy, and Petit Pierre is not here to take his share in it.'"

"Oh, yes," interrupted Pierre, "I would rather not have gone to St. Cloud, and this young woman, would she drown herself?"

"That is not certain," resumed Jean, sagely, "but there is no question, God be praised! that the delirium has not quite left her, for yesterday evening she ordered me to drive her close to Chaillot, for some

one named Ambroise. I dared not refuse and there we learned that Ambroise had started two days before, to his sisters at Melun. I feared this little promenade would fatigue her, but no, I saw upon my return and she is well and has related her history."

"How then did it all happen?" inquired Petit Pierre.

"We agreed," resumed Jean, "that is, Dame Champagne and I, she had wished to destroy herself, not from misery, for she had silk gowns and embroidered petticoats—it would not be anything but love——"

"It could be nothing else," interrupted Pierre, eagerly.

"Well, it was something else," replied Jean: he continued his narrative: "As she was going late in the evening to Ambroise's at Chaillot—she had passed the esplanade, when suddenly two brigands—robbers in masks, precipitated themselves upon her; the poor girl was seized before she could cry aloud; they tore from her her necklace, watch and chain, and threw her into the river."

"Good heavens!" ejaculated the kind hearted Savoyard.

"Yes, Pierre," responded Jean, "such scoundrels are to be found."

"I am aware of it," replied Pierre, "I see them at the Court of Azzizes,—and you have learned all this to day?"

"But a little while ago," responded Jean, "while you were asleep."

"Then I'll run to the commissary," ejaculated Pierre, excitedly, "and lodge a complaint."

"Not at all!" remonstrated the hackman, "not at all."

"But, yes," insisted Pierre, "you know nothing about such affairs. It is a criminal matter—we commenced by a complaint—the police will hail the assassins and it will finish by a sentence. By all that's good! it will be a brilliant affair and every one will have to get up early to secure a good seat—I shall be on the other side of the bar as a witness, I will see all without a farthing—I shall run to the commissary."

"Await first," said Jean, stopping his exit.

"But," interposed Pierre.

"Think you, I had no inclination," resumed Jean, "to run to the police as soon as I learned all this."

"Well," observed Pierre seriously, "what prevented you?"

"The young girl," resumed the hackman, "who begged of me to await until she returned to her family, and she is too ill yet to expose her to new emotions. It is necessary to punish these brigands, yes; and they cannot escape, but above all it is not right to injure the innocent to be avenged upon them. Let us await until the young girl is recovered—you know not what she is called, Pierre?—now what think you is her name?"

"What is it?" said the perplexed Savoyard.

"Jane!" replied Jean the hackman.

"Jane?" hesitatingly mused Pierre.

"The same as the little one," murmured Jean, "of the cottage."

"Yes, the same as the little one," repeated the peasant.

"What has become of her?" quoth Jean, in a pensive humor, "of my daughter and Genevieve. The blessing of Heaven should have accompanied them in their riches."

"Poor Jean Claude!" meditated Pierre, silently, "he often thinks of his wife and child."

"Eighteen years soon passes!" continued Jean in his reflections.

"Jean!" exclaimed Pierre, advancing to the hackman and awakening him from his day-dream, "come, let's see Mademoiselle."

"Yes," replied Jean, "distraction will do her good; you go first and I will charge you with a little message."

"Well, what is it?" exclaimed the delighted Pierre.

"Yesterday," responded Jean, "when I took her to Chaillot, it was necessary to be all dressed—her silk gown, her petticoats—and we dried them well, before they were put on—but at the moment of starting I saw she looked for something to put on her head. She is the daughter of rich folks, you see, and not accustomed to go out into the streets bare-headed. I said nothing, for she is so young, so handsome,—we could not offer her a hat of Dame Champagne's——"

"By no manner of means!" interrupted the Savoyard.

"This morning in passing by the market of St. Jacques," confidentially continued the hackman, "I saw a pretty little bonnet with rose-colored ribands, and I bought it. And as I don't know how to offer it to her, you will give it to her on my behalf."

Thus speaking, Jean took the package, which he had originally intended to send by Dame Champagne, and handed it to Pierre.

"It's agreed!" replied the honest Savoyard.

"I've just time to blacken Marengo's collar," responded Jean, "and I will come and join you."

"A little time hence," murmured Pierre as he ascended the stairway, "and I will make her a little present. I bought at Cloud's a shawl with flowers, which I intend to give to the flower-girl who takes charge of my shop when I go into the palace of justice—I will buy her another; it cost me three francs fifteen sous, but I'll give her your bonnet first."

"Above all," cautioned Jean, "don't speak of the commissary."

"No!" replied Pierre, "but don't you want to make a complaint?"

"No," sharply answered the hackman. "I don't wish it."

"Nor I either," responded Pierre, "here's to your errand."

CHAPTER XI.

THE SOLDIER'S SON.

JEAN, the coachman, was well satisfied with the return of his companion, for he would feel the departure of the young girl less bitterly.

As he had been seated by her side the previous evening, while she was arranging her toilet, the poor man thought he saw Genevieve. The dream of twenty years hung over him.

"This is the place," quoth a young gentleman, entering the courtyard; "yes, the number 226—the very man himself."

"What's wanting?" inquired the hackman respectfully.
 "Yes, now I recognize you," continued the young man.
 "I don't recognize you," responded Jean, perplexed.
 "I forgot a pocket-book in your carriage," resumed the gentleman.
 "Ah, it is you!" quoth Jean, "I no longer have it; it is at the Prefecture to be reclaimed."

"It was returned to me this morning," replied the young man.
 "I am glad," responded Jean, "it has reached its owner."
 "Sir," resumed the gentleman, "the pocket-book, besides bank-bills, contained papers of vital importance to me; and grateful at the act of probity which has restored them to me, I have hurried to your house to beg you to accept a just reward."

"No, sir, no," interrupted Jean earnestly, "I consider it theft to take possession of anything belonging to another, and no man deserves a reward for not having stolen."

"Monsieur Jean," spoke the young man in a tone of pride, "you are an honest man."

"I believe so, sir," replied the hackman.

"I have a proposition," continued the gentleman after a moment's reflection, "to make to you."

"What is it, sir?" modestly inquired the coachman.

"My fortune permits me to keep horses," rejoined the young man, "and if you would take charge of my stables, as an honest man can never be over-paid, I would leave you to arrange your own terms."

"I am thankful to you, sir," proudly answered Jean, drawing him self to his full height, "it would be necessary to wear livery, and when a man has been a soldier——"

"You have served then?" inquired the stranger.

"For fourteen years," responded Jean, with a military air. "In the 6th dragoons, styled the War-Dogs, in which regiment for ten years I have been lance-sergeant."

"I crave your pardon, sir," replied the young man, "the livery can never replace the uniform. I know it, for I am a soldier, and the son of a soldier."

"You a soldier!" warmly exclaimed Jean, "I served from '95 to 1809."

"You made the campaigns of Italy?" quoth the stranger.

"The first and the second, and that of Egypt between them," rejoined the hackman, with a glow of enthusiasm.

"How then have you remained so long a sub-officer?" earnestly inquired the gentleman, interested in the veteran's story.

"Ah!" responded the veteran with a sigh, "I know neither how to read or write. Since I quitted the service I have learned a little of both—to be a coach-driver it was necessary to read the names of the streets and the numbers of the houses. Had I known as much before, I never should have been uneasy as to the future."

"I have, Monsieur Jean," joyfully resumed the stranger, "a retreat I can offer you."

"Truly, sir," interrupted Jean, gratefully.

"In the forest guardians," returned the gentleman, "who wear as we may say, the veteran's uniform. Thanks to my position in the Italian army of occupation, I can place at your disposal the situation of frontier guardian in the forest of Piedmont."

"That is something like," responded the veteran, "sir, I would like to end my days somewhere in Piedmont, where I could view the lofty peaks of the Alps; still I would be unwilling to give up my business as long as I have Marengo."

"And who is Marengo?" inquired the young soldier.

"My old horse," replied Jean, "another of the 6th dragoons; we were together at Marengo, and a slash intended for me there cut off his left ear; we were moreover together at Cautzig, both down, and I believed he never rose from the field."

"Still you have found him again?" said the gentlemen.

"Two years after, at the market," resumed the veteran; "I was buying a hack and horses. I knew enough to husband the proceeds of victory, and in passing the mart where old horses are sold I recognized Marengo, from his lost ear. As soon as he heard my voice, he rushed to my side. He was for sale at sixty francs, a horse who had seen Rivoli, Cairo, and Austerlitz. I bought him immediately, and for five years we have toiled together."

"Can he do duty still as a hack-horse?" inquired the soldier.

"I must say," exclaimed Jean, "that I joined with him the Negress, a black mare of great strength, and she gently leads him along when in harness. However, although twenty-five years old, Marengo, still has a heart. Why, sir, the other day, during a sham fight on the Champ de Mars, they fired cannons and sounded the charge. Well! no sooner did Marengo hear a noise of battle than he dressed his ear, since he has but one, looked at me whining, as if to say: 'Oho, Jean! to the saddle! the Austrians are at hand.' Well, sir, it made me laugh as well as cry, and I could not help saying to him: 'Oho, my boy! the Austrians are no longer in the field.' Who would believe it? there are instances when I talk to that old horse as if he were a human being."

"Sub-officer Jean!" quoth the young soldier kindly, "the situation of forest guard, which I offer you, will be at your service whenever you wish to take advantage of it."

"In that case," thankfully responded the veteran, "I may have time to reconsider my refusal."

"You can always find my address at the war office," continued the soldier; "this is my name, Colonel Roger."

"There was a general by that name," sadly rejoined Jean.

"He was my father," responded the young man.

"Your father!" earnestly exclaimed the veteran, gazing upon the young soldier fixedly.

"Who was shot upon Mount Cenis by being betrayed," murmured the hackman.

"Did you serve beneath his orders?" warmly inquired the gentleman.

"I, no!" thoughtfully replied Jean. "I Jean, the Mountaineer, commenced my campaign under Massena."

"It's of no consequence," resumed the Colonel; "whenever you desire it, the post of guard is at your service. Now I have another request."

"And pray what is that, Colonel?" in turn inquired Jean.

"Before leaving, I must see Marengo," replied the soldier.

"That is easy enough!" responded Jean delightedly. "Please to pass through the stable, whence a door leads to the street. But don't expect to see a gallant steed, still you know many a gay lancer ends his career an invalid—this way, Colonel."

The hackman with a proud step marshalled the young soldier into the court-yard, while at the same moment Pierre appeared on the staircase and descended the steps with precaution.

"I don't hear any one speak," quoth Pierre gazing around him, and then addressing the young girl, he continued: "Come down, mademoiselle, there is no one here."

"Has Monsieur Jean gone out then?" inquired the young lady, who, in addition to her costume, wore the little bonnet purchased for her by the kind old veteran.

"Oh! no!" responded Pierre, as he caught sight of the hack, still standing in the court-yard; "perhaps he is in the stable: shall I call him, Miss?"

"Do not disarrange him," modestly replied the young maiden.

"Here he is!" exclaimed Pierre, as he noticed Jean coming from the stable.

"The son of General Roger!" quoth Jean, talking to himself; then observing his guests, he gaily said, "Ah, Pierre! and Mademoiselle?"

"We have been waiting for you," observed the beautiful girl, gently.

"You did not come, so, as I wished to thank you—for the pretty bonnet you had the kindness to buy me, I come to you. How do you do this morning?"

"Good heavens! how beautiful!" exclaimed Jean in raptures—"after all, it is not the bonnet—but since your color has returned—"

"I trust it has," interrupted the girl, taking a seat. "Monsieur Jean, we will have a long account to settle. So many cares! such kindness, and so much money spent for me, every day!"

"Money, mademoiselle!" stammered the hackman, "don't speak of that! we always have it! that is to say, Pierre and I have a little which always sleeps in our money box—"

"Yes, we have a money box," quoth the Savoyard, coming to his rescue.

"And I have something more," modestly said the damsel, in tones of gratitude, "to request from your inexhaustible goodness—"

"Perhaps a little shawl," thought Petit Pierre to himself, "now is the time to offer mine," and he went off to search for the precious article in the cap box.

"It is four days," resumed the girl, "since I have been with you?"

"Yes, mademoiselle," responded Jean, "four days."

"I have had but a few hours," continued the young maiden, "when the light of reason dawned upon me, when I have been permitted the use of my senses—during these hours I have thought of your goodness—of God—and of my mother."

"Your poor mother," sighed forth the generous Jean, "must be sorely distressed on your account."

"No, happily," gratefully replied the girl, "she does not expect me—she believes me absent on a journey."

"That is indeed lucky," interposed Pierre advancing to her, holding behind him the bundle containing his intended present, "and your father, Mademoiselle?"

"My father!" mournfully added the damsel, "it was to escape him that I so imprudently ventured abroad."

"He loves you not!" ejaculated the wonder-stricken Jean.

"He!" exclaimed the maiden disdainfully, "he is not my father; my mother has lost her first husband."

"Then he is but your step-father?" insinuated the hackman.

"Yes," replied the lady sadly, "my good mother who never wished to marry again, sacrificed herself for my welfare to save my fortune, and she has been sadly recompensed. On account of my step-father, I do not fly, this very instant, to the arms of my mother, whom I will expect to-morrow, and whom I wish to apprise in secret—not of my accident, but of my unexpected arrival. Dare I supplicate you, beg of you to take charge of a letter to her?"

During these remarks, Petit Pierre passed to the opposite side of the lady and gaily unfolded his cherished shawl.

"That is an easy task," replied Jean.

"You will please to hand to her a note in private, and to her alone," resumed the damsel; "for should the letter fall into the hands of my step-father, evil will come of it."

"Rest easy on that score," responded Jean; "it will soon be evening, I will soon go to my stand for the night. Does your mother live in Paris?"

"Rue de Verneuil, No. 8," replied the lady.

"No. 8!" ejaculated Jean, "are you not mistaken in the number?"

"No," returned the girl.

"No. 8!" rejoined Jean, "that is a magnificent mansion."

"Which belongs to my mother," resumed the young lady.

"To your mother!" exclaimed Jean, while Pierre who had unrolled his shawl to surprise her by throwing it over her shoulders, remained petrified, as it were.

"There," continued the maiden, following out her plan of instructions, "you will request the porter to conduct you to the Countess d'Arezzo."

"What, Mademoiselle!" exclaimed the astonished Jean, "are you the daughter of a Countess?"

"Yes," smilingly replied the young girl.

"You, Mademoiselle!" repeated the hackman, in redoubled astonishment.

"The daughter of a Countess!" murmured Petit Pierre to himself, "the shawl is too small," and he vigorously rolled it up again.

"And I," resumed Jean, "have dared to offer you—oh! it was not a bonnet, it should have been a hat! but I didn't know and—you must pardon me."

"That bonnet, Monsieur Jean," warmly responded the young girl, "I would not exchange for a diadem.—It will be treasured as the best souvenir of my life."

"In truth?" interposed Pierre, then he internally resolved to present her with the shawl, which he unfolded again.

"Go hide yourself with your three livre shawl," quoth Jean to the Savoyard, and who was approaching the girl, cap in hand.

"It won't do then," muttered the disconsolate Pierre as he retired to refold up his unfortunate purchase.

"Madam, you have suffered probably from the poverty of your host," apologetically asserted the humane hackman.

"All the treasures of the earth," responded the young maiden enthusiastically, "could not have drawn me from the river; we cannot purchase courage and devotion."

"That is true," mused Jean, "for it is not wealth which gives a heart."

"Oh, yes, you are right," responded Jane; "and have a care that my letter does not fall in the hands of the Count d'Arezzo."

"Have no fear," answered Jean.

"I will hasten and write it," joyfully exclaimed the girl.

"Yes, Mademoiselle," replied Jean, "Pierre will guide you to the chamber and bring you everything you want."

"Come, Mademoiselle," kindly quoth Pierre, "everything is in the chamber."

"And while you are writing," resumed the hackman, "I will harness up the team; it will not be long."

"This way, Mademoiselle," gallantly quoth Pierre, guiding the young woman along the stairway. Then as he gazed upon the fair creature his thoughts turned upon his intended present, and he for a moment wavered in determination between giving it to the flower girl or converting it into a waistcoat.

CHAPTER XII.

THE LOST TREASURE IS FOUND!

HONEST JEAN, the hackman, reflected seriously upon the narrative of the young girl, and wondered intensely how a step-father could render this treasure of a girl unhappy. She was the daughter of a Countess, and the worthy man thought to himself that his Jane might

be one too, for Genevieve was of a noble family. As the bewildered hackman sought for his reins which he unhooked from the wall and hung around his neck, he meditated that his daughter would soon be twenty-one years of age, and was now perchance married to some gay nobleman. Jean soothed his conscience by the reminiscence that upon each succeeding anniversary of her birth, he had caused mass to be said to ensure the blessings of Providence upon her.

"After all," soliloquized the perplexed Jean, "the young creature calculates upon me and I must make haste—where are my reins? I had them a moment ago—ah! here they are—I scarcely know what I am about; my head is wool-gathering."

"Jean!" exclaimed Pierre, coming down the stairway out of breath and violently agitated, "there is no need of harnessing up the horses; I'll carry the letter to the Countess. You must not go there with it."

"And why not?" inquired Jean.

"Listen to me," resumed Pierre, nervously; "a moment ago as the young girl was about to write, I said to her something like this: 'if your mother is a Countess, are you not one too, my little woman?' 'No,' said she to me, 'fathers alone give titles to their children, and my father was a poor man, who was killed upon Mount Cenis in guiding a French General.'"

"My God!" exclaimed Jean, as the realization of his daily dreams flashed before his brain.

"And what was his name? I asked," continued Pierre, "and without hesitation she told me—Jean Thibaut."

"It is my daughter—my Jane!" quoth the hackman in plenitude of joy, as he advanced towards the stairway.

"Where are you going?" interposed Pierre, stopping him.

"Are you certain she spoke that name?" again inquired the joy-bewildered Jean, returning to his ancient comrade.

"As sure as Jane," replied Pierre, "that the Countess d'Arezzo is no one but Genevieve."

"Both living!" exclaimed Jean, raising his hands to Heaven in mute thanksgiving. "Yes, Pierre, I know now why Heaven has spared my life against cannon ball and grape shot—it was that at some future day, I should snatch my daughter from the jaws of death. What! this beautiful girl is the little babe I have nursed. Great God above, I am repaid for all my sorrow. Conduct me to her, let me see her!"

"Calm yourself, Jean," remonstrated Pierre, as he noticed the temporary delirium into which his friend had relapsed, "don't go on so! look at me, see how cool I am."

"But you are not her father," murmured Jean.

"Am I not her god-father?" argued the Savoyard, "she's my god-daughter—she's both our daughter."

"Yes, my friend!" responded Jean, affectionately and rationally, "we have but one heart and one thought, dear little Pierre. And so the good God has conducted her to my poor roof."

Pierre could not withstand the expression of his comrade's confidence, as he threw himself into his arms wildly, while Jean winced away the tears rolling down his rugged cheeks.

"It was likewise a kind Heaven," continued Pierre, earnestly, "which inspired me to prevent you going to the commissary, for he would have compelled all of us to appear, you, the Countess, and her step-father. And justice would have her eyes open wide, and would have found a woman again with two husbands like the pretty bar-woman, as you know,—and ten years of imprisonment."

"But Genevieve is not guilty!" exclaimed Jean, "she thought me dead; she would not marry again, as Jane has said, only through devotion for her daughter."

"I know all that," responded Pierre, sagely, "still law is law; you let her think you were dead when you were not. Beside Genevieve with you was poor; with another she is rich and a Countess, and if they find out that her first husband lives——"

"You are right," sternly said the hackman, "they would dishonor her; still they shall know nothing about it. Still I dread that Genevieve will cause her own ruin—she will insist upon seeing him who has saved her child."

"And should she see you," interrupted Pierre, cautiously, "danger may come of it."

"Have no fear," firmly responded Jean, "for Genevieve will never see me again. I have been offered a post in Piedmont. I have the Colonel's card, who offered it to me. I will find him out and then see you."

"Hush!" interrupted Pierre, "here she comes."

And as the light, agile, and truly beautiful figure of Jane descended the stairway, the veteran exclaimed, in warmth of paternal pride:

"It is, it is her, indeed!"

"Monsieur Jean," quoth the young woman to the astounded, wonder-stricken hackman, "here is my letter."

"I, Mademoiselle," said Pierre, advancing to her, "am going to carry it. Jean, who commenced work so early, is fatigued, but I have slept late. Beside I am going to work, as every day I do a little upon the Quai Voltaire, which is but two steps from the Rue de Verneuil, and so you may rest assured that your letter will be delivered into the hands of the Countess."

"I thank you in advance," gratefully said the maiden as she remitted the note gracefully into his hands.

"Jean," quoth the Savoyard, advancing to the hackman, who seemed lost in deep meditation, "Eh! my old Jean, won't you give me a shake of the hand before I go."

"Willingly," responded Jean, extending his hand.

"You will not leave before my return," whispered Pierre, so as not to be overheard by the beautiful damsel.

"No!" replied Jean in a similar tone of voice, "I will wait until Mademoiselle Jane is asleep; I long, before I go, to kiss her as she sleeps."

"Here we go!" gaily said the Savoyard, as he lifted upon his head the board loaded with the plaster images which had survived the sale at the fete of St. Cloud.

"All right!" ejaculated Jean, as he kindly steadied the board.

"Now we're off!" quoth Pierre, with the shop resting firmly above him, "au revoir, Mademoiselle Jane; be here shortly, Jean!" and the gay Savoyard, with his humble stock-in-trade, moved into the street, where his voice was soon heard, exhorting passers-by to purchase the unrivalled specimens of art he had for sale at marvellously low prices.

Jane stood in silent meditation, and her face beamed in joy as she thought that her mother would soon have her letter, and on the morrow she would be secreted in the hospitable mansion of the gallant Colonel Roger.

"To-morrow," quoth Jean to himself in deep meditation likewise, "I will seek Colonel Roger, but I must first spend a few hours with my dearest long-lost daughter."

"Monsieur Jean," interrupted the young girl, "are you going to be so kind as to spend some time with me?"

"Yes, Mademoiselle," replied the hackman, "we will go into your room where there is a good fire burning."

Jane took his daughter gently by the arm, the heart of the honest man filled to overflowing, and his suppressed joy could only find vent in a few straggling tear-drops.

CHAPTER XIII.

A MOTHER'S SOLICITUDE.

COLONEL ROGER was seated in his house in the rue de la Paix, reflecting over the contents of a letter purporting to come from his betrothed announcing her approaching arrival from Fontainebleau and her intention to come to his house to secretly rejoin her mother.

"I trust," so soliloquized the young soldier, "that a fresh departure will not intervene before our marriage, for the Count d'Arezzo has made a formal apology to me, overwhelmed me with compliments, and finally agreed to a reconciliation with his wife. How astonished will Jane be at ascertaining this marvellous change! The emperor's letter has effected a miracle, and I am happy for it, for the five days of Jane's absence appear to have been as many centuries."

"I take the liberty of announcing myself at your service," respectfully said a servant entering the apartment.

"Ah, Benoit!" responded the Colonel, "I was waiting for you. Do you know the hour of the arrival of the diligence from Fontainebleau?"

"Between twelve and one," replied the domestic.

"Take my cabriolet," resumed the Colonel, "and drive to the office—you know the daughter of the Countess d'Arezzo?"

"I have seen her with her mother frequently, Colonel," was the answer.

"She will be a passenger doubtlessly, in the diligence," continued

the soldier, "You will tell her that I have sent you in advance for her."

The Colonel's sentence was cut off by a sharp ring at the bell.

"News from the Rue de Verneuil; see who is there?" quoth the domestic who almost immediately ushered in the Countess d'Arezzo.

"Good morning, Madame," said the Colonel with an affectionate salutation, "now, Benoit, lose not a moment."

The servant left the room, while the Countess, whose solicitude and agitation was apparent, seated herself by the Colonel.

"I have many things to tell you," said the lady.

"Nothing disagreeable I hope," inquired the Colonel.

"Quite the reverse," responded the Countess, "Good news."

"I have sent it in advance to Mademoiselle Jane," resumed the soldier.

"She will be here in two hours," quoth the Countess, "the diligence arrives at half past twelve."

"Now, Madame, I can listen to you—" resumed the Colonel as he arranged his papers on the table and took a seat opposite to her.

"You must know that when you quitted the mansion last evening," commenced the lady, "you left me in conversation with the Count."

"Yes, Madame," nervously interrupted the young Colonel.

"We talked for a long while about Jane," resumed the Countess.

"I have found the Count embarrassed or rather repentant, after accusing himself of a coldness, involuntary on his part, or rather irresolution, he passed a eulogy upon you, and he said he would be happy, for the sake of a reconciliation with her, to hasten your nuptials by giving a consent he had hitherto withheld."

"It is preferable both for our reputation and his own," responded the soldier, "that the marriage be arranged amicably."

"You are right, Henri," resumed the Countess, "and in the hope of attaining that object, I have announced to the Count that to-day I hope to meet Jane."

"But," interrupted the Colonel, "you did not communicate to him the contents of the letter."

"Oh, no!" warmly replied the lady; "I could not; the bearer of the note forbid such a movement; so I invented a little falsehood. I told him that when Jane left for about ten days of absence, she had upon our separation agreed to return secretly to embrace me at Paris and that we were to meet on the fifth at your house—which is to-day—that Jane, faithful to her promise, arrived here to pass an hour with me and that I, by announcing the happy resolution of her father-in-law, could prevent her from leaving again."

"Very good, indeed," exclaimed the delighted Roger.

"The Count," proceeded the lady, "upon hearing that I anticipated seeing Jane to-day, could not, restrain his emotions, and has given me authority to unite his requests with ours in a word, he is coming here, and I have hurried to let you know of the arrangement in advance."

"Madame," gleefully observed the colonel, "everything works well."

"Now," continued the Countess, "I have let you know of my anticipation, let me explain my inquietude."

"What can it be?" interposed the young man anxiously.

"I cannot define them," responded the lady, "but they are based upon this letter of Jane's—perceive how singularly it is sealed."

"It is not easy," remarked the Colonel, after examining the seal, "to find all necessary writing materials at a village inn."

"Still, Jane," continued the Countess, "carries a seal, attached to her watch, which is engraved with her initials—besides, see how the hand writing trembles."

"So it does," corroborated the Colonel.

"And further listen to the sombre style of the composition," remarked the Countess as she read:

"Dear Mother—I cannot live away from you and yet I dread to encounter the Count, that man who would cause our death, were not Providence to watch over us."

"You perceive," observed the Countess, pausing in her reading, "it would be impossible to exhibit this to the Count."

"Certainly, it would re-awaken his enmity," replied Roger, as the lady continued with the epistle:

"Towards the middle of the day, I will arrive at the dwelling of the Colonel; hasten to precede me there, and think in advance of some means for my concealment, where you can console the poor daughter who loves thee so dearly."
JANE."

"That letter was conceived in a profound state of melancholy," he remarked, as the sound of a carriage called him to the window. "It is the Count; conceal the letter while I go to receive the Count d'Arezzo."

"Henri is right," soliloquized the Countess, as she concealed the note and took off her hat and shawl. "The Count would gain nothing, but lose all, by deceiving us. I know the reason, but I am tormented despite myself; I would to Heaven the day was passed."

"Gentlemen, enter," quoth the Colonel, ushering in the Count and his inseparable companion, the Florentine forger; "the Countess, who is already here, awaits your coming."

"Colonel," said the Count, entering the apartment, "I have taken the liberty of being accompanied by my friend, Monsieur Morel, who, as you will hereafter judge, may be useful to us."

"You are welcome, sir," responded the Colonel politely.

"Colonel, you really do me very great honor," quoth the Florentine with obsequious humility.

"My step-daughter has not yet arrived?" remarked d'Arezzo.

"She will not be long behind us," responded the Countess.

"My dear Count," warmly spoke the young soldier, "the Countess has filled my head with joy by announcing to me you good-disposition with regard to us—"

"Some rumors have already been circulated with respect to my

opposition to this union," returned the Count with affected disinterestedness, "and I have deemed it proper to crush them by accelerating its consummation. It is therefore necessary to enter upon some important examinations; and therefore I have brought with me Monsieur Morel, who will present you with the balance sheet of my account of Jane's guardianship."

"Here are the documents," said Morel, producing them.

"For my part, gentlemen," quoth the frank soldier, "my fortune is open to inspection. The Emperor Napoleon, to reward the father in the person of the son, has conferred upon him the forests of Piedmont; to it he has added the pension of my rank, and a little pleasure mansion, which has been bought since my return to Paris."

"Colonel," interposed Morel, "the marriage contract of the Count d'Arezzo proves that the estate of Mademoiselle Jane was, at the period of his taking charge of it, valued at twelve hundred thousand livres. Had the speculation of the Count turned out always profitable this fortune would have been doubled during the past twelve years, but it has progressed in a proportion which you can determine and appreciate only by examining the accounts which I place at your disposal."

"In the evening I will charge my notary with their examination and with drawing up the marriage contract," responded the Colonel, placing the documents in the hands of his secretary. "I think I hear some one walking in the adjoining apartment."

"It is doubtlessly my daughter," said the Countess, rising in agitation, as the Count and Morel likewise quitted their seats. The hopes of the mother were disappointed; it was but Benoit who returned and spoke to his master.

"The daughter of the Countess," replied the domestic aloud in response to a question of the lady, "was not in the diligence from Fontainebleau."

"Are you quite certain?" interrupted the Count, with a significant glance at his companion—the counterfeiter.

"The diligence brought but three persons, and Mademoiselle Jane was not among them."

"There are other coaches which stop at Fontainebleau, which likewise take passengers."

"The diligences from Lyons and Orleans, but they will not arrive before evening," returned the domestic.

"Very well!" responded the Colonel as the domestic left the room.

"I cannot explain this delay," quoth the Countess, with evident uneasiness of manner.

"If Mademoiselle Jane was to have left Fontainebleau this morning, it is to be presumed that she has taken the post coach," interposed Morel.

"In that case she would have arrived sooner," interrupted the Countess.

"Doubtlessly," remarked the Colonel, likewise uneasy.

"I have a presentiment of some misfortune," said the Countess;

"I must leave, and go find it out."

"Be not tremulous concerning her, madame," interrupted the Count. "Reflect for a moment that your daughter has agreed to return to Paris in five days; that is to-day, and some very trivial incident may have detained her."

"Hark, some one at the door!" exclaimed Henri.

"It must be her!" ejaculated the Countess sorrowfully.

"I humbly trust it is," replied the Colonel, who gallantly proffered his arm to the tremulous mother, and led her forth to welcome her child, should she have arrived.

CHAPTER XIV.

RESUSCITATION OF THE DEAD.

"The moment of dissimulation has arrived, Morel," quoth the Count to his companion in iniquity, when alone.

"The Countess will doubtlessly proceed to Fontainebleau," remarked Morel, in a whisper to his companion.

"Or rather to Chaillot," observed the Count.

"The Colonel," said Morel, "will not have time to occupy himself with his notary or with the accounts which you dictated."

"Happily not," returned the Venetian.

"The Countess will soon be informed of her misfortune," continued Morel; "I commence to tremble already."

"Why so?" inquired the Count.

"From fear suspicion may fall upon us," replied Morel.

"The disappearance of the jewels will remove every suspicion from us," returned the Italian.

"Still you are the heir of Jane—" resumed the forger.

"In faith, a good reason, that!" interrupted the Count. "Think, we are in our own apartments, seen by our servants, at half past ten, and within an hour afterwards we were served by them in the same apartment, whence none saw us go out."

"That is true!" remarked Morel with satisfaction.

"So much towards an alibi!" rejoined the Count; "and now the fatal hour approaches—it causes me a fever, which will be mistaken for agitation arising from grief—Hark, they come! now put a good face upon the matter."

"God be praised!" exclaimed the Colonel upon his entrance, "here is your step-daughter."

"My step-daughter!" ejaculated the Venetian with a vacant stare of incredulity.

"Yes, father!" quoth Jane, as the Count stood petrified and his brother culprit trembled from head to foot.

"They tell me," meekly resumed Jane, "that you have consented to sanction our nuptials—nay, you do not reply?"

"Excuse me," stammered forth the Count, trembling as if he

beheld an apparition from the grave, "we were all—yes, all were—uneasy—"

"Our inquietude have vanished," replied the young girl, unsuspiciously; "embrace me, father."

The Count, almost ready to faint, leaned forward and kissed his daughter upon her forehead, who turned, after his embrace to her mother.

"Mother, Henri!" affectionately quoth the maiden, tear-drops standing in her eyes, "I am happy in being with you—I have suffered so much, while I was away from you."

"Suffered!" ejaculated the Countess, "why not send for me?"

"I could not, mother," replied the girl.

"But where was Ambroise?" inquired the anxious parent.

"I have not seen him," returned the maiden.

"Not seen him!" ejaculated the astonished Countess.

"The absence of Ambroise," replied the girl, "caused me to be the victim of a misfortune, so terrible, that I would not have mentioned it had I not contracted a debt which all of us must join in repaying."

"I tremble from head to foot," sighed the Countess.

"A misfortune!" inquired the Count in dissimulation.

"Ambroise came not to meet me," continued Jane, "and I continued along toward Chaillot; I trembled, for the long way grew more and more deserted, when profiting by my isolation two men in masks threw themselves upon me."

"Great Heavens!" ejaculated the Countess.

"Stricken by terror," Jane proceeded, "I became insensible in their hands, when the two wretches, doubtlessly to annihilate the evidence of their crime, threw me into the Seine."

"Thou! my daughter!" exclaimed the Countess, clasping her arms around her most affectionately.

"Weep not, mother!" soothingly resumed the damsel, "I am here with you again; weep not, for Providence has saved thy child—"

"By what miracle?" exclaimed Henri.

"What passed for three days," continued Jane, I know not, for during that time my reason wandered, but after that the light of intellect returning to me, casually through the intervals of fever, I discovered that a passer-by—a hackman, the best and most courageous of men, had dragged me from the water at the peril of his own life, and had carried me to his dwelling and watched day and night by my bedside. In due, in his poverty he had found means to succor me, and his kindness, like a ray from heaven, restored me to life."

"The name of this noble man?" inquired the Countess.

"He is called Jean," returned the grateful girl,—"the name of my father—"

"Where is he?" enthusiastically cried the joyous mother.

"I cannot designate his dwelling," responded Jane, "Oh, I had hoped to bring my saviour with me, but he deserted me when I was sleeping, and a friend, whom I found instead of him, Monsieur Jean had

gone on a journey. Thus would he avoid my gratitude, but he shall not, cannot, escape my researches, for I know the number of his carriage—No. 226. That figure is indelibly marked upon my memory."

"226!" ejaculated Henri, "I know the man."

"You know him?" inquired Jane, in astonishment.

"I received information concerning him at the Prefecture," returned the Colonel, "and have inscribed it upon this pocket book, which he, in his honesty, returned to me after leaving it in his carriage."

Roger drew forth his pocket-book and read: "226, hack driven by Jean, s yled the Mountaineer; residence, rue de Passy, Barriere des Bonnes Hommes."

"Order my carriage," exclaimed excitedly the Countess, "I must see that man."

"Pardon me, Colonel," said Benoit, on entering the room, "there is an ex-soldier, who has begged me to hand you this card."

"It is my own, let him await a moment," said the Colonel; after the servant had gone out, he discovered some writing upon the back. "What is this," he continued, as he read: "I have reflected, Colonel, and beg of you to accord to me, as soon as possible, the place of forest guard in Piedmont, which you have promised me."

Turning to Jane, the Colonel whispered: "It is the Mountaineer!" Advancing to the Countess, who had put on her hat and shawl, the Colonel said to her gaily: "Madame, remain; the man who sent this card in to me is—Jean, the hackman!"

"Heaven has surely sent him hither!" responded the Countess, again taking off her toilet garments.

"Come in!" shouted the Colonel to the coachman without the door, "Monsieur Jean, come in!"

"Excuse me," quoth Jean, who had entered the apartment unaware of other persons being present, "you have company, I will retire."

"Nay," said the soldier, kindly restraining his departure, "there are none here who should be strangers to you."

"None but friends, Monsieur Jean," exclaimed Jane, running to him affectionately.

"Mademoiselle Jane!" ejaculated the Mountaineer, astounded.

"And her mother, sir," interposed the Countess, "who desires to bless you for saving her life."

Genevieve recognized the features of the long-lost Jean Claude, and gave vent to a piercing cry of alarm.

"What ails you, madame?" said the Count, approaching her.

"Save me, Count," wildly exclaimed the semi-frantic lady, "you whose injustice has almost caused the—the—death of my daughter. That man there—who sacrificed himself for her—he alone has the right—"

Before the Countess could complete the sentence, her face turned pale, and her speech failed her.

"Mother!" exclaimed Jane, running to her assistance, while Jean, who had made a few steps in advance, turned upon his heel, by a desperate effort to master his impulse to rush to the unhappy lady's rescue.

"Carry me hence," murmured the Countess, in a state of semi-consciousness. The Colonel hastily opened the door of an inner apartment, and conducted the trembling lady within it, accompanied by her equally agitated daughter, but not, however, until her lips whispered the solemn words: "Jean Claude still lives!"

The Count paced the room in meditation; a fresh enigma was presented for solution, and for a moment he was at a loss to comprehend the reason why the presence of this obscure man could exert so powerful an influence upon the emotions of his wife.

"Wretched man as I am!" murmured Jean, in a paroxysm of grief which seized upon his sensitive soul.

"Jean!" quoth the Count, "styled the Mountaineer."

"Your star is accursed!" whispered Morel to his companion.

"Perhaps," whispered the Venetian in return, "but, Morel, leave me alone with this hackman, go!"

Morel gazed for a moment upon them both, and murmured to himself: "what can he hope to do now?" and with this observation, he took his departure from the chamber.

"I must haste to leave this house," muttered Jean, advancing to wards the door with a moody, melancholic step.

"Stop, sir!" interposed the Count, "I cannot let you go thus; I owe you a tribute of gratitude; I am the father-in-law of Jane."

"Ah! you are the man, then!" said Jean, with a gesture of contempt.

"Yes," continued the Count in a familiar manner, "I became the second husband of Genevieve Thibaut, widow of the father of this young lady."

"You have then gained," responded Jean most tranquilly. "a very kind, gentle girl, and very beautiful."

"I owe her return to you," resumed the Count in a tone of perfect dissimulation, "and therefore—I desire—I pray of you that you will consider my house, as I may say, as your own."

"Unfortunately," replied the hackman, "I am about to quit France."

"Soon?" inquired the Count.

"In an hour," responded, "My comrades are waiting for me."

"But the Countess will be inconsolable," interrupted the Italian, "if you go hence without her being able to thank you, you see; I will go and let her know."

"No!" quoth Jean, attempting to stop his movement. "I wish to tell you that I am an old soldier, very rough at that, and I know not the way of talking to your high-bred ladies—I would rather go, and you can arrange all the rest."

"It is impossible," said the Count, "here comes the Countess; she will accuse me if I suffer you to leave without her seeing you, and—not to annoy you—I will leave you together alone."

CHAPTER XV.

THE TEST OF LOVE.

THE heart of the Mountaineer beat rapidly as the Count made a sign as if going through one of the doors as the Countess entered through another. Instead, however, of leaving the apartment, the wily Venetian merely glided behind one of the curtains, whose damask folds concealed the windows.

"Pardon me," said the Countess in a half-stifled voice, "if my emotion at first paralyzed my speech;" then casting her eyes about her, she continued, "Where is the Count?"

"He is there," responded the hackman, gazing around the room, when not being able to see him, he murmured to himself, "is he concealed somewhere?"

"He is listening to us," whispered the lady, "I heard the curtain shake."

"Let us be upon our guard?" quoth Jean cautiously.

"Without you, sir," commenced the Countess, her eyes intently fixed upon the curtain, "the mother who now speaks to you would be dying with grief."

"You would have been very much distressed," calmly responded the Mountaineer, "had the young woman perished."

"I would," proceeded the Countess, "that my gratitude could equal the courage displayed by you in saving her from death."

"Oh, my courage!" tranquilly answered Jean, "why, you see, Madam—that would be a good deal for some people, and nothing for others. When a man has been twelve years a soldier, when he has marched across battle-fields, exposed to every kind of peril, then he learns the necessity of aiding his fellow-creatures; of picking up one who has fallen, or of tendering the hand to one who is down—and you may say that, without forethought, Providence impels some to assist others."

"Oh, you are right," interrupted the Countess, "the ways of heaven are unfathomable mysteries, which humble the strong and succor the weak, which unite and—separate."

"We are certainly overheard," whispered Jean as he mastered his emotions.

"Yes," continued the Countess as she drew a medallion from her bosom. "Providence teaches us to bless a man to-day, of whom we knew nothing the day before."

While she spoke, she directed the attention of the Mountaineer to

a medallion of pewter, which the Alpine Guide had bestowed upon his wife upon his return from the Grand Bourgo many years before. Upon the sight of this relic, Jean, who was about to speak, suddenly become mute, while the tears coursed rapidly down the cheek of the unhappy lady.

"Have you children, Monsieur Jean?" inquired the Countess.

"No, madam, I have never been married," replied the Mountaineer. "An orphan from infancy, I have ever been alone in the world."

The Mountaineer drew from his bosom the counterpart of the medallion, and secretly exhibited it to Genevieve.

"Since you have no child upon whom I can shower my gratitude," resumed the Countess, "it is with you, Monsieur Jean, that I must settle my debt and obligation."

"I understand, Madam," replied Jean, disguising his feeling by an outburst of laughter, while the tears trickled down his rugged cheeks; "you would pay me for what I have done; well, I accept the offer, only I don't know how much it was worth."

"First take this purse," said the Countess, drawing forth a purse which at first he hesitated about taking, but finally accepted.

"This purse is indeed a heavy one," said Jean, as he jingled its contents; "after all, it is perhaps but the price of service."

"With this gold I will have a glorious revel; I will spend it without remorse, for I have no family."

"Poor Jean Claude!" murmured the lady.

"I will assemble my companions," continued Jean, "and we will recommence the celebration of Saint Medard, fete of hackmen, and we will drink, for the Mountaineer stands the shot, to the health of Mademoitelle, as well as yours. Ever thanking the Countess, I have the honor of saluting you."

The Countess made an attempt to restrain his departure, but Jean insisted that his absence was requisite, as he was on the verge of a journey. The Countess heaved a deep sigh, and with her eyes filled with tears, disappeared through the doorway, announcing her determination to summon her daughter.

"Poor Genevieve!" murmured Jean, sorrowfully, "wealth has not given her happiness."

"It is not him!" quoth the Count to himself. "Besides, he alluded to his journey, and is waiting to see Jane again."

"She was right!" meditated Jean, without noticing the Count.

"Heaven has mysterious ways;—ah! the Count is listening: I was well aware that he was in that game."

"So you have seen the Countess," inquired the Italian.

"Yes, sir," responded the hackman, concealing his emotions.

"How excited he is," quoth the Count internally as he crossed in front of Jean to assume a seat upon the lounge, "I am not quite certain, yet—it may be possible that instead of remaining among the dead, Jean Claude has arisen to avenge himself. He must submit to another test."

"Monsieur Jean," exclaimed Jane, entering the apartment, "they told me you wished to speak to me."

"Yes, mademoiselle," replied the hackman.

"And I have so many things to tell you!" responded the girl.

"You waste your time, Miss," interposed the Count, arising from the lounge and placing himself between the speakers; "for Monsieur Jean has but a few moments to spare, and I wish to take advantage of them, for I have something serious to speak of to him."

"With me?" ejaculated Jean.

"Yes, with you," returned the Venitian.

"Can you imagine," interrupted the maiden, "that I have nothing serious to say to him—yes, sir, I?"

"I do not seek," responded the Count, speaking violently, "to rob you of an opportunity. I beg you to withdraw, and will wait until you are gone."

"But, sir," remonstrated Jane.

"In a word!" exclaimed the Count, imperatively, "your father commands you—obey—begone!"

"You are not my father," responded the maiden, indignantly.

"I know it well, Miss," sarcastically resumed the nobleman, "in that I have committed an irrevocable fault—in receiving you into my house, in becoming the husband of your mother—concealing beneath a noble title the shame and ignominy of a prior marriage."

"Shame!" exclaimed the young woman; "shame! there was nothing shameful in my mother's marriage—my father was poor, it is true—"

"So poor," interrupted the Count, "that he was a beggar!"

The hackman, however, was sufficiently keen-witted to catch the drift of the Count's assumed anger, so he leisurely retired to a distance, whence he endeavored to catch the eye of the young woman to put her on her guard.

"A beggar!" exclaimed Jane haughtily, "It is false!"

"At least I have been told so," remarked the Count.

"My father," continued the maiden, excitedly, "was indeed a poor man, a guide in the mountains, who walked night and day, frequently upon his bare feet, to earn money to nourish his household, which he blessed by his presence. There are others, Count, like you, soulless, heartless—"

"Jane," interrupted the noble, "you weary my patience."

"Heartless man," continued the girl, not heeding his interruption, "who outrages both the living and the dead."

"Enough!" interposed the Count.

"Whose presence is a curse," resumed the damsel.

"Mademoiselle!" ejaculated the Count in a frenzy of rage, rushing at the girl as if to strike.

"Count!—sir—I never," interrupted Jean, throwing himself in front of the Italian with a demonstration of forcibly resenting any personal violence offered to the trembling Jane.

"What do you want?" calmly inquired the Venitian.

"Nothing," responded the hackman mastering his anger—and attempting to smile, "I have a bad habit of mingling with other people's quarrels—that I have."

"It is truly Jean Claude," murmured the Count to himself.

"I saw you lift your hand," continued Jean, going up to the Count and attempting to excuse his conduct, "and then my bad habit came upon me—I as I told you, always meddle in what don't concern me; I ought to have gone—I will go now." Then reflecting that Jane might not be safe when left unprotected, the mountaineer proceeded to address her: "Mademoiselle, it would be better for you to retire—the Count is angry."

"He shows an interest in her safety," murmured the Count.

"Retire, I beg of you," continued Jean.

"But, Monsieur Jean," hesitatingly replied the girl.

"For my sake, do retire," solicited the mountaineer, "as a favor."

"For you, as a favor to you, Monsieur Jean, I withdraw;" thus speaking the young girl left the apartment, kissing her hand as if in adieu to the warm-hearted Coachman. Jean turned around and rapidly wiped away a tear falling from his eyes.

"He has wept," exclaimed the Count, "he wipes away tears."

"I have truly asked your pardon," continued the Mountaineer, "I did not intend offence—but I was excited! was wrong! I am as harmless as a chicken, but when a young woman is threatened then—I—I break something—I'll be going."

Jean the Mountaineer without further ado precipitately departed from the chamber, while the Count clapped his hands in undisguised glee, as he gave vent to an exclamation: "She is a bigamist; I am saved!"

CHAPTER XVI.

GENEVIEVE, AGAIN!

"WHAT a curious idea of the Count," muttered Simon, as he arranged the receipt on-chambers of the Mansion d'Arezzo in the rue de Verneuil, "who ordered me, should a hackman call, to show him into the parlor."

"Yes," quoth Jean, speaking to himself, "I did right in responding to the summons of the Count. I cannot leave Paris, yet; my flight would doubtless augment the suspicions he entertains. What can he want of me?"

As the hackman meditated he seated himself pensively on one of the large arm chairs standing in the centre of the chamber.

"He takes things easy," murmured Simon, advancing to Jean, and touching him upon the shoulder; "Coachman, just get up or you will spoil these arm chairs."

"Pardon," quoth Jean, still in a pensive mood, passing to another in a different part of the saloon.

"He takes the arm-chair for a box seat," ironically murmured Simon as he dusted off the article of furniture.

"Again!" exclaimed Simon on entering, Jean assumed another seat; "It is scarce worth the trouble of making you get up if you go from one to another."

"Excuse me," responded Jean, still in a brown study, "I did not pay attention—I was thinking," and Jean walked about in a state of abstraction.

"I wonder how the Count will suffer," muttered Simon, as he dusted off the second chair, "such people as these to come into this saloon."

"Happily," continued Jean, walking around as he followed his train of thought, "none save Genevieve and Pierre know that Jean Claude is still in the land of the living——"

"You didn't wipe your feet before coming upon this carpet," interrupted Simon, again advancing to the Mountaineer.

"Yes," responded Jean, looking at his feet, "I am rather dusty, for I have walked a considerable distance."

"Then go and wait in the ante-chamber," gruffly commanded the domestic.

"Just as you please," responded Jean; "which way?"

"File this way," replied Simon, taking him by the shoulder.

"Hullo!" quoth Jean, remarking him seriously for the first time, "you are a lacquey, you?"

"I am head valet of the house," returned Simon.

"Head valet, eh?" retorted Jean, displacing all the chairs within his reach; "arrange this furniture, earn your wages and hold your tongue."

"Do you think," exclaimed the astounded valet, arranging the chairs in their places, "I'm here to wait upon you?"

"Simon?" quoth the Countess, "my daughter requires you."

"The Countess!" ejaculated the Mountaineer, taking off his hat respectfully and holding it in his hand.

"You are doubtless astonished, Madame," said Simon to the Countess, "to find this man here in this saloon, but it is by order of the Count." Thus speaking he left the room.

"Jean Claude," resumed the Countess, after having closed the doors, "we are now alone."

"Imprudent woman!" ejaculated the hackman.

"The Count has been unexpectedly called to the Treasury," exclaimed the lady.

"He can return and surprise us," remarked Jean.

"Some one is on the watch!" returned the Countess.

"But should we be betrayed?" observed the hackman.

"Our guardian will never betray us," rejoined the lady.

"Depart, I pray of you," implored Jean, "for I have lost confidence in all mankind."

"In Petit Pierre?" naively inquired the Countess.

"In him, I have," gaily replied the veteran.

"He has worked his way to me," resumed the Countess, "he watches on one side, your daughter upon the other."

"They will be faithful to their trust," replied the hackman.

"I have desired," resumed the lady, "to profit by this hour, whenever we will be without witnesses, for that, before being uneasy as to the estimation of the world at large, I desire to secure that of Jean Claude."

"Madame!" exclaimed Jean.

"For a long time, I swear it," proceeded the Countess, "although having the proof of your death before me; I lived as in a bewildered dream. While awaiting an impossible return, while awaiting the sole riches of the soul, affection and confidence, I regretted my sudden prosperity. But passing days destroyed my hopes, and realized the bitterness of my disappointment. At the end of five years I saw the future of my child menaced, and on her account solely I was forced to sacrifice myself and accept the name of another—"

"Seek not to justify yourself," interrupted Jean Claude, "I am aware of the deepness of your sorrows."

"You!" ejaculated the Countess in surprise.

"I was miraculously saved," rejoined the Mountaineer; "I hastened to our home; there I learned that my presence would tear you from the titles and wealth of your ancestors; yes, upon the very day when you came in grief to bid farewell to Petit Pierre. Jean Claude in concealment, not able to restrain the impulse of his heart, was about to throw himself at your feet, when I overheard you say that opulence might prove the salvation to our child then, Jean Claude, who had courage to preserve silence, was prostrated in grief at the thought of leaving you a widow and an heiress."

"Unfortunate man!" returned the Countess, "if you only knew how many torments wealth has occasioned me, how envy of my portion engendered hatred, how much, in fact, I suffered daily!"

"I likewise," interrupted the hackman, "have shed many tears—have eat hard bread, and counted hours of wretchedness, still my little Jane was in refuge against the blasts of autumn and the colds of winter. Hence, while the mother was in sorrow, and the father dragged his wounded limbs on the battle-field, the child has grown up beneath a genial sun."

"And it was for her," responded the Countess, "that thou hast accepted isolation and misery; pardon me for having accused thy courage and thy will—thou, the only husband of Genevieve, thou, the martyr she has wept for in silence."

The Countess leaned upon the shoulder of her husband, and wept most profoundly.

"Genevieve!" exclaimed the mountaineer firmly, as he wiped away the tears from her eyes, "now that you are Countess, I'll tell you that which you have to do. If the Count could assure himself of the existence of your first husband he would probably institute proceedings against you, perchance with success, for men cannot rightly interpret a silence which has preserved wealth unto you. Still, that may not take place; when I followed the army, rather for death than glory, I was aware that the revelation of the name of Thibaut might

run you, therefore I volunteered under the name of Jean, the child of accident. I have never pronounced the name of my mother, nor that of Jean Claude Thibaut—come what may, you would be unaware of my existence, and could remain a widow in security."

"Yes," interposed the Countess, "but Jean the Mountaineer has saved the life of my daughter. Have I no right to see him?"

"As soon as it is proven," cautiously returned Jean, "that Jean Claude Thibaut is no longer in this world."

"The Count approaches the hotel," quoth Pierre, entering from one of the lower doors with precipitation.

"Already?" exclaimed the Countess.

"Fly!" said Jean, leading her to the door of the apartment.

"I go," returned the Countess, "remember, Jean Claude, that while the Countess must resist, Genevieve, from the bottom of her heart invokes blessings upon you. Farewell."

And the lady retired rapidly from the saloon.

"You know, old fellow," said Pierre to his comrade, "where to find me. I am under the coach yard gate with my shop. If there is any need of me, first a sign, and I'm here."

"I will reckon upon you," replied Jean.

"I always carry a good cudgel," resumed Pierre, "for we don't know when it is necessary to use it."

"Oh, no," replied Jean, "no violence here."

"Well, as you will," responded Pierre, "but it won't do to be beaten without a return. Here comes the rascal, and I'm off," then halting near the door, he continued, "you know, if needs be, you will find me."

"You will be where?" inquired the hackman.

"Under the gate-way," replied the Savoyard, "by the side of the watch-dog."

CHAPTER XVII.

AN INKLING OF THE TRUTH.

"PIERRE and Genevieve!" exclaimed Jean, as he was left alone after the departure of his guardian angel of the plaster image store, "just as they were twenty years ago. Come, I must drive every kind emotion from my heart. I must arm myself with restraint and distrust, and take care to disembarass myself with everything which can compromise me."

"You will watch in the vestibule," said the Count, entering with Simon, to whom he gave his hat and cloak, "and as soon as Colonel Roger calls, you will tell him I am impatient to see him, and show him at once into the saloon."

"Good!" said the domestic, retiring into the vestibule.

"You have been told, Monsieur," quoth the Venetian, "that I desired to see you."

"I have come hither," frankly responded the mountaineer, "to see what you wanted of me."

"Have you no suspicions?" asked the Count.

"None whatever," replied Jean.

"I sent for you to inquire," continued the Italian, "what sum of money you received of your wife to consent to pass as dead."

"I!" responded the Mountaineer, "my wife!—I don't understand your meaning."

"Are you a gambler?" resumed the Count.

"Thank God, I am not!" replied the Mountaineer.

"Then how are you so poor at present?" continued the Count. "You should have taken your share of the bargain which brought to your wife an inheritance of three millions."

"Three millions!" answered Jean, with a forced laugh.

"It is true," resumed the Venetian, "that time and the ale-house will ruin a man."

"You evidently mistake me for some one else," rejoined Jean, with a movement evincing his anger, "and your error almost amounts to an insult, therefore——"

"Be not angry quite yet, Jean Claude," calmly interrupted the Count, "I have a long story to tell you."

"What name did you mention?" inquired the Mountaineer.

"That of your father!" returned the nobleman.

"I never knew I had one," replied the hackman, "I was a foundling."

"A foundling!" smilingly resumed the Count, "then you are not the son of dame Marianne of Chambéry?"

"I know not who was my mother," answered Jean.

"Then," continued the Count in his examinations, "you did not marry in the Church of Saint Martin in the Savoy, Genevieve, adopted daughter of Marianne?"

"Never heard of her," determinately replied the Mountaineer.

"Did you not," again resumed the Count, "when Genevieve assumed the titles of her ancestors, suffer her to contract a second marriage upon conditions still more shameful than the first, by which you agreed to continue as if dead and thus make her be believed a widow?"

"Count," responded the Mountaineer in evident anger, "my patience is exhausted—finish this examination."

"The examination is finished!" said the Italian.

"It is very instructive," murmured the mountaineer.

"Do you know whence I have just come?" resumed the Count in a threatening manner.

"I know not, neither do I care," returned Jean contemptuously.

"From your residence at Passy," answered the Italian.

"My residence!" exclaimed the hackman—"the door is locked."

"I caused it to be broken in," resumed the Count.

"What?" rejoined the mountaineer, choking his inquietude beneath an outburst of rage, "that is a burglary."

"Make a complaint against me if you dare," responded the Count, in a defiant manner. "You have told me you never knew Genevieve, once poor, now wealthy—I wish I could believe you. Then how comes it I found this medallion in your possession?"

The Count arose, and going to the Mountaineer, exhibited to him the original souvenir of Genevieve in its pewter locket.

"It was given to me by a sister, who died," replied Jean, after a moment's hesitation.

"But you were a foundling," sneeringly replied the Italian.

"All foundlings are brothers and sisters," returned the coachman.

"And Genevieve was likewise a foundling?"

"Yes," replied Jean, sullenly.

"The tribunal will judge of that," quoth the Count, as he noticed a trembling seize upon the frame of the Mountaineer. "And you deny that you are the son of Dame Marianne?"

"Most positively," responded Jean.

"Then how comes it that I find at your house this chaplet, which was given to the Dame by a monk of St. Bernard?"

"All chaplets are alike," said Jean, as he recognized the relic.

"Not all," rejoined the Italian; "this one is rather peculiar, as its beads are made of the grey rock, and it hung eighteen years ago in the cottage of Jean Claude, at the base of Mount Cenis."

"Whoever told you so, has told you a wilful falsehood," tranquilly responded the Mountaineer.

"No one told me of it—I saw it there," replied the Count.

"Then you are, yourself, in error," answered Jean.

"Further to convince you," exclaimed the Italian, with a vehemence of manner, "I will summon the Countess d'Arezzo, who cannot deny that eighteen years ago, in the month of May, upon the festival of Saint Therese, I entered to rest myself into the cottage of Jean Claude, and that she herself, then called Genevieve, showed me this selfsame chaplet and told me its history."

"You are not the man who rested upon that day at the house of the Guide!"

"How do you know?" inquired the Venetian.

"That man, who likewise left the valise, was named Luidgi," answered Jean.

"Who told you so?" exclaimed the Count.

"I have been told so," tranquilly replied the hackman.

"Can you prove it?" inquired the nobleman.

"Possibly, I can," again answered Jean.

"And I can just prove that I am named Andreis Luidgi, Count d'Arezzo!" resumed the Italian, excitedly.

"You!" interrupted the Mountaineer, as he gave vent to an exclamation of exultation: "You are the man!"

The Count was inwardly congratulating himself upon having established the identity of Jean Claude, when the servant, opening the door, announced Colonel Henri Roger.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TABLES TURNED.

"You desire to speak to me?" inquired Colonel Roger, as he entered the apartment.

"Yes, Colonel," replied the Count.

"I deem it my duty to give you warning," commenced the Colonel, "that I refuse in advance every amicable arrangement you may proffer; and now be brief—what have you to say?"

"I desire to counsel you to renounce all idea of this marriage," returned the Count.

"Wherefore?" in turn inquired the Colonel—"for what reason?"

"Suffer me to refuse all explanation," rejoined the Italian.

"Still, Count—" urged the young soldier.

"It will be for your interest," returned the Count.

"It appears to me," continued the Colonel, "I have a right to require—to insist—"

"A right!" exclaimed the Venetian.

"Yes, sir," deliberately retorted Henri, "the right—"

"Well, sir, permit me merely to give you advice," resumed the Count, with renewed gravity. "People don't generally marry the daughter of a woman, to be tried before criminal courts."

"What do you mean?" inquired the Colonel testily.

"Simply that the Countess is a bigamist," replied the Venetian.

"Bigamist!" exclaimed the Colonel.

"That man," quoth the Italian, designating Jean, "who is disguised beneath the name of the Mountaineer—"

"That is Jean the hackman," returned the Colonel.

"That is," continued the Count emphatically, "Jean Claude Thibaut, the Countess' first husband, whom she declares to be dead."

"Wait a moment," quoth Jean with animation as he passed in front of the Colonel; "your pardon, sir. The Count is seeking after Jean Claude Thibaut, native of Saint Genis, an Alpine Guide, who lived near Saint Martin—yes; I knew him well—he was slain upon the Mountain."

"Along with my father!" interrupted the Colonel with a sigh.

"Who was betrayed," resumed Jean, "by a Venetian, who, on the day of Saint Therese, concealed himself within the cottage of the Guide." Then addressing the Count he continued: "Oh, I could talk to you of that story. Poor Jean Claude died in my arms, Count, saying that the traitor, whose name he had on his valise, was named Luidgi."

"Impudent wretch?" muttered the Count to himself.

"And the general Bonaparte," continued Jean Claude, to the Colonel, "although then a poor man, offered a handful of gold to whoever would discover the family of Luidgi. Now I am sure that to find out the betrayer of his companion-in-arms the Emperor Napoleon would give more than twenty conquered standards—still we have never been able to discover the family name of this accused Venetian, and you, Count, have never heard mention made of this assassin, you who were born at Venice?"

"I," said the Count, in trepidation, "I was born at Florence."

"During eighteen years," musingly quoth the Colonel, "this murderer of my father has doubtlessly died."

"We can't say," resumed Jean, his eyes fixed intently upon d'Arezzo, "ferocious animals live longer than others, and you have believed, Count, that I am Jean Thibaut, because I am named Jean and because I am a child of the Mountains. Reassure yourself, and to be convinced of your error, hold, here are the records of service of Jean the Mountaineer. Examine them, read them, there are only wanting the records of my birth and baptism. The first, my father forgot to put in the basket with me, and as to the second my companions christened me the Mountaineer. As for Jean Thibaut—a wicked idea of your own, devised to torment the Countess, it may some day bring misfortune on your own head. Sooner or later, as you well know, evil actions are punished and the older we grow, the more convinced we must be of all the justice of Heaven. Farewell, Colonel."

"Are you going?" inquired the young soldier.

"Yes, but it will not be long before we meet again, replied," Jean, then turning to the Count he continued: "I will return to demand the papers of Jean, the foundling, surnamed the Mountaineer. To a speedy meeting!"

"He is gone," murmured the Count, as he heard the doors close after the excited Mountaineer; then taking up the documents, which had been thrown upon the table by the veteran, he made a semblance of examining them.

"That man was right," resumed the Colonel, "particularly when he charged you with inventing tortures for your wife. And by what odious suspicions do you not seek to wound, to injure her, and above all to break off my marriage, which you dread so deeply? Still in spite of your obstinacy, the motive for which is revealed, that marriage will take place without your consent and within the shortest space of time possible. For I have hastened to recall to you that no tie of blood connects you with Mademoiselle Jane, and to prove to you that the Countess will find in me a son, who will know how to protect and defend her. Upon that head I pledge my solemn oath. I have solicited peace from you, sir; now I desire war."

With a look of mingled defiance and contempt the young soldier stalked majestically out of the room, leaving the noble criminal to his own reflections.

"War!" shouted the Count, tossing the documents, which he held in his hand, disdainfully on the table. "Yes! I could vanquish you all, were it not for this terrible fatality which ever pursues me. This man, this Thibaut possesses a terrible secret—but will he be believed? Yes, old soldiers are ever listened to in France. How can I deliver myself from him? He has my secret, but that of the Countess. To avoid compromising Genevieve he will, doubtlessly, fly far from hence. He can be disposed of, how to get rid of the Colonel and the Countess?"

The Count mused sullenly and was awakened from his reverie by the sudden entrance of a man through the window of the parlor.

"Who is there?" exclaimed the Count in affright.

"6th Dragoons," responded the Mountaineer, "in the enemy's camp!"

"You commit burglary?" shouted the Italian, ferociously.

"You broke open my door," responded Jean, energetically, "and I have opened your window. A friend whom I encountered in the court-yard made himself into a short ladder and I have taken a short cut into the room."

"Sir," added the enraged Count, "you are quite venturesome."

"Oh! don't get angry yet awhile," responded the veteran in a calm collected manner; "I've a long story to tell you, but, first, the chaplet of my mother—"

"Is it this which you want?" quoth the Count handing him the relic; "now you avow yourself the child of Marianne Thibaut?"

"The child of Marianne," replied Jean, gravely, "has come to avenge Genevieve!"

"Or perchance to ruin her," retorted the Venetian.

"Not as yet, Luidgi!" replied Jean.

"I am not the Luidgi, to whom you allude," rejoined the Venetian.

"It is too late to deny it," reasserted the Mountaineer.

"What proofs have you of my being the person?" inquired the Count.

"In the first place I will prove it," answered the veteran, "because being determined upon the death of the Guide, you caused the General to be massacred: you were interested in the death of Jean Claude."

"I!" ejaculated the Count, "for what purpose?"

"To enrich Genevieve and then to rob her," returned Jean.

"To rob her!" muttered the Italian.

"I have not time to pick out my words," resumed the veteran.

"I have said it and I mean it; and perchance I will prove it before long that you went masked to throw a young female into the Seine."

"Can you suppose—" interrupted the Count.

"Yes," rejoined the mountaineer undauntedly, "still I dare not complain of it, for, by means of this crime, I have been enabled to save my daughter's life, and to find out my Genevieve; I could, if I would, in return conceal myself to waylay you; but when a man has

served a dozen years beneath the banner of France, he does no such things. We attack our enemies, face to face, and summon them to combat loyalty in a duel,—wrong, perhaps still it is the custom. Now that is the reason I have hurried here to ask of you in two words—the hour and place of meeting."

"Your passion," interrupted the Count, "your insolence and anger seems to have prevented your thought of the distances—"

"Excuse me," responded Jean, "I know you to be a rascal, while I am an honest man, and I throw the distance in as a bargain for the difference—"

"There are unfortunately," replied the Venetian, "limits, which the laws of nobility do not permit a man to transcend—I am the Count d'Arezzo, chevalier of St. Mary—"

"And I am of the Legion of Honor," remarked the Veteran proudly, "and I will wager I have had more trouble to gain my cross than you had for yours—But we will not speak of that."

"Nevertheless," interposed the Italian.

"You are a Count and chevalier, say you?" quoth Jean, "you are a coward—"

"Sir!" exclaimed the Count, indignantly.

"You are a wretch, and have been so for more than twelve years," continued the Mountaineer, in a sonorous tone of voice. "You have robbed, harassed, tortured during that period, two defenceless women, and when the father and the husband comes to challenge the assassin of his family, you speak of distance. Oh! have a care. Luidgi, that the old soldier may not for an instant, forget the dictates of honor. Now let us determine the hour for the meeting, let me counsel you."

"Should I accept your challenge," responded the nobleman, "who would be your second?"

"It is a matter of no consequence," returned the veteran.

"Mine would desire to know," resumed the Count.

"My second will be Petit Pierre," replied Jean, "a friend of my childhood, devoted to me as a brother."

"I will not be able to find a single one of my friends," resumed d'Arezzo, promenading the room, unconcernedly, "who would consent to regulate the conditions of a duel with Petit Pierre, and that renders a duel impossible."

"Is that the case?" rejoined the veteran, with a smile, "well, we will arrange it in a different manner. I will seek my old commander at the Battle of Arcola, who was an intimate friend of General Roger and of Massena and who, at the present time, is Marshal of France, Prince d'Essling and Duke of Rivoli—who ran over the ground swearing that he would shoot Luidgi in the evening were I to miss him in the morning. And if your friend finds the Marshal too small a man, I know of no one higher, unless it be the Pope or the Emperor. But the Pope forbids duelling and the Emperor they say, has no time to attend to it. Come," exclaimed the veteran, observing the uneasiness of the Count at his suggestion, "you prefer, I see,

Petit Pierre to the Marshal—I go then for Pierre, and we will have no farther words. Now, the place of meeting?"

The Count after a moments reflection designated the Bois de Vincennes.

"The Bois de Vincennes!" ejaculated Jean, "it is a large place."

"Porte St. Maude," said the Italian, "at the guard house."

"Very well," returned the veteran, "now the hour?"

"The break of day," replied the nobleman.

"All agreed upon," quoth the Mountaineer, "but not without some trouble."

"I will be punctual, Monsieur Jean," responded the Count, "and I trust to chastise you for your insolence."

"All in good time," answered Jean, "you will have need of your courage as well as your bill."

Then as he was about emerging through the door, the veteran turned and addressed the Count: "To-morrow, Luidgi, and to the death!"

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PORTE ST. MAUDE.

TOWARDS the break of day, Morel, the confidential friend of the Count d'Arezzo, promenaded in front of the guard-house, at the Porte St. Maude in the Bois de Vincennes. The gentleman was strangely transformed in personal appearance, for instead of his usual costume he wore the full uniform of a forest guard. He amused himself, while walking about to resist the chill of the morning, imagining by what means the Count had obtained the consent of the ordinary guardian to permit him to stand about in borrowed plumage, but finally concluded that fair promises as well as good pay had wrought the miracle.

"Here I am, under arms," soliloquized the Florentine, "but I cannot divine what can be the intentions of the Count, whom I blindly serve—still I trust that it will lead to the payment of my five hundred and twelve thousand francs. The Count told me to await here the arrival of the coachman, and then warn him, as I would meet him in the grand avenue. Why the Count has thought proper to get rid of the guard, I can't say, but the mystery will soon be explained. I hope this Jean won't discover me—here comes some one—it is him."

"Is this the road to the guard-house upon the road to St. Maude?" inquired Jean the Mountaineer, as he entered, bearing a pair of pistols in his hands.

"This is the place," answered the counterfeit guard. "you are travelling early in the wood?"

"That's so," responded Jean, absorbed in other thoughts.

"I must make my round," resumed Morel, "this is a good time to catch the vagrants who are sleeping around the wood."

You will find some not far off," returned Jean, "I heard some one treading upon the grass near the grand avenue."

"I will go see," replied the false forester, "it must be the Count."

Jean walked about in meditation, awaiting the arrival of Pierre, as he had started before that individual in order to have time to say a prayer while on his way. The worthy Savoyard did not, however, keep him long waiting, for, deeming the presence of a carriage an act of precaution, he drove up the green hack, and shielding it from observation among the dense underwood of the forest, hurried to the guard-house to enter upon his duties as a second. Pierre was a practical philosopher; a carriage was a necessary to a duel, serving as a hearse for the deceased, or the means of escape for the survivor.

"I was certain you would not be behind time," quoth Pierre, entering upon the ground in front of the guard house, "you are alone."

"You see I am waiting for this Luidgi," replied the veteran.

"He will be always too soon," remarked the Savoyard.

"Why so?" inquired the Mountaineer.

"Because," said his companion, "it should be forbidden that a brave man, like you, should risk his life against that of a felon, like him."

"How otherwise," calmly remarked the veteran, "can I disincumber the world of him, unless through a duel?"

"Bah!" quoth Pierre with a significant expression of disdain, "let me do it,—with my stout cudgel."

"Be perfectly easy," returned the Mountaineer, "I have my mother's chaplet with me, and I have prayed to the God of the Brave. However, Pierre, we should anticipate all accident: should my destiny determine that a ball should open my road to my last home, you will go, Pierre, to Colonel Roger, and declare to him that the Count caused his father to be shot, and you will join him in watching over my Jane."

"There is no need in telling me that," responded the Savoyard aloud, who murmured inaudibly: "If he only knew that I have told the Colonel all about it."

"Which of you is named Pierre?" inquired Morel, returning from his walk.

"That's me," replied the Savoyard, "what's wanting?"

"A gentleman, who has just arrived on horseback," replied the false guardian, "charged me to announce to you that as second to the adversary of your friend, he is at your service."

"Where is he?" inquired Pierre.

"I will conduct you to him," said Morel, trembling for fear of being detected.

"I am with you," replied Pierre, taking up the pistol with repugnance.

"Pierre, you know the rules," calmly said Jean, "fifteen paces and fire until one falls."

"All right," responded Pierre, following Morel to the grand avenue.

"One hour hence," soliloquized the veteran, "and the hazard of the die will be decided; should misfortune arrive, Pierre and the Colonel

who survive me, will be protectors to my wife and child." And Jean paced the ground resignedly.

"The Guard House," whispered the Countess to Jane, as the two ladies made their appearance from the opposite side of the domicile of the forest ranger.

"This must be it," responded Jane, when seeing Jean, she pointed him out to her mother who immediately advanced towards the impatient veteran.

"Genevieve!" exclaimed the mountaineer, in astonishment.

"Genevieve!" returned the Countess, in a voice of unaffected endearment, "has heard of your appointment to fight the Count d'Arizzo, and has hurried to prevent the combat."

"But, Madam," replied Jean, inflexibly, "a man has sacred duties, which he must perform."

"The most sacred of duties," resumed the lady, "is that which preserves those dear to us, and at the hour of duelling I come armed with your daughter."

"You have then entrusted Mademoiselle Jane," quoth the veteran, moved at this exhibition of affection.

"Everything," interrupted the beautiful girl, "oh, father! I had no need of this to love you, but now I have the right of informing you that you are no longer your own property, and therefore cannot expose days which belong to the child, who entreats you to preserve her wealth."

"My daughter!" exclaimed Jean, in sincerity of affection.

"Only think," continued the maiden, her tones augmenting in affectionate interest, "that my mother taught me in my earliest infancy to pray God for you, father, and now, after having suffered so much from the disdain of the man usurping your name, I find you—the object of my early prayers and after sorrows, on the eve of a duel! But you will not fight, father, for I have need for you to live, that I may love and cherish you."

"My Jane!" exclaimed the Mountaineer despondingly, "you will render me a coward and poltroon—I likewish at this moment condemn the duel; I too dread death, when my daughter stands before me, a treasury of kindness and affection."

"What can we do to prevent this duel?" interposed the Countess.

"We can do nothing, my poor woman," responded Jean. "I must see Pierre, who is at this moment engaged in arranging the conditions of the combat."

"Where is he?" inquired the Countess.

"Not far hence," replied the veteran. "I will go join him, and he may be able to assist us."

Jean walked leisurely in the direction in which Pierre had disappeared, when he perceived the Count coming towards him and involuntarily announced the fact.

"He here!" exclaimed the Countess, "we will remain with you."

"No," replied Jean sternly, "he might insult one of you."

"Then the duel will be inevitable," interrupted Jane.

"If we could only hide ourselves," quoth the Countess.

"Where?" responded the veteran, going to the guard-house, "this door is closed—no! it opens—enter here."

"Yes!" replied the Countess, taking her daughter with her by her arm; then, standing upon the threshold, she entreated Jean to pledge his word to abstain from the combat.

"I swear to adjourn the duel if within my power," responded Jean, as the ladies concealed themselves in the house; "no! I cannot fight at this moment, my eyes are filled with tears and my hand trembles."

"Morel has doubtlessly given Pierre the wrong direction," quoth the Count as he entered. "Some time must elapse ere he can find his way again."

"Ah, 'tis you, Count?" said the Mountaineer, accosting him.

"Before taking our positions," commenced the Italian, "I have something to say to you particularly."

"And I also desire to speak to you," responded Jean.

"You!" exclaimed the Count in surprise, "proceed, I listen."

"I believe," said Jean, with embarrassment, "that each one of us—upon sober thought, might—that is—instead of the duel—for the duel—"

"Well?" interrupted the Count.

"We will," stammered out the veteran, "leave the matter entirely to chance."

"I did not expect to find you with such ideas," responded the Italian, although distrustful of the man's sincerity, "and if they are really your own, you can annul the combat—"

"Upon what conditions?" interrupted the Mountaineer.

"Upon condition," replied the Count, "that on the morrow you depart for America with your daughter Jane—"

"But she loves the Colonel," interposed Jean.

"You will teach her to forget him," replied the Venetian.

"And her mother?" inquired the veteran, "what will become of her, deprived of her exiled child? no—no—it is impossible!"

"Impossible, do you say?" quoth the Count, sarcastically. "Probably you are not aware that I can rid myself of you, who have fallen into this trap."

"Trap!" ejaculated Jean in amazement.

"Here I could slay you without the presence of a witness," said the Count, drawing a pistol from his bosom, and presenting it full cocked at the mountaineer, who folded his arms, and prepared to meet his death with the courage of a soldier.

CHAPTER XX.

MARENGO'S LAST JOB.

"You are deceived!" exclaimed the Countess, suddenly appearing from the guard-house, followed by Jane.

"The Countess!" exclaimed the astonished culprit.

"Have a care, mother!" implored Jane, as she interposed her person between the Count and her parent.

"Away, my daughter!" quoth the Countess, tenderly repelling her, as she continued excitedly, "the Count is your heir, but at my death he loses everything, and therefore I can brave him. I can, and no blood will be spilled—no duel—I will summon him before the law which will decide my destiny."

"Genevieve!" exclaimed Jean, somewhat terrified.

"The law!" muttered the Italian, sarcastically.

"I desire," continued the lady, elevating her voice in passion, "to appear before the Court with my two husbands,—he who succored me in indigence, and he who tortured me in wealth. I wish them to know that my daughter belongs to the poor man she honors, and not to the rich man she despises. In a word I wish to be tried. The world, absolving me in advance, will learn that which my family has forgotten—that true nobility belongs to the heart."

"You are ignorant, madame," interposed the Count, smilingly, "that a judgment will come to you with dishonor."

"Dishonor!" ejaculated the lady, "I can be dishonored no more than by the name I bear. I defy you and put my trust in God."

"I accept the struggle as I hurl back defiance," wildly responded the Count. "There are men whom difficulties overwhelm, but there are others who can break them down like rushes. Destruction to you all, and may you fall into the abyss you have toiled to dig for my feet!"

Humiliated, frenzied, and infuriated, the Count d'Arezzo took his departure, casting glances of defiance upon the family who had expelled the catiff from its bosom.

"Thanks, Genevieve," murmured the Alpine Guide, as the tears of gratitude rolled from his eyes, "who would offer yourself for sacrifice in my place. Still you know not the new danger which threatens you—"

"A new danger!" ejaculated the lady.

"You know, poor woman," resumed the Mountaineer, "that they ever condemn good souls—you are perchance right in placing your trust in the justice of man—unfortunately they can neither condemn or absolve you."

"Why?" inquired the Countess.

"Because," replied Jean, "the Count can never be your accuser, and will remain more than ever your enemy."

"And will you not defend my mother?" pathetically inquired Jane.

"Reassure yourself," returned the Mountaineer, "I undertake the defence of your mother, and when I perish with that assassin—"

"Perish, my father!" exclaimed the maiden.

"Would I not deem myself guilty of all the evil that malefactor has created for you, and will continue to create, unless I follow his guilty footsteps," and thus speaking wildly, the Alpine Guide started to follow in the wake of the Count.

"Jean! father!" entreatingly exclaimed the sorrow-stricken ladies, endeavoring to restrain his departure.

"What is that?" exclaimed the Mountaineer, as the report of a couple of pistol shots followed each other in rapid succession.

"Some one comes from the grand avenue," exclaimed Jane.

"It is Henri!"

"What has happened?" said Jean, musingly; and then addressing the Colonel, who was accompanied by the ever faithful Petit Pierre; "what is it, Colonel?"

"The Count d'Arezzo," quoth the soldier.

"Well!" interrupted the Mountaineer, nervously.

"Thanks to the revelations of Pierre," replied the Colonel.

"I have forced the assassin of General Roger to fight."

"The assassin of the General!" exclaimed the Countess.

"Yes, Madame," rejoined her future son-in-law, "and Jean Claude Thibaut can prove to you that I had a father to avenge."

"And now, Genevieve," interposed the Savoyard, joyfully, "the child can go home with Jean Claude, and I have exactly No. 226 on the field and I'm a going to drive."

"What!" exclaimed Jean deliriously, "I ride in my own carriage with Genevieve, and the child of Jean Claude; it is a dream, let us start before it disappears—come, friends, come."

As he spoke the green cab, with Pierre on the box drove up to them, and the worthy Savoyard soon forced the party to take their seats within it. Snapping his whip with the most approved science of a coachman, Pierre drove off in triumph as Jean exclaimed to his sanguine companions:

"Courage, Marengo, old fellow! it is your last job!"

That night the Emperor pardoned a duel, and sanctioned a marriage.

THE END.

THE WITCH.

HEZEKIAH NORRIS was one of those who in the latter part of the 17th century, emigrated from England to this country for the purpose of enjoying, in peace and without molestation, those religious privileges which at home were prohibited, under the most severe penalties. He was one of that class of plain religionists denominated Puritans, who considered that the surplices and vestments used by the clergy of the episcopal church, were an abomination in the sight of the Lord, and he looked upon the beautiful ceremonials of that church as being but very little removed from the gross abuses that had crept into and almost swallowed up the imposing ceremonials and strict ritual observances of her elder sister of Rome.

Whether the opposition of the Puritans to the established church was right or wrong, I must leave to the decision of wiser heads than mine; but Hezekiah Norris held the opinion of many stout and stern hearts of the same period, that he and they did perfectly right in opposing it, and all that belonged to it, to the utmost extent of his and their ability.

His wife, as in duty bound, held the same opinion, and when they had received some gentle hints from the authorities of the place in which they resided, that from their obstinacy in religious matters, their small property was in danger of sequestration, Hezekiah very wisely resolved to sell it, square accounts with the world, put trust in Providence, and with his wife and two small children, emigrate across the Atlantic.

"By the blessing of God," as our friend Hezekiah expressed it, they had a pleasant passage, and all arrived safe at Plymouth on the 16th of the following July.

This goodly place not suiting the fancy of our worthy pilgrim, in the spring of the next year he removed to Salem, where with his family he soon became permanently located. With the proceeds of the sale of his former property, he soon built him a snug little house, near the spot where now stands the large brick edifice known as the Franklin Building. He also possessed a little garden in which his wife, assisted by the little Anna, their daughter, cultivated some flowers which they had transplanted from their former little garden in "merrie England." And careful, very careful were they constrained to be in this harmless occupation, for the red sons of the forest, become jealous of the encroaching whites, were at that period making sudden irruptions upon families, and in many instances whole villages fell a prey to their cunning and savage warfare, thus rendering necessary the greatest caution in carrying on even the most common avocations of life. But a few days prior to the opening of our story, two men, while at work in the fields, had been shot at and killed by an unseen foe, and several other indications of a warlike nature having been shown by the Red Men, rendered it necessary for the settlers to be ever vigilant and always upon their guard. Therefore, every one kept their fire-arms within their reach, and

seldom was it a family retired to rest, during that dark period in the history of our venerable town, without having a sentinel of some kind to watch for the appearance of their savage and implacable foes.

In the night that our story opens, Hezekiah, having just returned from the labors of the field, entered the door of his humble dwelling, and having deposited his loaded rifle safely in its place, called out,

"Come, wife, my dear, supper, supper."

But his wife did not answer him, she being at the same time engaged in the garden with little Anna and the flowers.

Hezekiah soon found them out and joined them, reminding them at the same time that the hour for supper and evening devotion was at hand. Upon hearing this, they left their pleasing employment, and joining Hezekiah, proceeded to the house. The evening being warm and sultry, the doors and windows were thrown open, whilst (after a blessing had been craved) this little family eat in religious silence their evening meal. After it was finished, "little John," the brother and son, having just returned from a neighbor's took down the large family Bible, and placing it upon his father's knee, the old man opened it, and read a portion of it aloud, at the commencement of evening worship. This done, they all rose, then dropping upon their knees, he poured forth a simple, devout, and fervent prayer.

At its conclusion, as he arose from his knees, he was surprised to find that an unlooked-for and unknown visitor had been in attendance during part, if not the whole of his short supplication.

He was soon aware that his visitor was a woman of tall and stately form, dressed after the manner of the Indian women of that period, and that she bore in her arms a beautiful babe, delicate and fair as the whitest rose. The woman spoke—

"Man of the pale face and strong arm! Nature, the spirit of the clouds commands me to confide this child to your protection and care—take her; let her be brought up as your daughter; and mind! as you dread an Indian's vengeance, that no harm ever befalls her. At the end of every year, come to the cavern that you wot of by the side of the Indian Oak, and you will find money sufficient for all her expenses. Answer me not, but take her, and remember that you have once seen her of whom you have often heard—aye, even Zoraida, the Witch of Naumkeag."

So saying, she stepped forward, and depositing her burden in the lap of Mrs. Norris, with a proud and stately step, she left the house, and ere the astonished inmates could muster presence of mind enough to follow her, she had turned into the woods, and speedily vanished from their sight.

We must now take the privilege assumed by all the romancers, and transport the attention of the reader to the mansion of an English nobleman, situated in London. In the drawing-room of this mansion, about two years previous to the time mentioned in our last chapter, might have been seen, sitting at a small round table, sipping his chocolate late in the morning, the Right Honorable Lord Henry Fitzsimmons. He was dressed in a loose morning-gown, and the appear-

ance of a bandage round his head, together with the redness of his eyes, gave pretty strong tokens of an overnight debauch.

"I have a great mind," said this Right Honorable Lord, soliloquizing: "to leave off drinking this cursed wine, it makes one have such confounded headaches. Good Heavens! how my temples throb now, in spite of Camphor, Eau de Cologne, and all other such remedies—past 11 o'clock," exclaimed he, looking at his gold repeater, "I shall not be able to take my seat in the House of Peers to-day," so saying; he remained silent till a servant entering, announced that Lord George Herbert was below.

"Show him up," said his master, and the servant departing, soon returned, and ushered in Lord George, whose countenance, like that of his Right Honorable companion, bore visible marks of recent dissipation and excess.

"Good morning, Lord Herbert," exclaimed Fitzsimmons, as soon as his companion had seated himself, "how does your lordship feel this morning?"

"Indifferently well," replied Lord George, "as regards bodily health, but a strange circumstance has recently occurred, which bids fair for the future to seriously endanger the health of my mind."

"And what lamentable accident, if I may take the liberty to ask," said Fitzsimmons, "has taken place to impair the strength of that hitherto-considered impregnable fortress of thy bosom?"

"Indeed," replied Lord George, more seriously than before, "I am scarcely prepared to answer that question; but this much I will inform you, that after the party at Lord A——'s last evening had broken up, I returned home as you well know, much excited by wine, and entered my wife's chamber. Judge of my surprise at finding it untenanted. I immediately called together all the servants, but all the information I could gain of them concerning her, was that she had walked out in the early part of the evening and had not since returned. It was late—I knew not what to think, or how to act. In turning to look towards the bed, I discerned a note lying upon it—in a moment I had opened it, and read as follows:—

"LORD GEORGE HERBERT:

"False deceiver, farewell—I leave you now forever. Thinkest thou that the heart of woman, weak and tender though it may be, can have the sharp-pointed dagger of jealousy pierce to its very core, and not feel it? Thinkest that thy criminal flirtations with that wretched hag the Countess of A——e have been witnessed by me unheeded? Satisfied as I am from what I have seen and heard, aye, seen, that you have proved recreant to all ties of honor and true love, I have resolved never more to see you. Live and be happy if thou canst with thy paramour, but never shall it be said that the proud daughter of Duncan of Scotland brooked such deadly insults, even from the partner of her bosom. But oh, Herbert, though almost turned to stone by the mortal injuries, my lacerated heart still clings to thee, when I reflect that ere long I shall become the miserable mother of

your child, and if—but oh, no, it cannot be, between us there is fixed an impassable gulf.

"I shall embark as soon as possible for America, but if you have any regard for your own life or that of your child, seek not to follow me.

"Thus writes for the last time the much injured

"EMILY HERBERT!"

"Ods blood," exclaimed Fitzsimmons, as his friend finished reading this epistle, "what a woman, high spirited as a young lioness, methinks if she had been my wife I could have loved her for that attribute alone. Why could you not love her?"

"Why," replied Lord George, "I did love her as I could, but there was a certain something, in her manner and temperament, a boldness that I could hold no sympathy with. Young and gay, with the reputation of being handsome, I courted pleasure and congenial spirits. On the other hand she lived mostly in an ideal world of her own creation, where she conjured into her presence, dark phantoms of romantic madness. Yet she was young and stately, and beautiful, and had she condescended to inhabit the earth, and partake freely of its pleasures like myself she would not have driven my love into other and criminal channels. But be that as it may, I have determined to sell all my estates, place the proceeds in the funds, and start immediately for America. As for her I know she is in possession of a large property in her own right, therefore she will need none of mine."

"I am glad to hear," replied Lord Fitzsimmons, "that you are going to America, I intend soon to do the same thing myself, as I have large estates in Virginia that sadly need my oversight in person. My young and only son will accompany me, and if it suit your convenience, my dear Lord George, we will both go at the same time, and by the same conveyance."

"A thousand thanks, my dear Lord Henry, for your generous offer, and I gladly accept it, as I am firmly resolved to leave nothing undone in the endeavor to gain tidings of my injured wife and child."

So saying the noble Lords shook hands and parted.

Meantime the little Zoraida, (for that name had been applied to her from the first,) grew up to be a fair and delicate girl. She knew no other parents than Hezekiah and his wife; to little Anna, she confided all her joys and sorrows during the period of her childhood, and also shared with Anna the little affections of her brother George. Though gentle in her manners and disposition as the most timid of her white playmates, she would show symptoms, when in the least excited, of the high spirit and bold daring of the brave Indian.

Although the junior of Anna, by four years, she greatly excelled her in travelling the wild woods, and climbing the rocky precipices, and unlike her too, she appeared to be very fond of the Indians, and they of her.

The money found at stated times in the cavern was punctually appropriated to her use, and nothing occurred to her worthy of notice until she had attained her fifteenth year.

At that time, upon a fine summer afternoon, when the sun was shedding his farewell beams on the departing day, she and Anna might have been seen seated on a board seat that George had prepared for them at the bottom of a little flower garden before spoken of, in conversation apparently important and interesting to them both, for they heeded not the presence of a tall dusky form, that stood erect behind the little hedge that divided the garden from the woods beyond.

"So, Anna," said the lovely Zoraida, looking up into the blushing face of her companion, "I have heard that in your late visit to Boston, you have attracted the attention of a young gentleman and are about to be married to him. Tell me now, my dear Anna, have I heard true or false?"

"Dear Zoraida," replied the still blushing Anna, "in the course of our young lives I have never kept from you a secret, and I shall not begin now. What you have heard is true. You know that I have spent the greater portion of the last year with my invalid aunt, in Boston. 'Twas there I first met and soon after loved, Henry Fitzsimmons. He is soon to visit us, and ask the consent of my parents, to our immediate union, and dear Zoraida, when you see him, all gentleness and beauty as he is, you will not wonder at my choice."

"Oh!" exclaimed Zoraida, as the burning tears coursed down her pale cheeks, "how lonely I shall be when you are gone. On whom else shall I bestow my love?"

"Do not talk so, my more than sister," replied Anna, "are you not called the pride and beauty of the village? Do not all the handsome young men of the village, to say nothing of the proud Indian Chief Cheusa, strive in every way to gain your favorable attention. Ha!" continued the fair girl, playfully, "if I had half so many beaux at my heels as you have, I should have been married long ago."

"Alas!" replied Zoraida, "I love them not, I heed them not. But, Anna, I have often thought if perchance such favors were ever granted to us wicked mortals, that I should like to tear away the dark veil that separated us from the future, and become acquainted with its impenetrable mysteries."

"Your wish shall be gratified, if you have the courage to brave the dread ordeal," came from behind the hedge. In an instant the hedge was cleared, and Zoraida, The Witch of Naumkeag, confronted the astonished and bewildered maidens.

"Tremble not," said the Witch to Anna, whose slender frame shivered with horror and surprise at the sight of the strange being before her—"my business is not with such as thee. I would speak a few words with thy fearless companion, who but now expressed a fatal wish to penetrate the dark shade of the future."

"Maiden of the pale face, but the brave heart," continued the Witch, suddenly assuming in a measure, her Indian manner and language, "art thou willing to depart for a short time from thy pale-faced companions, in company with the daughter of the Chief of the Golden

Waters, in order to have revealed to thee something as regards thy future destiny?"

"Lead on!" exclaimed the fearless Zoraida, "I will follow."

"Oh, dear Zoraida," exclaimed the weeping and trembling Anna, as both she and the Witch began to move away in the direction of the woods; "do not go with that fearful being. Remember what our father has told us of the dark doings of the emissaries of Satan, who have of late appeared among us in the shape of old women, whom he has entangled in his toils, and then led to death. Again," said she more vehemently, as the distance between her and her companion increased, "I adjure you, Zoraida, not to depart in company with the Witch."

But her solemn adjuration was neither heeded nor answered, for ere it was concluded, the fair form of Zoraida, and the tall, stately, and noble form of the Witch, had disappeared amongst the gigantic oaks and pines of the adjoining forest.

Hurrying her companion through woods and over plains, the Witch thus addressed her:

"Brave girl, a sorrowful moment will it be for thee, when the wish that you expressed to yon trembling girl shall be gratified. When at your age, the same desires and thoughts, and feelings, had taken a strong hold upon my mind, so strong, that I have ever since lived in the future. But 'twas a terrible life. The imagination of such visionaries will conjure up a thousand phantoms of misery, which, concealed under the bright mask of glory, tends to lead on the pursuers, until they find themselves engulfed in a horrible reality of cares and sorrows. But perhaps, maiden, thou understandest not the meaning of my wild words, and happy would it be for thee, if thou shouldst always remain ignorant of their sad purports."

Zoraida did not attempt to reply to the lofty words of her companion, and they hurried on in silence, until emerging from the woods, they found themselves overshadowed by the ancient branches of the Indian oak, and near to the cavern before spoken of.

Easily finding, by the light of the bright full moon, the entrance of the cave, which Indian ingenuity had contrived to conceal, and pushing aside the thick foliage of two bushes, which served instead of both outlet and entrance, the Witch, followed by Zoraida, entered the cavern; the Witch telling her companion to remain still, as the darkness was intense, until she should strike a light. Zoraida, whose courage now for the first time began to falter, tremblingly obeyed, whilst her companion groping her way to a shelf at the side of the rock, took from thence a small box, and, by the Indian mode of obtaining fire, that is, by rubbing two dry sticks violently, one against the other, she soon succeeded in accomplishing her object. As the lamp threw a brilliant light around the cavern, both the Witch and her companion were surprised at seeing crouched in the farthest corner of it, the dusky and savage form of an Indian Warrior. He arose and confronted them as soon as he became aware of their presence, but the Witch was the first to break the silence.

"What seeks Wacumca of the Narragansetts, in the dark wigwam of the daughter of the Chief of the Golden Waters? Let the Red Warrior reply."

"The Great Spirit," answered Wacumca, "is angry with the Narragansetts; the son of their Chief is sick, his bones are weak, he hears the war-whoops, of the Pequods, but the strength of his arm is gone, he cannot answer it. Let the medicine woman of Naumkeag go to him, and he will again be strong, and the scalps of the enemies will again be seen in his wigwam. Will the daughter of the Chief of the Golden Water go?"

"Seest thou, Wacumca," replied the Witch, pointing to Zoraida, "this young squaw of the Yengees; she is dear, very dear to me; I have just taken her from her parents; her feet are young and tender; she is tired and would rest. Ere many morns, and the daughter of the Chief of the Golden Waters will leave her a wigwam, and go to the far off Spirit Land, and who but she, the young Zoraida shall take her place. The wigwam of Wacumca is far off and enemies are in the path, but ere five suns have gone from east to west, the medicine woman of Naumkeag, and the beautiful and brave Zoraida will visit it. Will Wacumca say more?"

"The daughter of the Chief of the Golden Waters is wise," replied the Warrior, "and her words are fair; Wacumca is satisfied." So saying, he drew about him his deer-skin robe, and immediately left the cavern.

"Notest thou, fair maiden," said the Witch, after the departure of the Warrior, "the power that I possess, so that the bold and brave Warriors of the Red Race come from far distant tribes, to have their sick braves raised up by the skill of the medicine woman? Still although they think so, and although the pale faces think so too, yet I am not of them. I was once—but no matter, we are tired and will now rest."

Thus saying, she removed a broad flat stone from the entrance to another apartment of the cavern, which by the assistance of the Indians of the neighborhood, had been rendered much more commodious than the outer one. It contained a table, two large oaken seats, and a small but comfortable looking bed, and a large oaken chest also occupied one corner of this strange abode. After they had entered, the Witch open the chest, and taking from it a basket, she locked it, and carefully placed the key in her bosom. She then uncovered the basket, which contained provisions, of the nicest quality, and setting them in order upon the table, she thus addressed her companion;

"Eat, daughter, and refresh thyself, for to-morrow thou mayest avert need, but not time. If thou repentest not the bold step thou hast taken, I see before us a long, a weary, and a perilous journey. Therefore daughter, if thou thinkest thou hast not courage and strength equal to the undertaking, I will to-morrow return thee in safety to thy parents, and prosecute my journey alone."

"Mother," replied Zoraida, "I know not why it is, but when in

your presence, I feel as though I was where I ought to be; I feel as though I was where I was beloved. I have often heard my parents speak of you; they called you Witch; said that you possessed charms; that you ought to have been hung along with the poor wretched unfortunates who have suffered that cruel penalty. And when they said such words, some invisible agency seemed to prompt me to a terrible and deadly revenge, aye, revenge against the best of parents, but I crushed such horrid feelings, and after such seasons had passed, I would retire into the dark woods, and weep for whole hours, and pray that such vindictive thoughts might be totally eradicated from my bosom. And now, although in your presence, I feel a sort of strange dread which I cannot define, yet I will not leave you. "Whither thou goest, there also will I go."

"Daughter," replied the Witch, in a softer tone than she had ever before assumed in conversation with her, "thou sayest that thy parents called me Witch; I have passed through severe and fiery ordeals to gain the title, and in it lays the whole secret of my power. But now we will retire to rest."

In a few moments, this strange being and her young companion, were wrapped in the happy forgetfulness of sound repose.

About an hour after the old folks had retired to rest, a slight rustling was heard among the bushes in front of the house, and soon the light and graceful form of the fair Zoraida was seen to emerge from their covering, and approach the open window of Norris's house.

"I wished to see you, my Anna," said she, after she had got within speaking distance, "for the purpose of bidding you farewell, as I am about to depart to-morrow with the Witch, as you call her, to some distant part of the country, where her talents as a medicine-woman are to be put in requisition."

"Dear Zoraida," exclaimed Anna, "you shall not go, nay; you must not: come, do come in. Henry Fitzsimmons is here, and I wish you to be made acquainted with him."

"I may be glad to make his acquaintance," replied Zoraida, "for the selfish purpose of requesting his company back with me to the place from whence I came, for in my progress hither, I saw several suspicious and dusky forms, that seemed to watch me, and I feel somewhat fearful that all is not right."

Seeing that Anna was about to speak, she said:

"Do not urge me to stay, Anna, for it will be useless, as I have given my word to her whom you call the Witch, and it cannot nor shall not be forfeited. Therefore, if Mr. Fitzsimmons will accompany me back, I will thank him."

"Certainly," said our chivalrous hero, starting from his seat, and preparing to go, "that is, if Anna here will promise not to be jealous."

So saying, and telling Anna to be a good girl till he returned, he left the house, and joining Zoraida, they immediately took the path leading to the Witch's Cavern.

But an unexpected stop was soon put to their career, for they had hardly got a quarter of a mile distant from Norris's house, when a

party of about eight or ten Indians darted out of the thick woods, and in less time than it will take to chronicle it, had taken Henry and Zoraida prisoners, gagged and bound them, and immediately disappeared again into the woods, taking their prisoners along with them.

Under the verandah of a commodious mansion, situated upon one of the finest plantations on the confines of James River, in Virginia, about a month previous to the events related in the last chapter of our history, might have been seen sitting a person who has before been introduced to the reader under the title of Lord Henry Fitzsimmons. In his hands he holds a letter, which he seems to be diligently perusing, when all at once he starts, and pacing backwards and forwards, exclaims:

"Well, this is a pretty kettle of fish; Henry Fitzsimmons junior, son of a lord of that ilk, very good-humoredly and peremptorily announces to his indulgent father that he is engaged to be married to the daughter of one Hezekiah Norris, whom he denominates as one of the most substantial farmers of that den of witchcraft and superstition, Salem.

"Here," said the old man, speaking to an Indian in attendance, who appeared to be servant of the family; "go to the library and acquaint the minister that I wish him to join me here immediately."

"What has happened, my dear Lord Henry," asked the minister, entering the apartment, "to cause such an unusual excitement in your manner and bearing?"

"Happened!" exclaimed his enraged companion, thrusting into the minister's hand the open letter, then pulling it away again, he threw it on the ground, and continued "Why, you see, George, that my dutiful son to show his gratitude, I suppose, for my making the trouble and expense of giving him the best education the country affords, sends me word very coolly that he intends taking to wife the accomplished daughter of a substantial farmer."

"I do not see what objection you can have to that, my dear Lord Henry," replied the minister.

"Objection, why only think, I say, for an instant, of the complete absurdity of my son—the son of an English Peer marrying a farmer's daughter! But if I can I will prevent it. I will to-morrow start for Boston, and my object in sending for you, Herbert, was to see if you would not bear me company."

"Certainly, Lord Henry," replied the minister, "I will gladly go with you, although I think, as it regards your son's case, it will avail but little, for where a man really loves, let the object of his affections be high or low, he will seldom be entreated much less compelled to give it up. But how are you going?"

"Why," answered his companion, "we will take passage in Capt. Cbutter's sloop which sails from the town to-morrow with a load of tobacco. Then we must trust to Providence, and our good luck, if we happen to have any, for a conveyance to Boston."

Therefore the next morning after getting every thing in readiness, our friends took their departure, and in about a fortnight arrived safe-

ly in New York, where they had the good luck to find another sloop bound to Rhode Island and Providence plantations, and on board of her they went, and off they started, but they had not proceeded more than two days' sail, before a violent storm arose, and they were driven ashore upon the Connecticut sea-board, where they had hardly time to offer up thanks for their deliverance from the perils of the sea, before a party of Pequod Indians had seized upon and made them prisoners.

"Ah!" exclaimed Lord Henry, upon finding that his journey bid fair to end very tragically, "if I had dreamed of this, Henry might have married all the infernal Indian squaws in the country and be hanged to him, before I would have troubled myself about either him or them."

Their enemies having led them in triumph to their village, they were all placed in a large wigwam, and well guarded, whilst their Indian captors proceeded to hold a council to determine their fate. The council soon assembled in the centre of the village, when after sitting for some time in silence, an aged warrior opened it as follows:

"Brothers, the Great Spirit has given into our hands these pale faces, who burnt our houses, and took our scalps—that in return we might take theirs also. Let the pale faces die. I have spoken."

A stifled murmur of approbation ran through the council at these words, and the prisoners were doomed to immediate torture and death. Each one of the prisoners was then brought forth, stripped, and bound to stakes, and the Indians were about commencing the death-song when another warrior spoke as follows:

"Brothers, shall the pale face and his sister, whom we took from the Narragansetts, die? I say let the pale face warrior die, but let the squaw, his sister, live. I have spoken."

Another murmur of approbation ran round the circle, another stake was planted, and the young Henry Fitzsimmons, followed by the beautiful Zoraida, was led to the stake of death.

In vain did the weeping and distracted girl plead for him; in vain did she throw herself between him and death, for her merciless and savage foes soon bound her, then gagged and left her on the ground in a state not to be described. They had piled faggots around the unfortunate prisoners, and they were preparing to set fire to them, when suddenly the shrill war-whoop was heard, and a band of Mohawks, with which nation the Pequods were then at war, completely surprised them, killing many and taking the rest prisoners.

These new visitors then unbound the white prisoners from the stakes, and substituted in their stead the Pequod warriors they had just taken. The fires of death were lighted, and they soon underwent the same cruelties which just before they were about to inflict upon the pale faces.

After the departure of Henry Fitzsimmons with Zoraida as before noted, poor Anna sat for some time in a patient but anxious expectation of Henry's return.—But hour after hour rolled by, and still he did not return, sad, and melancholy, and despairing hours were they

to Anna Norris. At last her delicate frame gave under the agonizing suspense caused by the prolonged and unaccountable absence of Henry, and in attempting to rise, for the purpose of calling her father, her strength failed her, she sank in a deadly swoon upon the floor.

Meantime, there was one, waiting as patiently, and expecting as anxiously the return of the young Zoraida, as Anna was that of Henry, and that one was the Witch of Naumkeag, the solitary inhabitant of the Cavern by the Indian Oak. But after hours had elapsed and she did not return, the Witch rose from the bed, upon which she had reclined, and hastily putting on her Indian dress, she left the Cavern and took the path leading to Norris's house.

"When she arose from the bed," soliloquized the Witch, speaking of Zoraida, as she swiftly travelled the path by the light of the full midnight moon, "she told me that she was only going to bid her sister farewell, and then she would directly return, and I took her at her word; and were it not that I believed that she was too much like her mother to forfeit it, I should think they had persuaded her to remain with them. But be it as it may, I will now unravel the mystery."

Thus soliloquizing, she walked on more swiftly than before, and had nearly reached the open space in front of Norris's house, when a tall shadow darkened the path, and immediately the stately form and features of Wacumca, second chief of the Narragansetts, boldly confronted her.

"The medicine woman of the Naumkeag," said he, addressing her, "seeks her lost bird of the forest. Let her seek in the lodge of the Narragansetts. Wacumca has spoken."

So saying and before his auditors had time to answer him, the Indian warrior had darted into the woods and disappeared.

Intimately acquainted as was the Witch with the metaphorical language of the Indian tribes, she was at no loss in coming to the conclusion that Zoraida had been entrapped and carried off by the attendants of Wacumca, in order that she, the far famed medicine woman, might speedily hasten to the lodge of the Chief Sachem, for the purpose of curing his sick son; but for all that she had a latent hope that she might find the object of her solicitude at the house of Norris. She therefore emerged from the woods and seeing the door of the house open, she abruptly entered the lower apartment, where the first object that her eager gaze encountered was the prostrate form of Anna, who was just beginning to recover from the swoon into which she had fallen.

"Anna Norris," said the Witch, dropping for the time her Indian manner of speaking, "tell me, I a jure thee, if thou knowest aught of my Zoraida. Have you seen her? Has she been here?"

"Out upon thee, Witch!" exclaimed the indignant Anna, as soon as she had recovered sufficiently to speak, "well dost thou know where she is. Begone instantly, tell deceiver, or I will call my father."

But there was no need of that, for the old gentleman at that instant descended the stairs, having been awakened from his sound repose by the loud tone of the Witch's voice, which she had assumed in speaking to Anna. His wife soon joined him, and then, in that little room, was a scene for a painter. Half prostrate on the floor, lay, or rather inclined, the form of the pale and trembling Anna, her clear blue eyes flashing indignantly at the tall and stately form of the Witch, while she, totally unmoved, stood against the window, calmly awaiting the issue of the scene; and Hezekiah and his wife, suddenly aroused from a sound sleep, confused and bewildered, invested the whole with an air of solemn ludicrousness, which would have formed an equally happy subject for the poet as well as the painter.

But to return. After Hezekiah had in a measure recovered from his unfeigned surprise, he demanded of the Witch the cause of the intrusion into his house at that late hour of the night.

"I came," answered the witch, calmly, "to seek her whom, when she was an infant, I left in thy safe-keeping; but she is not here. And—" she was about to have said more, but the old man sternly bid her to remain silent whilst Anna proceeded to give an account of the re-appearance of Zoraida and her departure with Henry Fitzsimmons, and concluded by saying,

"Father, I solemnly and sincerely believe, that the limb of Satan, that Witch, who now stands so lofty in your presence, has delivered them both up to our Indian enemies, with whom I know she is in close league."

"Begone from my house instantly!" exclaimed Hezekiah, incensed by the words of Anna, "and never again dare to desecrate its threshold with thy presence."

Slowly, yet with a firm and lofty step, the Witch moved towards the door, which having gained, she turned and casting towards Anna a look of withering contempt, she said,

"Proud girl, feeling as I do the bitter injustice of thy words, I could curse thee for them, but I will not; for, if my own eyes tell me true, ere you bright moon comes again to its fullness, thy fair form, of which thy parents are so proud, will be mouldering in the cold and gloomy church-yard. Even now thy burning brow is flushed with the dry heat of a malignant fever. The scenes of this night have been too much for thee. Remember my prophecy. Now I will go."

So saying, this strange being departed from the house and wended her way back again to the Cavern.

Hezekiah and his wife, after the departure of the Witch, tried every means in their power to soothe the fears and quiet the apprehensions of the pale and trembling Anna, and they at last succeeded so far as to gain her consent to retire to rest for the remainder of the night. She with considerable difficulty reached her bed, kissed her mother, who kindly said she would watch beside her, and then sank away into a troubled sleep, from which she awoke in the morning in all the delirium of a brain fever.

The next morning the witch left her Cavern and made the best of her way through the wilderness to the lodge of the Narragansetts.

After they had feasted their savage cruelty upon their enemies in true Indian style, the band of Mohawks before mentioned, with their white prisoners, took up their line of march northward towards the location of their tribe.

In a few days they arrived with the prisoners at the lodge of the Chief Sachem of the tribe, where they were civilly treated, and acquainted, through an interpreter, with the cause of their singular capture and detention.—Through this medium they learnt that Wacumca had formed and executed the curious stratagem of taking them prisoners for no other purpose than that of receiving the prompt and immediate attendance of the famed medicine woman upon the sick son of their chief.

But they did not have time to await the success of their strange project, for a detachment from the large and peaceful tribe of Pequods with whom they were then at war, came upon them the very next day after Henry and Zoraida had arrived at the lodge, killed their Chief Sachem and his sick son, burnt their wigwams, and carried off a large number of prisoners amongst whom was Henry and his companion.

Having made the above explanation to his father, Henry with the rest of the prisoners and their Indian captors, being greatly fatigued by their forced marches, laid themselves down upon nature's green carpet, with no covering except the broad canopy of the summer sky, and were soon enjoying the repose which their tired and exhausted situations rendered necessary for them. They might have been thus reposing some two or three hours, when the guard suddenly gave the alarm, crying out, "the Yengees! the Yengees!"

Upon hearing this alarm, both prisoners and captors sprung almost simultaneously to their feet, and dire was the consternation amongst the Indians and great was the joy of the prisoners when they heard the cheering sound of an approaching drum, and the shrill notes of the martial fife.

Ere the Indians could gather their weapons, or yell forth their horrid war-whoop, they were surrounded by a company of whites, the captain of whom commanded them instantly to surrender, under pain of being immediately fired upon if they refused.

Being hemmed in upon all sides, and finding that they could not do any better, the Mohawks were forced to agree to an unconditional and immediate surrender when their white prisoners soon received the congratulations of the brave soldiers, who had so providentially and unexpectedly released them from bondage.

What a strange and unaccountable passion is true love. Confine it as we may, under all conventional forms and usages of civilized society, and still it will secretly penetrate bosoms where it has no right to enter, and there, locked up in the most secret recesses of the heart, drive its unfortunate victims to despair and death. Thus it was with the young Zoraida.

After her unexpected capture by the attendants of Wacumca, when

the beautiful light of the ensuing morning first revealed to her the handsome features and noble form of Henry Fitzsimmons, the consuming, burning ardor of the most passionate love took immediate possession of her sensitive bosom. But being fully aware of his situation towards Anna Norris, she betrayed not to him, either by word or look, the least symptom of her hopeless passion, but she nobly resolved to endeavor to eradicate it from her bosom. Poor thing, she little knew what a Herculean task she had undertaken to perform. But, in accordance with her determination, although in their strange situation she and Henry were necessarily together, she treated him with a coldness and reserve, which, considering her as he did to be Anna's sister, pained and surprised him. Therefore on the night to which we have brought our story, when at supper, George had obscurely hinted at Henry's future union with Anna, sharp pangs of jealous despair had pierced the heart of the unfortunate Zoraida. And that night, when she retired into her tent she wept, and then prayed that such unholy passions might be driven away from her bosom, but it was of no avail; so towards morning, being unable to sleep, she left her tent, and passing the guard, she paced wildly and swiftly the little open space upon the border of the dark pine-woods. She had not walked long before a low voice interrupted her by calling out,

"Zoraida?"

She turned and beheld George Norris standing beside her.

"Be not alarmed, dear Zoraida," he said, "at my intrusion upon your privacy, for I felt anxious to speak to you a few words ere we depart from this spot."

"George," answered Zoraida, "in the bygone days and happy hours of our childhood, you were always wont to speak your thoughts and wishes to me without restraint, and I know not that your absence has debarred you from now taking the same privilege. Speak on."

"Dear Zoraida," replied George, "I will not longer conceal from you the true feelings of my heart. By accidentally overhearing a conversation between my father and mother, I became acquainted with the fact, that you were not my sister; and having always felt towards you more than brotherly love, now that you have given me the privilege of speaking my feelings, I will tell you, that towards you they are none other than feelings of the most deep and fervent love. If so be, dear Zoraida, that my suit be favorably regarded by you, here on this spot, with yonder morning star for my witness, I pledge to you my hand and heart."

"George," replied Zoraida, turning towards him her pale and careworn features, "although before it was never whispered to me by mortal lips, that I was not your sister, yet from my earliest childhood I always felt within my bosom the most incontrovertable evidence of the fact, therefore in respect to that, you have a right to love me if you will, but I must tell you, George, for the first and last time that your passion can never by me be returned. It grieves me to wound a heart so noble and true as I believe yours to be, yet I must solemnly entreat you, by the remembrance of our earlier

and happier days, never more to lisp to me that cruel, yet sweet word, Love. No," continued she drawing herself up to her full height. "if you would not drive me from your presence into yon dreary wilderness, avoid forever speaking to me as you have this morning. Ask me no reasons for what may appear to you unaccountable and ungenerous conduct on my part, for the time may soon come when you will learn all. When we meet again let us be as we have always have been, brother and sister." So saying she turned abruptly from him and entered her tent?

Poor George, stood for some time motionless. Thunder-struck at the fatal blow his long cherished hopes had just received, it was some time ere he could decide how for the future to act. But with a buoyant heart always alive to man's sweetest and best angel, Hope, he said—

"Perhaps by paying her every little attention, and striving in every way that I can to show my deep devotion to her I may yet succeed in gaining her affections. Indeed I will try."

Having formed this very reasonable and philosophical resolution. Norris, with a heart somewhat lighter than when Zoraida first left him, turned and entered the encampment. In his way to his tent he discovered our friend Drubbits, the chaplain, advancing towards him with a countenance so extremely lugubrious and disconsolate that he could hardly refrain from laughing aloud at poor Jerry's uncouth appearance.

"Our worthy chaplain," said George, "seems to have taken the field early this morning. How happens it?"

"Capt. George," solemnly replied Jeremiah, "I have discovered in this camp, aye, even in the very apartment where I have spent the night, my mortal enemy, yea, even him who did smite me unto the earth with his fists in the beautiful little garden which lays behind your father's house. Lo, Lo, the Lord hath delivered him, even mine enemy into my hand, and vengeance is mine, and I, even I, will repay it." So saying he began to make sundry war-like demonstrations with his withered fists, which, if George had not stepped back, would have come in contact with his nose, but of which he took no farther notice than to laugh outright, saying at the same time:

"My good Mr. Drubbits, allay your wrath till after our morning meal, when I will inquire into this matter, and have it definitely settled, ere we leave this place."

"Verily," replied Jerry, "although the young man hath wounded me in a sore point, inasmuch as he came between me and the beloved of my heart, still if he repenteth and asketh my forgiveness, as I am a man of peace rather than war I will grant it unto him."

"But," asked George, as he took the worthy chaplain's arm and walked with him towards the tent, "how did you happen to recognize the young man, your enemy as you term him?"

"Why," replied Drubbits, "amongst the rest of the prisoners which the Lord through our instrumentality, delivered from the blood thirsty Indians was a godly pious man whose name was

Herbert. When we were about retiring to rest last night, this man asked the privilege of returning thanks to God for the happy deliverance of himself and companions from their enemies. The privilege having been by me joyfully granted to him; he commenced and made such a fervent, and such an appropriate prayer, that verily my bowels yearned towards him, even as a mother for her child, and at the conclusion of it I could not refrain from taking him by the hand and warmly embracing him. In a conversation which I held with him after the rest of the company had gone to sleep, I found out that this Henry Fitzsimmons, who aspires to your sister's hand, was the person who so unceremoniously knocked me down as I have told you before, in the little garden. What vexed me more was that the young man had made a jest and sport of me to his father and Mr. Herbert, concerning this same affair. Surely it hath sorely troubled me, and the evil spirit rises within me, yea, even the unhallowed spirit of revenge, whenever I think of it."

Having arrived at his quarters as Jerry concluded with this statement of facts, George immediately gave directions to have the men mustered, and breakfast prepared, which was soon accomplished, and all had met at their respective stations to enjoy their morning meal. The same guests who had graced the table of Capt. Norris, the night previous, did not need a second summons to appear in the morning. Soon seated at the table was the cheerful Lord Henry, and his anxious and impatient son, the mild and dignified, yet melancholy Herbert, Zoraida, with her countenance deathly pale, yet betraying no other sign of her recent emotion, and last but not least, our good friend Drubbits. He having craved a blessing, George commenced conversation by saying—

"Henry, my dear fellow, our friend the chaplain here has entered a serious complaint against you for knocking him down in my father's little garden, coming in between him and his beloved, and so forth; now, we, as being umpire upon the occasion, would like to hear your version of the affair."

Henry then proceeded to give a distinct and true account of the occurrences in the little garden, and after he had concluded, rose and gave poor Jerry his hand in token of repentance.

"Verily," said Jerry, as he took Henry's extended hand, "young man, I forgive thee from the bottom of my heart." And so, dear reader, that matter ended.

After breakfast was over George ordered immediate preparations to be made for their departure, which being soon done, the whole company were quickly on their way to Salem.

It was some days after the strange disappearance of Henry and Zoraida, before the burning fever had left Anna Norris. But it did leave her, although in such a weak and debilitated state as to give but small hopes of her ultimate recovery. After the wild delirium under which she had suffered during the fever, had left her, the fair sufferer called her mother to her bedside, and thus addressed her—

"Mother I feel that my time in this world of cares and sorrow is

short, and that soon I shall be called to depart to another and a better world."

"O say not so, Anna," answered her weeping mother, "the fever has left you, and I hope and trust that you will soon recover."

"Mother," replied Anna, and her eyes sparkled with supernatural brilliancy as she spoke, "my hopes of happiness in this world were all centered upon one being, and in the deep devotion of my love for him, in the wildness of my fervent attachment, I had forgotten that my highest affections should have been bestowed upon my blessed Redeemer. By this sorrowful and afflicting dispensation he has been pleased to show me mine error, and now my thoughts of this world are as nothing to me, and I now feel it my duty to prepare myself as soon as may be for the change which I feel certain awaits me, yet, mother I have prayed, and I hope there may not have been sin in the prayer, that I once more might behold my Henry, and my dear Zoraida. Mother, come to me and kiss me, for I am weary and would sleep." And her mother went to her and kissed her, and the beautiful girl sank gently back upon her pillow and slept, but 'twas a fearful and troubled sleep, for every few moments she would give a convulsive start and say, "O God! the Indians! the stake! the fire! my Henry—oh, save him!" and then her mother would soothe her, until she seemed to drop into a peaceful sleep—and then her mother left, hoping that when Anna awoke she should find her better. Mrs. Norris then joined her husband, and related to him Anna's conversation with her, but the stern old man only answered, "the Lord's will be done."

Next morning Anna awoke somewhat refreshed, but that evening she was weaker than before.

As her father at her request was performing evening service a loud knocking was heard. The old man opening the door, Henry Fitzsimmons rushed past him into the apartment. When he had recovered sufficient breath he asked—

"How is my Anna, is she still alive?"

"She is," replied the old man, "but Henry, the days of that dear child are numbered. It is the will of the Lord, Henry, and we should not murmur at it, but oh, (and the tears ran down the old man's burning cheeks as he spoke,) human will asserts its prerogative and we must mourn, we must weep."

Whilst the old man thus spoke, Henry began to weep convulsively and there they sat, two manly and stern specimens of God's handiwork; the one young, the other old, bitterly weeping at the very idea of the death of that young and pure being so sincerely, yet differently loved by both.

Whilst this scene was going on below, Anna, having heard, and immediately recognized that voice, suddenly seemed gifted with supernatural strength, for, throwing over her emaciated form some articles of clothing, she exclaimed, "It is him!" and with a quick step descended into the room below, and throwing herself into Henry's arms, she said—

"Henry, if thou couldst have been blessed with the vision I had last night, thou wouldst not weep. Henry, I dreamed of Heaven, but my tongue cannot describe its glories. And Henry, I felt too that it would be hard to part with thee, and my fervent prayer was, that I might live to behold once more the dear form of my affianced husband. God in his infinite mercy having seen fit to grant my prayer, I can now depart calmly and in peace." Throwing her eyes up to the window, she suddenly gave a wild scream of terror, and exclaiming, "The Witch! the Witch!" fell back in Henry's arms in a deadly swoon. Upon looking up, the old man beheld, standing upon the same spot where she had so prophetically pronounced the doom of Anna upon the night of Henry's departure, the stately form of Zoraida, the Witch of Naumkeag! But it was only for an instant, for the old man rudely grasped her arm, and said,

"Witch! how dare you taunt me with your accursed presence in this bitter hour of my distress? Art thou not satisfied?"

"Hezekiah Norris," replied the Witch, mournfully, "I am no enemy to thee or thine, yet when in the sorrowful hour of my separation from her who is as dear to me as this pale flower is to you, you spurned me from your presence, I was constrained in the galling bitterness of my heart to utter the fatal prophecy. Your child dies peacefully and calmly in the home of her father, surrounded by those who are dear to her; but mine oh, God! has no home." Thus speaking, the woman rushed into the woods.

Meanwhile Mrs. Norris, with the aid of the almost distracted Henry, had borne Anna to her chamber, where she again sank into a troubled sleep.

The next morning the loud sound of a drum, gave notice to the denizens of Salem of the approach of their soldiers from a victorious campaign.

Foremost amongst those who greeted the soldiers' return was Hezekiah Norris. Besides being a prominent town officer he felt a father's pride arise in his bosom at the thought of meeting his son, crowned as he was with the laurels of victory.

Captain George dismissed the men, and hastened to inquire of Anna.

"And here, father," said George, "see I have brought my other sister, the fair Zoraida, and should also have brought Anna's truant lover, Henry, but he stole a march upon us, and I suppose is here, ere this."

"True," replied Hezekiah, "he is here, he arrived last night in a state of great exhaustion and fatigue. And now my son George," continued the old man, "you and your fair companion Zoraida, must accompany me without further delay to the bedside of that fair and resigned sufferer."

"But stop, dear father," said George, "ere we depart, suffer me to introduce to you Henry's father, Lord Fitzsimmons and Mr. Herbert, a worthy minister of our Lord and Saviour."

I should consider myself as doing injustice to both, were I to undertake to describe the meeting of Zoraida with Anna.

Having bolstered the weak sufferer up, her mother descended, leaving the three together as Anna had desired, after which she called Henry to her bedside, and said to him,

"Henry dear, I feel that I am fast going. I wish to speak to you concerning the sister of my heart, the friendless Zoraida."

"Henry Fitzsimmons," said the dying girl solemnly, "to your protection and in your care I leave her. Refuse me not, Henry, my last, my dying request, but swear to me that you will cherish and protect her, as you would me, if it should have pleased God to have suffered me to remain on earth."

"I swear," replied Henry, solemnly. As he concluded, Anna sank back upon the pillow, and her pure spirit returned unto him who gave it.

The wild shriek of Zoraida, and the heavy fall of Henry brought quickly to the apartment the agonized parents, and their sympathising visitor.

The remains of the gentle girl were shortly afterwards deposited in a new made grave in the village burial ground. After which they took the path leading to the Witch's Cavern.

On arriving at the Indian Oak, the party halted, and soon the tall form of the Witch moved towards them from the cave.

"I bid you all welcome," she said, coming up to them, "to the rough, yet secure shelter of my wild abode, and I ask you to enter my cave and partake of such poor hospitality as I may be able to show you."

The young Zoraida was the first to press forward and in a few moments they had all entered that dark and romantic place of refuge.

The witch soon struck a light, and turning to her visitors, said:

"Methinks I see one among you, who young in years and strong in limbs, should be amongst these brave soldiers, who even now are contending with the savage enemy."

Zoraida stepping forward, anticipated him by saying—

"Mother, speak no harshly to the young man, for it was his ardent wish, expressed to Captain Norris, upon the receipt of your note, to go forth with him and fight by his side, but the captain reminded him of a solemn oath which dear Anna extorted from him, to protect me, yes, me and her poor and friendless Zoraida."

"Ah, that is well," replied the Witch, and continued she musingly, "two so young and handsome, surely there must be love at the bottom of all this; however I shall soon ascertain the facts." She had spoken the latter part of this speech in a low tone of voice, and at its conclusion, she turned suddenly to Lord Herbert, and looking him earnestly in the face, while her voice trembled with emotion, she said:

"Your dress, sir, bespeaks you to be a minister of the Gospel; if I might take the liberty, I would ask, sir, if that be a fact."

"In answering your question, madam," said Herbert, "I would merely state, that having spent my youth in giving loose rein to my wild passions and vicious habits, a sudden and unexpected calamity that came upon me as a thief in the night, had the effect to bring

me to my senses, and led me seriously to reflect upon my previous conduct. I had taken for the partner of my bosom, a being beautiful and fair as the uncloudy sky, and as pure as she was beautiful, yet totally unfit for the station she had assumed. I could have no pleasures in common with her, and I soon became in a measure weaned from her, and sought amongst women of a lower and more congenial order, to spend my leisure hours in the grossest debauchery and dissipation. But this gentle and pure being, could not brook to be neglected and dishonored by him to whom she had given her young affections, therefore she suddenly left me, and since that, I have never been able to gain any information whereby I might be enabled again to see her. I will inform you now, what I should have told you before, that I was formerly an English nobleman, and after my injured wife left me, I accompanied my friend here to his plantation in America, where I accepted a call to preach to the few inhabitants of the vicinity in which we resided."

She said nothing, but motioning Zoraida to follow her, she removed the broad flat stone, and then both of them entered the inner apartment, where the Witch, opening the large oaken chest before mentioned, took from it several articles of dress suitable for her sex and stature of the finest quality, and strictly conforming with the fashions of that period, with which, after divesting herself of her Indian apparel, she proceeded, assisted by Zoraida to array her person. She then removed an Indian mask from her face and neck, showing as she did so, a skin of the most transparent whiteness.

"My child," said she to the astonished and amazed Zoraida, "I now declare myself to be your mother, my child, and the time has now come when it is proper that I should explain to you my reason for putting you away from me, to be brought up amongst strangers."

"I was married when young to an English nobleman, and lived with him about two years, when I learnt that—, but it matters not; I left him secretly, and by the assistance of friends, was enabled to obtain a passage to America. Always romantic and wild, and visionary in my thoughts and ideas, and sorrow and trouble having blighted my young hopes and made me sick of the busy world, I resolved as soon as I arrived here, to live altogether retired from it. Delighting as I did to roam about in the wild woods, enjoying in solitude the luxurious melancholy of my own wild thoughts, I heeded not danger beset me, till I was suddenly captured in one of my rambles, by a party of Narraganset Indians. I believe that they at first intended to have put me to death, but my courage and bold bearing excited their admiration, and although they still held me captive, yet I was allowed every other privilege I could wish for. Soon becoming used to their manners and customs, and having been carried far away from the white settlements, I relinquished for the time all thoughts of escape, and resolving to adapt myself to their ways, I sat myself down with them, and become as one of them."

"And now, my dear child, having said all I have to say to you at present; we will join our companions in the other apartments." So

saying, the Witch took out a large golden necklace from the oaken chest, and putting it upon her neck, and telling Zoraida that it was her husband's gift upon her bridal night, she proceeded, followed by Zoraida, to the outer apartment.

No sooner had she presented herself in her English dress, to the astonished and admiring gaze of the inmates of that apartment, than Herbert, suddenly springing from his seat, caught her in his arms, exclaiming:

"I know that necklace——oh, my much injured wife, forgive, oh forgive your suffering and repentant husband!"

"I have no doubt," exclaimed she, speaking in a soft, mild tone, "George, that you have suffered sufficiently for your injustice towards me, and I now freely and unconditionally forgive you. Embrace your daughter," said she, pointing to Zoraida, and in an instant she was clasped to his paternal bosom.

"Zounds!" exclaimed Lord Fitzsimmons, starting up and seizing his friend's hand, and then in the exuberance of his joy dancing and capering about the apartment, "this is what I like to see. Forget and forgive is my motto. The minister said to-day that in the midst of life we are in death; that is very true, but I should think that he might now add in the midst of death we are in life. Hurrah! a man and wife reunited after a long and painful separation! a daughter found! Zounds! I can hardly contain myself."

Here Drubbits entered, exclaiming:

"Verily I bring glorious news from the soldiers of Israel; the Lord hath delivered the enemy, even the Indian Philistines into our hands, and many of them are now the captives of our bows and our spears. Captain George hath sent me to acquaint this worthy company, that you can now return in safety to the house, in which I opine that the accommodations are somewhat better than they are here."

Great was the astonishment and first surprise of Hezekiah Norris and his wife at the strange denouement that had just taken place, whereby Lord George and his wife had become reconciled to each other; and Zoraida had found her real parents, but after it had in a measure subsided, they both approached Lady Herbert, and each taking a hand of hers, the old man said:

"My lady, I humbly ask your forgiveness for the harsh and bitter words I have spoken to you, and for which, having found how little you deserved them, I now feel heartily sorry."

The forgiveness that he asked, having been speedily and cheerfully granted, the whole company, headed by Henry and our friend Drubbits, made the best of their way to Norris's house, where George had made hasty preparations for their reception.

THE END.

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