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Victorine Durocher

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Title: The Young Lord, and Other Tales; to which is added Victorine Durocher

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Release date: January 22, 2008 [eBook #24403]

Language: English

\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE YOUNG LORD, AND OTHER TALES; TO  
WHICH IS ADDED VICTORINE DUROCHER \*\*\*

Transcribed from the 1849-1850 Darton and Co. edition by David Price, [ccx074@pglaf.org](mailto:ccx074@pglaf.org)



**THE YOUNG LORD,  
AND  
Other Tales.**

BY MRS. CROSLAND,  
(LATE CAMILLA TOULMIN.)

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

**VICTORINE DUROCHER.**

BY MRS. SHERWOOD.

LONDON:  
DARTON AND CO., HOLBORN HILL.  
1849-50.



**THE YOUNG LORD;  
AND  
THE TRIAL OF ADVERSITY.**

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BY MRS. NEWTON CROSLAND,  
(LATE CAMILLA TOULMIN.)

**THE YOUNG LORD.**

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“Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.

“But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”—ST. MATT. vi. 19, 20, 21.

“How can we reward the little boy who has so honestly brought me the bracelet I lost at church yesterday?” said Mrs. Sidney to her only son Charles, who was now passing the Midsummer vacation with his widowed mother, at a pretty cottage in Devonshire, which had been the home of his early years.

“I do not think people should be rewarded for common honesty,” said Charles; “and the clasp contained such an excellent likeness of papa, whom every one in the village knew, that it would have been unsafe as well as dishonest for him not to have delivered it up.”

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“I am sorry to find, Charles,” said Mrs. Sidney, “that school has not weakened those selfish feelings which have so often caused me pain. You seem to me to think that every trifling gift I bestow upon another is robbing you; and, worse than all, I find you constantly wresting phrases from their real meaning to answer your own purposes. Thus, I agree with you that people should not look upon common honesty as anything beyond a simple duty which they would be culpable *not* to perform. But I am as well assured that honesty, even in this world, meets with its reward, as I am that it is our duty, when we find the poor and uneducated distinguished by this quality, to show our sense of it, and so make ourselves the instruments of this earthly reward, by every means in our power. I addressed you, Charles, on the subject, because I fondly hoped it would give you pleasure to offer some assistance in the matter; besides which, I thought that you might be more likely to hit upon something which in a pleasing manner would be of service to a boy of your own age—although only a cottager’s child—than I could be. I am disappointed in this expectation, however, and can think of no other plan than giving him a small present in money, with some of your old clothes; he is, if anything, less than you, so there is very little doubt of the latter being of use to him.”

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Now it happened that the honest little boy, who was named Thomas Bennett, had stood in the hall the whole time, and thus overheard the conversation. I am sure that you cannot wonder that he remembered it, with feelings far removed from love or gratitude to Charles Sidney.

Any one who observed Charles Sidney, while his mamma examined his wardrobe to find what clothes she might choose to spare, would have been shocked at perceiving the selfish expression of his countenance.

It seemed absolute pain for him to part even with articles which, he having quite outgrown them, were utterly useless to him, and which very likely the moths would soon have destroyed: for to accumulate and keep made the rule of his life. You may imagine what a serious trouble this unhappy disposition of her son was to Mrs. Sidney, who felt perhaps the more from contrasting his character with that of an elder brother, who had died from a lingering illness about two years previously, and who had been equally distinguished for a generous nature, which had sometimes led him to the opposite extreme of improvidence.

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Indeed, poor Frank had been known to debar himself of necessary comforts for the sake of assisting others. His pocket money was given away within an hour of its being received; his books were often torn or lost, from being indiscriminately lent; and the cold he caught, which led to his fatal illness, had been occasioned by his leaving a warm upper coat, which he had been accustomed to wear, to add to the bed covering of a poor sick child, whom he had gone out one cold winter's day to visit. Now, though it was impossible for any one to help dearly loving so amiable and generous a character as Frank, his parents had found it necessary gently to reprove his exceeding and indiscriminate generosity, by pointing out to him that it was even wrong when it tended to injure his own health, or to encroach on the rights of others. On such occasions Mr. and Mrs. Sidney had explained to him that their income was limited, so that their acts of benevolence must consist less in absolute gifts of money (alas! some persons think there is no other way of doing good), than in the bestowal of time and advice on the poor, and a degree of judgment in the distribution of what they had to give, which would make that little of its greatest service.

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Charles had often been present at these conversations, and the allusions Mrs. Sidney made to his fault of wresting phrases from their real meaning, had reference to the evil manner in which he applied these warnings to himself—so unnecessary for one of his character: warnings which nothing but the indiscriminate profusion of Frank could have tempted Mr. and Mrs. Sidney to utter. I mention these circumstances because I am afraid we are all too much inclined to find excuses for our faults; to do which, we generally apply maxims suitable only to the opposite extreme of our own failings. And this was precisely the case with the little selfish miser. The death of Mr. Sidney, which had occurred suddenly, had followed quickly upon that of Frank; but, amid all the widow's affliction, she never forgot the sorrow that Charles's selfish disposition occasioned her. There was no longer even the shadow of an excuse for parsimony, as the inheritance which would have been divided between the two brothers would now devolve on the only son. Charles knew this: he knew that he was provided with a sufficient fortune to finish his education admirably, to send him to college, and start him in a profession. But this made no difference in his disposition; he continued to hoard money and books, and everything that came in his way, as if each individual article were the last he ever could expect to have.

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It so happened that Charles had several cousins, the children of a younger brother of Mr. Sidney, and whose characters formed a strong contrast to his own. Their father had been a clergyman, and though they had been bereaved of him when very young, they had never forgotten the lessons of piety he had bequeathed to them.

The two Mrs. Sidneys were also sisters, and having married two brothers, the families seemed as it were doubly cemented.

Now Mr. William Sidney, the younger brother, having five children, between whom his fortune was divided, these cousins had each just one-fifth of Charles's expectations, and, of course, Mrs. William Sidney was obliged to limit many of their present indulgences in due proportion to her income.

And yet I need scarcely tell you that William, the eldest son, who was about the same age as Charles, and his younger brothers and sisters, were a thousand times happier than their cousin; and, even with their limited means, did more good to others in a month than Charles did in a year.

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In the first place, they were kind and generous to each other. A book, a toy, any source of gratification that was opened to one, was always made the property of the whole family; so that a present or kindness to one of these children, was like bestowing it on five. Then the little girls, Fanny and Lucy, were so clever and industrious, that they would make clothes for the poor, either by purchasing coarse but warm materials with their own money, or from cast off frocks of their own, which their mamma gave them permission so to employ. Like all those who think more of other persons than themselves, and who are constantly enjoying the pleasure of doing good, they were light-hearted and happy; while their cousin Charles, who thought of nothing but his own selfish interests, was three days out of the four in bad spirits and bad temper.

"How I should like to rummage out that closet," said William one day to his cousin, when he had chanced to have a peep into his receptacle for what he had hoarded.

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"Would you, indeed," replied Charles, "I can tell you there is nothing there which would be of the least use to you."

"That is good," returned William, with a hearty laugh; "not that I want anything you have stowed away, but if it could be of no use to me, what use is it to you? answer me that, Charles!"

"I tell you there is nothing there but old childish toys and baby books, things that I have not looked at for years."

"Then why don't you turn them out, and give them to some children, or let the little creatures have a scramble for them? It would be capital fun, that it would. Suppose you were to give them to the young Bennetts; I told them the other day I would beg some of your old toys for them. It would be such a pleasure, I am sure, to make them a present. Poor children, you know, have seldom anything of the kind."

"How you talk!"

"How I talk!" continued William, "to be sure; besides, I hate waste, and it is just as much waste to shut things up which might be of use, as it would be to burn them; more, I think, for if they make firewood, that is proving of some use. Now don't be such a miser, Charles, do turn them out."

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"I shall do no such thing!" exclaimed Charles, in an angry tone, "and as for your extravagance, it is quite shocking; I wonder what you think is to become of you when you are a man."

"I tell you what I expect," replied William, throwing some apples from his pocket out of window to a poor child who was passing; "what I expect is, to have to work very hard for my living, and, as I am the eldest, I look upon it that I ought to do something for mamma, and the girls into the bargain. But for all that I hope I shall never turn a miserly screw. Why, when God gives us health, food, clothing, and lodging, don't you think that hoarding and hoarding, instead of dispensing the blessings, and performing such acts of kindness as may be in our power to bestow, is like doubting God's goodness and mercy for the future?"

"One would think you were preaching," said Charles, with a sneer.

"Well, never mind if I am; it was only yesterday I was reading one of dear papa's sermons, in which he quotes one of the most beautiful chapters in the New Testament, the 12th of St. Luke, in which our Saviour speaks of the ravens, which 'God feedeth,' though 'they neither sow nor reap;' and of the 'lilies, how they grow.' And He emphatically says, 'Seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father knoweth ye have need of all these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, *and all these things shall be added unto you.*'"

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"Besides," continued William, after a slight pause, "it seems to me that nature is constantly repeating the lesson which Scripture teaches us. See how, year after year, the blades of wheat spring up, and the fruits of the earth ripen, as if to warn us that we should distribute the good things God provides us with, and wholly trust that he will continue to send us all things that are needful."

"Pray did you find that in the sermon, also?" asked Charles.

"Perhaps I did."

"Did it say anything about the ten talents—where we are told that unto every one that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath?" replied Charles, with an air of triumph.

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"Do you understand the text you have quoted?" asked William, mildly.

"I suppose so, I should think it rather taught people to increase their stores than anything else."

"Then let me tell you that you are quite wrong, for that was a text I used to hear papa explain very often, that it should never be applied to worldly possessions. But those who pray for, and seek by every means to acquire, heavenly grace will surely find it bestowed on them; while those who neglect to cultivate the spirit of religion will as surely find any feelings of piety they may once have experienced in like manner depart from them. Every human being has the power, more or less, of doing good: and his means and opportunities are also among the 'talents' with which he is intrusted, and for which he must account at last."

"Have you done preaching?" yawned the little miser.

"Yes, for I am afraid you are beyond my teaching." And so the cousins parted.

Charles sat musing for a little while. "How happy William seems!" thought he; "and yet I dare say at this moment he has not half-a-crown he can call his own. It is very fine of him, indeed, to talk of turning out the closet, he who has got nothing to keep."

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And so reasoned the selfish boy, amusing himself with gazing upon a shelf full of baby toys he could take no pleasure in using, but yet which he had not the heart to give away; and then he jingled a money-box, which was heavy enough to tell there were many, many coins inside, and yet he drew from his pocket a shilling, which he slipped through the narrow chink, thus adding to his useless store.

Oh! sad it is to believe that no thought of gratitude to the Almighty for the blessings with which he was surrounded; no prayer for guidance from on high rose in his heart; no thought of the duty of cultivating the "talents" which had fallen to his share.

Two or three years passed away, and notwithstanding the exhortations of Mrs. Sidney, and the bright examples of his cousins, no amendment was perceived in the character of Charles. Most persons who act improperly, as I have said before, endeavour to find an excuse for their conduct, and he formed no exception to the rule. His apology for his parsimony was, that he was saving every pound he could accumulate to help pay for his college education when he should be sent

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thither. A poor, shallow excuse, for his mother often assured him how little he needed such mean precaution, and entreated him to spend his money with proper liberality. Mrs. Sidney so often shed tears on his account, that no one in the house was much surprised to see her weeping on one important occasion.

Charles was at this time about fifteen, when, entering his mother's morning room somewhat suddenly, he found her in tears, with an open letter in her hand, which Charles in a moment remarked had a black border and a black seal.

"What is the matter, mamma?" said he "is any one we know dead?"

"Yes, Charles," she replied; "I am sorry to say three relations, whom, though you may have heard of, you have never seen, have been suddenly removed from this world by the upsetting of a boat in which they had gone on a pleasure excursion."

"Not Lord Sereton and his sons?" exclaimed Charles, clasping his hands, while an expression of anything but sorrow passed over his countenance.

"Yes, Charles," replied Mrs. Sidney, after a moment's pause, "I am sorry to say they are no more."

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"Sorry, mamma," shrieked the youth, in a voice of gaiety that, considering the circumstances, was horrible. "*Sorry*, mamma, why then I . . . I . . . am . . ."

"Yes, *you* are Lord Sereton now."

"And shall I have all the money, mamma, and the houses, and that beautiful park which I once went to see, and the carriages, and the horses, and the—the—all the beautiful things? Oh, yes, I shall, I know I shall. I am so glad—I am so happy. Lord Sereton was only papa's third cousin, I know, but I am the next heir."

"And do you feel no shock"—said Mrs. Sidney, rising and laying her hand on her son's shoulder, while she spoke almost with a shudder;—"do you feel no shock at the awful sudden deaths of three estimable individuals—no compassion for the bereaved widow and mother? and, beyond all, do you not feel deeply conscious of the additional responsibilities and the heavy duties which become yours with this accession of wealth and rank? Oh, Charles, it is hard for a mother to wish such a thing for a son, yet, unless the Most High would change your heart, I could pray that this wealth might not be yours. Oh, my son, let me beseech you to humble yourself before His throne, and ask His grace and assistance."

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But Charles, or as we may now call him, the young Lord Sereton, at no time rendered anything but lip service to his God. It is easy enough to do this, though such prayers never mount to heaven, but fall back to the earth from which they spring. Prayers, to be acceptable to God, must arise from a devout frame of mind, and be accompanied by a diligent endeavour to acquire that grace for which we ask, while by our actions we must show the sincerity of our hearts. "That ye cannot serve two masters," was fully illustrated in his case; and he, the slave of Mammon, was lured on with the vain expectation that his new wealth would bring happiness!

Of course, during the minority of the young lord, the guardians whom the law appointed took care of his property and estates; but, boy as he was, large sums of money were still at his disposal, and he was old enough to have considerable influence with those who had legal authority over his fortune. His treasures, however, were a sort of "enchanted wealth," which, as he used it, or rather did not use it, was as valueless as a bag of gold to the thirsty traveller in the desert, who cannot procure with it a glass of water; and certainly happiness, according to Charles's plan, was as completely out of his reach.

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As he rode or walked over his estates, no face was there which lighted up with grateful pleasure, as would have been the case at the approach of a generous and kind young landlord; no, he was miserable himself, because he never attempted to make others happy. Tutors were to a certain degree forced upon him by his guardians, or I really believe he would have neglected to pursue those studies which he before followed, much more as the means of acquiring future wealth, than for love of themselves.

And so time passed on, Mrs. Sidney often spending a week or month at her sister's pretty cottage, where, surrounded by the kind-hearted generous family, she could not but contrast that happy home with the splendid misery of Sereton Hall; an abode rendered melancholy to her by its young owner's selfish and avaricious nature.

It had been the custom for many generations, on the coming of age of the lord or heir of Sereton Hall, to have a general feasting and merry-making among the tenantry; an ox was roasted whole, and such rural festivities were observed as I dare say you have often heard described, if you have not witnessed them.

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When his birthday drew near, it was with great difficulty that the young lord could be persuaded to adhere to the old-fashioned custom; calling it waste, profusion, and using many other words which belong to a miser's vocabulary.

At last, however, he yielded to his friends' advice, chiefly, it is very probable, because they represented to him that if he made himself more unpopular than he already was, the people on his estate might find some serious manner of showing their dislike.

The eventful day arrived. A glorious morning dawned, which *should* have been ushered in by the ringing of bells, but unfortunately there was so much difficulty in finding any one willing to perform this office in honour of the grinding, hard-hearted young landlord, that Charles had nearly finished a somewhat late breakfast before a feeble peal fell on his ear. Soon afterwards he had an interview, by appointment, with his guardians and trustees, in which they resigned all the papers connected with the estates.

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The young miser, however, had taken care long ago to make himself acquainted with the exact state of his finances, so that he had very little to learn, and the business was soon transacted.

How he now rejoiced that he had not yielded to the suggestions of these gentlemen,—who within the last two or three years had thought fit to consult the young lord on such matters,—when they had proposed lowering the rent of a poor farmer, or remitting, it might be, some arrears when crops had failed, or some unforeseen misfortune happened; not yet was the time come for the recollections of such misdeeds to torture his mind with all the writhings of remorse. Not yet, for in the morning of that day he only revelled in thoughts of his vast wealth, and dreams of future aggrandizement.

Presently his mother entered the room, accompanied by his cousin William; they came to offer their congratulations, with, on Mrs. Sidney's part, a hope that, now her son was really in the possession of enormous wealth, some impulse of generosity and benevolence would spring up in his heart. Accordingly she it was who took the opportunity of offering a petition: nothing less than that he would spare a certain sum of money for his cousin William's college expenses.

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Poor William! he trembled while he listened, for on the chance of his cousin's acquiescence rested the probability of his advancement in life, and the means of assisting his brothers and sisters.

But the face of the young lord grew clouded, and though it would seem that he dared not look up when he spoke, he said, resolutely, "I have no money to spare for any such purpose."

"Oh, Charles!" exclaimed Mrs. Sidney, "I know that you have hundreds and thousands of pounds at your disposal; again, again, I warn you that your sin is great. In the sight of God you are but the steward of this vast property, and to Him will you have to render an account of its disposal. My son, my son, while there is time, oh! change this heart of stone;" and overcome by her bitter feelings she burst into tears.

"My hundreds and thousands of pounds," returned Lord Sereton, without appearing in the least degree moved, "are wanted to pay for an estate which is contiguous to my present property, and which I am determined on having. By joining them together, I shall increase the value of each."

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"Is it you, then," exclaimed Mrs. Sidney, with an expression of horror in her countenance, "is it you then, who have been bidding so cruelly against the former owner? that good man who, having been compelled from unforeseen misfortunes to sell his inheritance in early life, has worked indefatigably for thirty years to win back the house of his fathers, and preserve the honour of the family. He was your father's friend too."

"What have I to do with friendship that existed before I was born?" said the unfeeling youth, sulkily; "I *will* have the estate, I tell you."

"Hush—hush," murmured the mother, and her words seemed almost prophetic, "it is God that WILLS, not man; and even now I think HE does not will this cruelty."

"Aunt, let us go," said William, "I am as grateful to you as if your mission had been successful."

"Let me call *you* son:" exclaimed Mrs. Sidney, taking William's hand with affection; "I will no longer own that selfish and cruel child."

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And to this pass had the hardening heart, and the growing covetousness of Charles Sidney brought him: to be disowned by his mother on his one-and-twentieth birthday, at the moment of his earthly pride, and of his acquiring princely possessions!

Yet now, even at this eleventh hour, a merciful God might have pardoned and protected him.

The feasting and attempted merry-making went off heavily. There was no spirit of love, or reverence, or gratitude, to warm the hearts of the tenantry, or make their lips eloquent; and not a few were glad when the day was drawing to a close.

Towards evening, the young lord mounted his horse, and rode in the direction of the much admired neighbouring estate. Wishing to examine some particular spots minutely, and to revel in the contemplation of the whole without being disturbed, he was not even accompanied by a groom.

The sun was going down in all its glory, casting tall shadows of the trees across the road, when it peeped from the clouds of crimson and gold that encircled it. The young lord came to a field dotted with the graceful wheat-sheaves, for it was harvest time, and knowing that if he rode across it, he should be saved half a mile of road, he determined to do so. Two men were lounging at the gate through which he passed. One of them was Thomas Bennett, whom circumstances had induced to become a labourer on the estate, and he it was who remarked, "He'll be thrown, that's my opinion; those fine-paced gentlemen's horses are not used to make their own roads across a corn field."

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"Then why don't you warn my lord?" said the other.

"Warn him!" replied Bennett, who it must be owned, had grown up a violent tempered vindictive man; "you have not lived long in these parts, or you would have known better than ask that question. If it were Master William, now, I should make free to seize the bridle—but as for my lord there—why, I have known him man and boy, and I'll answer for it, no one has love enough towards him to warn him from any danger." And so saying they both walked rapidly away.

Bennett's words were indeed true, for scarcely had the young lord proceeded a hundred yards, when the horse, unused to such uneven ground, stumbled and fell, throwing his unhappy master. Nor was this all, for Charles had remained entangled in the stirrup: he was dragged along the stubble a considerable distance, with a broken arm and fearful bruises, till, stunned by a kick from the horse, he became insensible. Probably the saddle-girth at the same moment gave way and released him, for the unconscious animal trotted home, and was discovered with disordered trappings at the park gates.

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It was evident some accident had happened, and servants were sent out in all directions. The first conscious perception Charles had was of waking to excruciating agony, and finding himself supported on men's shoulders along the road. No doubt every one believed him still insensible, or, much as he was disliked, they would not have been so cruel as to reproach him in his hour of agony. He had not strength to speak, but he could not avoid hearing.

"He can't get over it; he'll never see another sunset," said one.

"Well, any way we can't have a harder master, that's some comfort!" exclaimed another.

"Oh! Master William *is* a real right down lord," cried a third eagerly, "he won't rack-rent the tenants, and grind down the poor. Why, he saved us and our little ones from the workhouse last winter, though he is poor—that is quite poor for a gentleman—I well know."

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"Then hurrah! for the new lord!" said the second speaker, throwing his hat in the air; "and I think they should pension the horse, that has given him to us, with the free run of the park all his life, instead of shooting him, as some one talked of doing."

"For shame, it is wicked to rejoice over the fallen," said a woman in the crowd, and in the next moment the sound of a pistol was heard proclaiming that the horse had paid his penalty for the accident, and would never throw another rider!

And now for a moment, before these pages close, let us contemplate the death-bed of the selfish and avaricious young lord, who in the three stages of ease, affluence, and luxury—and as boy, youth, and man,—had only laid up his "treasures on earth."

But they could not assuage one torturing pain, or prolong his life for a second!

Far more than bodily pangs, oh! harder to endure a thousand times, were the stings of conscience which now assailed him. In dark array rose all the scenes of suffering he might have relieved, and had not; he saw himself again the selfish child, the covetous youth, the grasping landlord, and the unrelenting man. The events of that same day were even yet more fresh in his memory. Had he but listened to his cousin's wants, instead of his own selfish plans, might he not have lived?—was it not one last opportunity of amendment offered by a merciful God, ere He swept him from the earth, and called him to give a strict account of his stewardship?

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And it was that cousin, who would now have all his wealth, to whom he had denied in the morning so small a portion.

The anguish of the sufferer's mind was to be read upon his despairing countenance, and as his weeping mother, now, indeed, with pardon on her lips, bent over him, he murmured: "Lost, lost, there is no hope for me."

"There is always hope for the truly penitent," replied Mrs. Sidney, through her tears—"hope in a Saviour—hope in our Maker's mercy."

The dying man turned upon his pillow, for a few minutes he was silent, though it is believed he joined in the fervent prayers which arose from the lips of his mother and cousin; and let us hope, though tardy his repentance, it was accepted. It was evident he was sinking fast, and before sunrise he expired.

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Almost his last words were, "William, yes, William will atone with the money for the wrong I have done. Yet he does not seem so glad as I was when I became a lord!"

It was all over, and William, the next heir, was indeed the lord of that wide domain, and of his cousin's accumulated riches; but *his* first act was a fervent prayer for divine assistance. Knowing, as he did, that at no time is it more needed than, as our Litany beautifully expresses it, "in all time of our wealth."

That he did make amends for his cousin's avarice by a wise as well as generous use of his wealth, my young readers will readily believe; and William, Lord Sereton, was as much beloved as his cousin had been disliked. And Mrs. Sidney, grieving as she did, notwithstanding his faults, for the loss of her only child, found no small consolation in the affection of that family, whom his death had raised from many cares to rank and affluence.

“Blessed are the meek.”—ST. MATTHEW v. 5.

“He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” ST. LUKE xviii. 14.

“You are quite a contradiction, that you are!” was the exclamation of Harriet Mannering to her sister. And she continued, “You are not too proud to wear a cotton dress and coarse straw bonnet, and even to be seen in them by the very persons who knew us when we had a carriage; and yet you will not accept these presents from Mrs. Somerton.”

“I do not accept these fine clothes, Harriet,” replied her sister Mary, “because, however kind the gift, Mrs. Somerton only provides me with them, that I might visit at her house in a suitable manner; and I do not think it would be my duty to leave poor papa, even for one day, in his present helpless state. You are the elder, Harriet, and must act for yourself, but I have decided.”

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Mr. Mannering had been a wealthy merchant; but from one of those sudden reverses of which we so often hear, he had lost his whole fortune. To add to his affliction, his eyesight had been for some time failing him, in consequence, it was thought, of intense application to business; and about the period of his unfortunate speculation, he became totally blind.

He had been for many years a widower, but his daughters, when these calamities reached him, were respectively about seventeen and eighteen years of age.

From a large and commodious house, with many servants, and every luxury, they were obliged to retire into humble lodgings, living even thus only upon an allowance made by a distant relative.

The circumstance of Mr. Mannering’s blindness threw much of the responsibility of management and direction upon Harriet and Mary, though theirs was an early age at which to be so placed. For though, it is true, they could ask his advice on every passing circumstance, they very often refrained from doing so, because, in their changed condition, most of these very occurrences would, if related to Mr. Mannering, have had the effect of reminding him, very painfully, of his present poverty.

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In the days of their prosperity, it would have been difficult to decide which of the two girls was the more amiable.

Both of them were affectionate and obedient; both of them were kind to the poor; and yet, a very keen observer might have discerned, that in Harriet’s visits, or gifts of charity, she was actuated by a vain-glorious feeling of *pride* and self-satisfaction at the benefits she was conferring, which, in the sight of the All-wise Judge, must have cancelled the merit of her good action; while, on the contrary, Mary’s heart turned in *humble* thankfulness to God for allowing her to be the instrument of His mercy, not unaccompanied by a prayer, to assist her endeavours to perform her duty in that station of life to which it might please Him to call her. We shall see, presently, how much more strongly in adversity each characteristic of mind showed itself.

To Harriet’s proud nature the loss of fortune had been a sore affliction. It had cost her bitter tears to resign her spacious elegant home, the many servants, and the pleasant carriages; she desired no more to be seen by those whom she could not now rival in appearance; and yet, when she and her family mixed with strangers, her offended pride rose in indignation at the lower station they were obliged to take.

p. 34

But, though there was sorrow in Mary’s heart, there was no rebellion there. Her father’s blindness was so great an affliction, that it seemed to swallow up every other; yet even to this she bowed with trusting piety, remembering, in the words of Job, that “the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.”

Long before the days of their adversity, Mary wrote the following verses—I do not think they have much poetical merit, but they have sincerity in them, and there is one line which shows, I think, that Mary, young as she was, already watched her heart, lest that fatal pride should invade it; that sin by which, we are told, Satan fell from his high place, and which, on earth, is sure to lead to selfishness and impiety.

#### ON ENTERING CHURCH.

p. 35

Again within thy walls I stand,  
 Again I bend the knee;  
 In mercy, God, so bend my heart,  
 And turn my soul to Thee.  
 Teach me by thy Almighty power,  
 To choose the “better part,”  
 And send, above all gifts, thy grace,  
 To sanctify my heart.

#### ON LEAVING CHURCH.

For any measure of thy love  
 This day vouchsafed to me,  
 Accept the tribute of my heart—  
 My gratitude to Thee.



*Yet pride may lurk in humble guise;*  
May I no vain thought own,  
If something whispers one short prayer  
Has reached Thy heavenly throne.

The offer of dresses far more suitable to their former than their present station, was a temptation Harriet did not resist. So that while the elder sister accepted also the invitation to spend a month at Mrs. Somerton's beautiful house, Mary wrote a grateful letter to that lady, thanking her for her proffered kindness, but saying that she felt her duty was to remain at home, and tend her blind father, more especially as Harriet would be absent.

p. 36

Although Mary could not avoid touching on their recent misfortunes, her letter was not a complaining one: on the contrary, it was distinguished by that Christian humility of spirit which is very nearly akin to cheerfulness—that humility which, while it bends the heart meekly to the chastising hand of God, teaches it also to look around, even in affliction, for means of executing His will. As the time drew near for Harriet to depart on the promised visit, it was remarkable that she did not improve either in amiability of temper, or assiduousness of attention to her father.

The truth was, she was too much occupied with her own arrangements, to have much thought for the comfort of others; thus selfishness was the first-fruit of her pride and vanity. Mr. Mannering always found the easy chair and footstool in the same place, and his walking-stick within reach of his hand: and he perceived, now that summer was come, and flowers could be had for the gathering, that a vase of sweet-scented blossoms was always near him; but the blind man did not know that it was Mary's thoughtfulness alone which now provided for his comfort. And yet he had a strange idea; he began to fancy that Harriet's voice was growing shrill and querulous! How singular it was, for no one else had observed it; but it is one of the merciful dispensations of the Almighty, by which we are guarded, that when man is deprived of one faculty, the others are almost always sharpened, to make up, in some measure, for the deficiency. Thus, though poor Mr. Mannering could not see the frown or distressed expression which often crossed Harriet's face, he *could* distinguish the different modulation of her voice, which was but another expression of her feelings.

p. 37

But why was Harriet distressed, ask some of my young readers, now that she was about enjoying again the fine clothes and all the luxuries which she had so much regretted?

Listen to a conversation which took place between the sisters, two or three days before Harriet's departure, and then, perhaps, you will be able to guess some of the reasons. Mary had just returned from guiding her dear papa in a pleasant shady walk, and now, throwing off her bonnet, and putting on her apron, she prepared to lay the cloth for dinner; for as they had only one servant, and that was a mere country girl, to do the drudgery of household work, Mary assisted by performing a thousand little offices, which Harriet was too haughty to undertake.

p. 38

"Cannot you come and help me?" said Harriet, who had been sitting at home all the morning making one of her new dresses. "I shall never get this sleeve finished if you do not. I am sure Peggy, (that was the servant,) I am sure, for once, Peggy can get the dinner ready without your assistance."

"No, Harriet, not exactly as papa likes it," replied Mary; "and you know we are always so sorry when anything happens to remind him of his misfortunes."

"But how should you know how to mash potatoes, or make pies, or hash meat so much better than Peggy?" asked Harriet.

"Did I never tell you that, before we left the great house, I asked old cook to teach me how to do a great many things. I cannot tell how it was, but she cried all the while she was telling me about cookery—partly, I think, at the thought of her dear master having to eat plain or ill-dressed dinners, partly, I really believe, at her sorrow for leaving us. However, I coaxed her into teaching me how to make a great many things dear papa likes; besides, I have bought a cookery-book."

p. 39

To mark the difference of character, it is worth noticing that Harriet, before leaving the great house, had "coaxed" the lady's maid to give her a few hints about the cutting-out of dresses—and since her preparations for her visit began, she had bought a book of the new fashions.

As it was likely the sisters would henceforth have to make their own dresses, it was a wise precaution to gain as much information as they could on the subject; but in their inquiries, the one sister thought only of her afflicted father's comfort.

"I will help you after dinner," resumed Mary, "that is to say, if papa does not want me to read to him." And as, during dinner, Harriet contrived to make her wishes very evident, Mr. Mannering dispensed with the reading, and, accepting the arm of a neighbour, a new and homely acquaintance, took a second stroll in the green lanes.

"What am I to do about a bonnet?" said Harriet, as they sat at work, and after a pause, as if she had been summoning courage to commence a rather disagreeable subject.

"About a bonnet?" said Mary, repeating the question.

p. 40

"Yes, I *must* have a new one; the old straw is so burnt by the sun, that it is far too shabby to wear at Mrs. Somerton's; and it looks even worse by the side of this bright new silk dress, than with a

common one."

"I know that," replied Mary, with a sigh, "but you cannot afford a new one. If you remember, we both agreed to have new ribbons to the old bonnets, and thus make them serve."

"Yes, and so you may do, Mary, very well; even if you were to go on wearing your bonnet as it is, old ribbon and all, I do not see that it would much signify; but it will be different with me at Mrs. Somerton's, you know."

"Yet, though no one sees me here," replied the younger sister, musing, as if to consider if it were possible to save the price of her own ribbon, as something towards procuring the new bonnet which Harriet said she "must" have, "though nobody sees me, it is right at least to be *neat* and *clean*, and really my bonnet strings are very dirty."

"Could you not wash them?" said Harriet, really blushing at the meanness and selfishness of her own suggestion.

"I did not think of that before. Yes, I can wash the ribbon, and I shall not much care about it looking faded and shabby, if it be clean. So, at all events, there will be that money towards purchasing what new things you still require."

p. 41

"I am sure it is very good of you, Mary," replied her sister, the anxious expression of her countenance somewhat relaxing; but, alas! this was only the removal of one of many similar troubles. The bright dress and the new bonnet required many other articles to correspond, for the purchasing of each of which some new sacrifice was exacted from the gentle Mary. And Harriet suffered all this for the selfish gratification of a mere vanity, which, disdaining their humble abode, and so repining at God's will, which had changed her position from wealth to poverty, sought, at any hazard, to flutter in fine clothes, and to maintain a false appearance! Instead of perceiving the beautiful and unselfish character which Mary was developing, in the careful and cheerful discharge of her humble duties, Harriet had latterly begun to feel contempt for her,—a feeling which grew so strongly, that, before she departed on her visit, she had quite arrived at the conclusion that Mary was a very inferior person to herself, and fit for no more exalted station than that which seemed to await her.

p. 42

On the whole, this opinion was a source of satisfaction to Harriet Mannering, since it relieved her own mind from any anxiety about leaving her father—she felt so very sure Mary would attend on him carefully. Thus, the very virtues of the one sister were made the excuse for the selfish vanity and haughtiness of the other; until, priding herself on some beauty, and a few showy accomplishments, I believe the elder sister at last thought she was conferring almost a favour by becoming Mrs. Somerton's guest.

Mrs. Somerton was a kind-hearted lady; and her real motive for inviting one of Mr. Mannering's daughters to pass some time with her, was to ascertain if her disposition and acquirements were such as to fit her for a situation in the family, as an assistant, or under-governess to her children. I think her plan was a very good one, for it afforded her more opportunity of judging of Miss Mannering's real character, than if she had been quite conscious of Mrs. Somerton's intention; and, considering the important trust that lady was confiding to Harriet, I think she was justified in taking any measures short of deception, to ascertain the real qualities of her heart and mind.

p. 43

Certainly no deception was practised. Harriet was invited as a guest, and treated with all the consideration of one, but Mrs. Somerton, narrowly watched her conduct and her words.

It would be well if both young and old always remembered, that this life is at best but a state of probation, and that in all our actions we are but "on trial," watched over by the All-seeing God. And often, and often, indeed, when we least suspect it, our doings are marked by our fellow men, are weighed, even in an earthly balance, and so are permitted to influence our earthly happiness. A poet has said—

"A deed can never die."

If my young readers do not yet understand how the consequences of our actions follow us through life, and so do not perceive all the truth and meaning of that line, I would advise them, nevertheless, to remember it; some day they will understand it better.

We shall leave Harriet Mannering for awhile on her visit of pleasure and gaiety, and return to the humble dwelling of her father and sister. What with her household cares, and walking with and reading to her father, the time flew rapidly with Mary: she met, too, with an unexpected return for her attention and devotion.

p. 44

At first, the books of history, divinity, and natural philosophy, which were those her father had desired her to read, had seemed heavy and abstruse, but gradually their meaning, like a dawning light, beamed upon her mind, which, opening to receive it, let in the new delight of intellectual pleasure! Then, in the long twilight of the summer evening, when it was too dark to read, would she sit on a stool at her father's feet, with one of his hands clasped in both of hers, and he would explain away the difficulties at which her young mind had halted.

What did it signify that they sat in an humble, low-roofed chamber, and that Mary's dress was one of cotton? They could discourse on the wonders of creation, and the goodness of God!

But, if the pleasures of an enlarging mind were opening on Mary, new cares were also stealing

upon her. The many purchases Harriet had made, had drawn heavily on their little stock of money, in addition to which, Mr. Mannering had suffered so much pain in his eyes, that he had been obliged to have further medical advice. Mary felt that some means must be found of adding to their little income. At first, she thought of attending pupils, and imparting what she had learned in the days of prosperity. But, distrustful of herself, she sometimes doubted if she were competent to undertake the task of tuition.

p. 45

She might have taught music, but, for want of an instrument, she was sadly out of practice, and feared that this, with her youth, and her want of experience, would be a hindrance to her success; and so she found it. Yet something must be done; for Mary's humility of heart was not that inert apathy of idleness, that is sometimes by foolish, unthinking people mistaken for it; and I suppose, in the eyes of the vain and worldly, there was some degradation in Mary Mannering employing several hours of the day in needlework, for which, at the end of the week, she received a few shillings; but the gentle girl herself never felt that there could be disgrace in earning this trifle honestly, however humbly; although, in one of Harriet's letters, she professed to be quite "shocked" at the necessity of such a thing, while she made it a plea for her own prolonged absence, saying that there was one less to support while she was away. It would seem that it never occurred to her to contribute her share of industry by the labour either of head or hand.

p. 46

Alas! her heart was indeed becoming hardened by her selfish pride.

Mary and her father had one evening been enjoying their usual walk, when one of those sudden storms, which often succeed sultry weather, came on. They were not within a mile of any house where they could ask for shelter; but they chanced to be near a wide arch which had been constructed across the road for the convenience of a railway line. Above them, rolled the hissing engine and its long train, and glad enough were they of the protection the archway afforded. They had not, however, been there many minutes before they perceived an open carriage coming rapidly along the road, and as, just when it reached the point where Mr. Mannering and his daughter had found shelter, the storm increased to its utmost violence, the elder of the two gentlemen, whom the carriage contained, desired the coachman to draw up under the archway until the pouring rain should have somewhat abated. The gentlemen were Dr. Vernon, a celebrated physician, and his son.

I should have told you before that Mary was not considered so handsome as her sister, and, as you know, she had not the advantage of gay and fashionable attire; but both the gentlemen have often said since that there was something inexpressively interesting in her appearance. I suspect hers must have been the loveliness of a kind, affectionate, and contented heart, which showed itself in her watchful attention to her blind father, and in her always unaffected manner.

p. 47

Dr. Vernon was the first to address Mr. Mannering, when he not only perceived his affliction, but also discovered he was conversing with no ordinary individual; for it is astonishing, when two persons of great acquirements and high moral worth are thrown together, how speedily they understand each other. The storm continuing, prolonged the interview, until, in the course of conversation, it appeared that Dr. Vernon and Mr. Mannering had known each other in their youth, though circumstances had separated them in later years. This, of course, was an additional source of interest, and, after a little while, Dr. Vernon insisted on Mary and her father getting into his carriage, and promised to set them down at their own door.

The acquaintance thus renewed, was not likely again to drop, and from paying them frequent visits, it very soon happened that either Dr. Vernon or his son was sure to call to see the invalid every day. Arthur Vernon was at this time about five and twenty, and was no less remarkable for his great talents than for his amiable disposition. He had inherited an independent fortune from a distant relative, but, from love of science, and a consciousness of the wide field of active benevolence that they might open to him, he had studied medicine and surgery with great perseverance. Latterly he had devoted himself more particularly to the consideration of the eye, and the truth was, he began to think that Mr. Mannering's sight was not irrevocably gone, and that he had a knowledge of remedies which, by the blessing of God, would restore the sight of his father's old friend.

p. 48

It was to Mary herself that Mr. Vernon first breathed his hopes of effecting a cure, and is there much wonder that henceforth she looked forward to his visits with interest and delight? And, as day by day hope seemed to promise recovered sight more and more surely, it was very natural that she should feel deep gratitude to the young surgeon.

Sometimes when Mr. Vernon came, Mary was at needlework, sometimes attending to the necessary domestic arrangements, and sometimes reading to her father; and, if the last was the case, the conversation not unfrequently turned upon the book before them.

p. 49

Mary had acquired one valuable piece of information. She knew enough to understand how very trifling was the sum of all her knowledge; it may be remarked that very ignorant persons are almost always the most conceited. Such individuals have no more idea of knowledge than those born blind or deaf can have of sight or sound. But the gentle humble-minded Mary Mannering was a very opposite character. She was *not* ignorant; she had, as it were, peeped, through books and conversations with her father, at the vast stores of knowledge and learning which human reason has been permitted to accumulate; and, though she knew how little, in the longest life, could really be mastered, in comparison with the mighty whole, she also knew that one of the purest pleasures that life affords proceeds from acquiring the sort of information which opens to our view the wonders of creation. Thus would she quietly listen to conversations on many

improving subjects between her father and Mr. Vernon, seldom joining in them, it is true, unless she was addressed. But hers was that "eloquent silence" which is the opposite of indifference.

p. 50

And thus several months passed away; for the remedies Mr. Vernon recommended to his patient were slow in their operation. Winter came, and still he was a daily visitor. Oh! how sadly Mary would have missed him!

An event, however, was about to occur of some importance; nothing less than Harriet's return home from her protracted visit at Mrs. Somerton's.

Yes, Harriet returned to her lowly home, less inclined than ever to be content in her own station. She returned to it, however, because Mrs. Somerton had not found her distinguished by the gentleness and humility she had hoped to recognise in her character. For the proud and vain are always selfish, and perhaps Harriet Mannering had been quite unconscious that, while eagerly bent on her own enjoyment and frivolous gratification, her conduct had been narrowly watched. And what had she to show as the harvest or even gleanings of the last few months? Literally nothing, for her time had been utterly wasted—her fine clothes were worn out, and neither mind nor prospects improved.

p. 51

It appeared that Mr. Vernon had sometimes visited at Mrs. Somerton's, but, though Harriet recollected him immediately, she had made so little impression on his mind that he did not at first remember her. And now it was no small mortification to the vain girl to discover that Mary, in her humble home and common dress, was treated both by Dr. Vernon and his son with a consideration *she* had never found among any of the gay guests at Somerton Park. For the truth was they already loved and esteemed Mary.

This was, perhaps, the first happy awakening of Harriet to the faults of her own character; she began to perceive the sweetness of gentle, unselfish humility, which, prompting ever to a contented fulfilment of our duties, is sure to make its presence felt, even as we know, by its delicious perfume, that the violet is near, though hidden from sight beneath its green canopy of leaves.

Time passed on. At last, one happy day of returning spring, light gleamed again on the darkened orbs of the afflicted father! The cure was working, and soon—very soon, he could recognise his dear children; and, throwing back their hair to gaze yet more fondly on their countenances, he would talk of the change of time, of their growth, and, above all, of his deep thankfulness to the Almighty for the blessing of sight. And now it was that Harriet fancied—was it fancy?—that he looked more fondly at Mary than herself. And then *they* had so many subjects of interest to talk about, of which she knew nothing. But whose fault was it that she had not shared her gentle sister's cares and pleasures?

p. 52

The happy time had come when Mr. Mannering no longer required the guiding hand of either daughter. He was walking in the little garden which belonged to their dwelling when Dr. Vernon and his son arrived. Contrary to his custom, the old gentleman, perceiving his friend, joined him out of doors, while Arthur, who well knew his way up stairs, tapped at the door of their one sitting room. He did not perceive any occupant but Mary as he entered, and indeed, I am not quite certain that even she was aware that Harriet was in the room, Mary herself having only just come in, and her sister being nearly hidden by a thick curtain which half covered the window.

It was then and there, with the haughty sister for a listener, that Arthur Vernon asked the gentle Mary to be his wife!—hinting at his hopes and wishes at first in answer to some expressions of gratitude from her for the service he had rendered her father, and begging her thus to repay it by giving him herself.

p. 53

Mary wept, but they were very happy tears she shed; for now she might own that gratitude and admiration, for his noble qualities had made Arthur Vernon very dear to her. Yet she could not refrain from asking if his father were willing he should marry one poor and humble as herself.

"Think not, dear Mary," he replied, "that I would tempt you to disobedience by setting you the example. I am almost sure my father has spoken to Mr. Mannering this morning on the same subject, and here our parents come to complete our happiness by giving their sanction."

And so it was. Dr. Vernon kissed her affectionately as he said, "My son has chosen wisely and well. A dutiful daughter will make a good wife; and though now he is rich, he knows how mutable is all earthly fortune. And so he has chosen a wife whose wealth cannot be taken from her, for it consists in good principles and a well-stored mind; and an humble, loving, and gentle nature, that will add to all the joys of prosperity as it would comfort him in the sorrows of adversity, prompting her, in either case, to 'do her duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call her.'"

p. 54

And after awhile Harriet came forward with streaming eyes, but her tears did not now spring from envy or selfish regrets. "Father!" she exclaimed, "in this happy hour, forgive me my haughty selfish conduct. Mary! teach, oh, teach me some of your virtues!"

"I forgive all, Harriet," replied Mr. Mannering, with much emotion, "for the acknowledgment of your error is half-way to repentance and atonement. And this is a day of triple happiness, for I have just heard that, now my sight is restored, I have a fair chance of again entering into mercantile pursuits, and arriving at independence. But oh! my children, neither in prosperity nor adversity let us forget to pray for true humility of heart—the Christian spirit!"

**VICTORINE DUROCHER;**  
**OR,**  
**THE BLESSINGS OF PEACE.**

p. 55

BY  
MRS. SHERWOOD,  
AND  
HER DAUGHTER, MRS. STREETEN.

**VICTORINE DUROCHER.**

p. 57

It was towards the end of the pleasant month of May, that Dorsain D'Elsac reached Salency, in Picardy, and stopped at the door of his sister's cottage, a Madame Durocher, who dwelt in that village. Dorsain D'Elsac was one of three children. The elder, Pauline, however, was no more; she had married, but was never a mother, so that the children of Margoton Durocher, his remaining sister, were the nearest relatives he had left in the world. It is true D'Elsac had a wife, one, I must say, of the best tempered women in all Dauphiny,—she was a native of Grenoble, in that province,—but she was now getting on in years, and was often very weary of her daily employment, and yet she had no one to whom she could occasionally entrust her duties.

It was one evening, when complaining of this to her husband, that Madame D'Elsac suddenly exclaimed, "What say you, Dorsain, of sending to Salency for one of your sister Margoton Durocher's grown up daughters; as Pauline has left no family, we may ask Margoton to let us have one of her three good-sized girls? Had we not better have one of your own nieces, Dorsain, than a stranger?"

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Though Madame D'Elsac, having once thought of this plan, was ready and willing to put it into execution without a thought, not so her worthy husband. He must first weigh the affair steadily in his mind, and repeat over and over again to his wife, that if once they took a relative into their house, they could not part with her as a hired attendant if she did not suit them; "and then you know, Delphine," he added, "you and I are so happy and comfortable together, that I should not like to invite one to our home who might make that home disagreeable."

Madame D'Elsac's disposition was of that easy kind that she allowed her worthy partner almost to talk himself against the arrangement altogether, and the matter would probably have dropped without any consequences, had not Dorsain mentioned it to a neighbour, who had been at Salency two years before, and who had been highly delighted with the lovely daughters of Madame Durocher. So the affair was settled, that D'Elsac should invite a niece to wait upon his wife, and to reside with them on their pretty little farm, near Grenoble, on the borders of Swisserland. The next point in question was, whether this selected niece should be Caliste, Victorine, or Lisette, for as to little Mimi, the fourth daughter of Madame Durocher, she was considered altogether too young for the office.

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Monsieur D'Elsac had not seen his sister nor her children for many years, and it is probable, that this slow-minded gentleman would have pondered till his death, upon which he should favour of his nieces, if the quicker Delphine had not proposed that he should go over to Salency and see the young girls before he made his selection. So the affair now really appeared likely to come to some settlement after all, particularly as Monsieur D'Elsac did arrive safely in Salency, mounted on one of his own farm horses, from which he alighted at the door of Monique.

The cottage of his sister was small, containing only three apartments and an outer kitchen, and the furniture was of the simplest kind. As the family were numerous, the kitchen was used as a sleeping apartment, the head of the bed being made in a kind of cupboard, into which in the daytime the bedding was turned up, and the cupboard doors closed. A few chairs, a table, and a glass case, in which was a coarse waxen figure, flauntingly dressed, representing the Virgin with her child in her arms, completed the rest of the moveables of the sitting room.

p. 60

D'Elsac fastened his horse to a post, which opportunely stood near, and walked into the cottage. No sound reached his ear, though around him lay many articles, denoting that the family had not long been absent. He was in the kitchen, but his step aroused no one to see who was the intruder, and he again walked back to the door, but still there was no appearance of any one near.

He looked down the village street, to see if any one was approaching, but the village also appeared deserted, and he was beginning to get a little uneasy, when he was roused by the playful voice of a child as it were behind him. He turned in the direction of the voice, and saw that two young girls were standing in the very middle of the apartment, having come from some inner room.

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They did not appear to notice D'Elsac, as he was without the cottage door, and, as he listened unnoticed by them, he was aware that they were too much interested with their own conversation to regard his presence.

He could not doubt for an instant but that these two fair girls before him were his nieces, and the younger, a mere playful child, was no doubt the little Mime or Mimi, as she was endearingly

called, for the rare talent she evinced in mimicking or laughing at the eccentricities of her neighbours.

Mimi was a very lovely little girl in outward appearance, her hair and eyes being of a most brilliant black, and she wore the dress of the peasants of Normandy, a province which borders close on Picardy. D'Elsac could not so easily distinguish her companion, though she was evidently an elder sister, and she, too, wore the Norman costume. This dress consisted of a full red striped petticoat, a jacket with short sleeves, and an apron with pockets.

He saw, however, that she was not behind her younger sister in beauty, and though speaking with earnestness to the child, when Dorsain first beheld her, her manner was gentle, and her countenance calm and serene.

p. 62

"My dearest Mimi," she said, "I want you to understand thoroughly, why I refused to listen to Monsieur le Prieur, when he came to talk to me. He wanted me to try with my own sisters Caliste and Lisette for the rose, and supposing I had agreed to do so, what would have been the consequences, my dear Mimi? I love them dearly now, and I believe they love me; but were I to gain the rose from them, they would be vexed, and if I lost it after trying for it, I should be disappointed, and very likely I should be cross and jealous."

"You are never cross, Victorine," replied the child, "so that you certainly have a better right than Caliste or Lisette to the rose, and then, too, we shall have fine work here, if they are rivals for the rose, and either of them has a chance of getting it."

"Alas! I fear," exclaimed Victorine, sorrowfully, "alas! I fear so, Mimi, I could almost find it in my heart to hope that neither will be chosen."

"But you forget," replied Mimi, "how we manage these things in Salency, you have only been at one of our yearly fêtes, whilst I have been to ten, and five of those I can remember very well. Three girls are always chosen, Victorine, by the villagers, not one only, and then the Seigneur takes one from those three—that is the way, you know, and Monsieur Le Prieur wanted you, and Caliste, and Lisette, to be the three chosen. He said it would make the thing so interesting, if three out of one family were striving for the rose."

p. 63

"Can it be possible," said Victorine, all astonishment, "that anybody can be so ignorant of human nature, as to set three sisters to strive against each other, to rouse up envy and jealousy in their minds, to make them grieve to hear that their own sister is looked upon favourably by their neighbours and friends, because by that favourable notice they will be rejected? Young as you are, Mimi, you can see that this fête of the rose must be very wrong, by raising one girl above another, and causing envy, hatred, and malice amongst the rivals for the rose."

"It is very wrong," exclaimed the child, after a moment's thought. "Yes, Victorine, it is very wrong, I am sure, and a fine scene we shall have of it here, which ever way it turns up. But I am for Caliste against Lisette—I am for Caliste, and if Lisette gains it, I for one will not let her set herself over us. I am for Caliste—I am for Caliste."

p. 64

So shouting, the child darted from the cottage, paying no heed to Victorine's entreaties to allow the matter to take its course, for enough strife was likely to ensue, and nearly knocking down D'Elsac in her eagerness, she ran down the village street, and the next minute was out of sight. For a moment, or more, her uncle remained still at the door reflecting upon what had passed between the sisters; then, anxious to know what the worthy Salenciens were about, he stepped into the cottage to learn particulars from his niece.

Victorine was seated beside a table, on which lay her needlework, yet untouched; she had covered her face with her hands, and it was evident by her manner she was feeling deeply. The step of D'Elsac roused her, and, looking up, the tear was visible in her eye, she brushed it away hastily, as she rose to receive her visitor, and offering him a chair, she begged him to rest till her parents returned.

"You cannot know me, Victorine," he said, embracing her, "but I am your uncle, D'Elsac, and I am come to Salency to see my sister and her family. It is many years, my child, since we met, but tell me where are my sister and her husband? Where are Caliste and Lisette? or whither has little Mimi run in such haste?"

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"Is it possible," enquired Victorine, "that you do not know the fête of St. Medard is approaching, uncle Dorsain? It is well you asked *me* the cause why our village is deserted to all appearance to-day, had you asked any other Salencien, I really do not know what they would have thought of you."

Victorine spoke playfully, and D'Elsac feared not to acknowledge his ignorance. "Remember," he said, "that I have only once before been at Salency, and that was but for a day. Tell me then, dear niece, what it is I ought to know before my sister returns."

Victorine smiled, as she answered, "Well, uncle, I will repeat to you, as nearly as I can, the words of Monsieur Le Prieur when speaking on this subject:—"Twelve centuries ago, the proprietor of Salency was named Medard, whose good conduct was so renowned, that on his death he was beatified. St. Medard was a native of Salency, and being a great admirer of all that was good in others as well as in himself, he appointed a day of festival, the 8th of June, being his own birthday, on which that young girl, who was most remarkable for good conduct, modesty, and wisdom in Salency, should receive from the judge of the district a rose or crown of roses publicly

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presented to her in the chapel of St. Medard, and for the following twelvemonth she was to be honoured by the title of the Rosiere of Salency.' In little more than a week is our fête of the rose, and to-day is the day in which the Salenciens meet before the officers of justice to converse on the subject, and to choose three young girls from whom the Seigneur de Salency must select the Rosiere. All the parents and friends, and even the young girls themselves, are gone to hear this discussion; and, unless it may be the sick or infirm, all our cottages are deserted for the chamber of meeting."

"And you, Victorine," enquired Dorsain, "wherefore are you not there?"

She blushed, as she answered timidly, "Dear uncle, I am a heretic, or what we term a protestant. I think such scenes encourage anything but peace or family love."

"A heretic, a Protestant!" repeated D'Elsac. "How is that, Victorine?"

She blushed still more deeply, saying, in very low tones, "My aunt Pauline, you know, married a native of Geneva, and went with him to dwell in Geneva. My uncle Basil was a protestant, and my aunt became one also. They had no family, uncle Dorsain, and my mother being very ill after my birth, my aunt Pauline, who happened to be here, took me to her home, and till I was fifteen, I never even saw my parents. My aunt is dead now," she added, the tears filling her eyes, "and my dear uncle Basil too, so I have come back to live with my parents, and I am allowed to continue in the faith in which I was reared, at least, till I am one and twenty, and then Monsieur Le Prieur threatens to banish me from Salency, and my family, unless I renounce the Protestant faith. I am now seventeen," she added, "Caliste is two years older, Lisette is nearly a year younger, and little Mimi is not eleven. I am allowed free intercourse with my family; and though my bible is taken from me, yet I ought, and am very thankful, for the indulgence shown to me."

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"But why do you disapprove this fête, Victorine?" asked D'Elsac. "Does it not encourage virtue?"

"Dearest uncle," she replied, "what is virtue? Are not we full of sin and corrupt before God, and will not such a strife as this encourage envy, hatred, and malice amongst us? Are we not driving peace from our breasts and our firesides, uncle Dorsain, and can we expect to be holier or better when she is banished from us? With peace goes love, and is not 'love thy neighbour as thyself,' the blessed Commandment given us by our Lord?"

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D'Elsac, however, did not agree on this point, and he told her so, while, secretly, he congratulated himself on not having been too hasty in his choice. "I might have taken this heretic home," he thought, "and so near Geneva as we are, she would have all the encouragement one heretic ever gives another. Let me be cautious, therefore, I will watch Caliste and Lisette carefully, before I select one as a daughter."

Just when the good man had arrived at this conclusion, a sound of many voices reached them, and the next minute Margoton Durocher, with her daughters and neighbours, stopped at her door. There was an increase of noise and bustle on the appearance of D'Elsac, and for some minutes everybody spoke and nobody listened.

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Dorsain was much struck with the change years had effected in his sister. She was as lovely as any of her own daughters when they last met: now she was become very stout, and her features were very coarse; but still her dark eyes sparkled with pleasure, and her cheeks were glowing with unusual bloom.

She saluted her brother on each side the face, inquired kindly after his wife, and then without waiting for further particulars of the reason of his visit, she called aloud for Caliste and Lisette to present them to their uncle.

If Dorsain had been pleased with the quiet Victorine, he was enchanted with the growing and still budding beauty of Lisette, who was certainly, in outward appearance, the loveliest of the family; then Caliste, too, with her long dark eyelashes, and her look of proud pensiveness, was very charming. In short, the worthy man looked first on one fair girl and then on another in high delight, and concluded by heartily embracing the little Mimi playfully, scolding her for pushing by him so hastily, and then, in the same breath, declaring that never before had any uncle four such very charming nieces.

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It was curious to see how differently the sisters took this compliment—the proud Caliste's lip slightly curled in scorn at it, as a mere kind commonplace; Lisette blushed, and took the praise as all her own; Victorine smiled good-humouredly, and little Mimi archly took up her uncle's words, and inquired "if he had come to Salency, to see which of her sisters would look best as the Rosiere."

Dorsain, to his astonishment, was suddenly and loudly congratulated on his probably near connection to the future Rosiere, and all with one voice declared, "he would never be forgiven if he did not stay to the fête of St. Medard."

Now Dorsain had already determined he would stay with his sister for some days, but being, as I have before remarked, a thoughtful and slow personage, he was so long in answering, that he found the good and excited Salenciens had imagined his silence was a refusal, and all together they mutually joined to persuade him to stay.

"Now, brother," said Margoton, "this is one of the proudest days of my life, and I shall take it very hard to be thwarted in anything on this day. Caliste, Lisette, my fair rival Rosieres, speak,

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urge your uncle to stay to see our family triumphant."

"Monsieur D'Elsac, you must remain for the fête," exclaimed one of the neighbours, "we could not let you leave us on any account; well may Margoton call this the proudest day of her life, for no native of Salency has been so fortunate, so favoured, as she is now, from the day the sister of St. Medard was proclaimed Rosiere even to the present year."

Lisette then addressed Dorsain, taking his hand, and looking up into his face, "Uncle," she said, "we wish you to remain, surely you will not vex us by a refusal to-day?"

The speaking eyes of Caliste and Victorine seemed to request his presence, and the little Mimi, hanging upon him playfully, held her finger on his lips, that he should not thwart their wishes. What could Dorsain do? He did not intend to go, but it happily struck him, that he might answer them, as if their over persuasion had prevailed against his past arrangements, and that, without their suspecting his intention, he would have plenty of time given him to study the characters of the three sisters. Moving the hand of Mimi, he inquired, "what had been the result of the meeting that morning."

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"Is it possible, it cannot have reached you?" exclaimed the mother, proudly. "Why, Dorsain, never such a thing has been known at Salency in the memory of man. My own two girls, Caliste and Lisette, have been chosen, with Felicie Durand, and the Seigneur will make his election as it pleases him. Two out of one family, Dorsain, only think, two sisters from one family; ought I not to be proud of my girls? But, alas!" and she sighed, casting a look of displeasure on Victorine, "alas! we have all our troubles. Why should the elder and younger daughter be chosen, and the second past over as a shame, rather than an honour, to an honest family?"

Poor Victorine coloured highly, and turned her head away from the group.

Mimi sprang forwards, and seized her hand, exclaiming, "If the best girl in the village was to be Rosiere, where should we find another equal to you, Victorine? Now own it, mother," continued the indulged child, "own that Victorine is the most obedient and complaisant of us four."

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Madame Durocher patted Mimi on the head, and held out her other hand to Victorine, as she kindly said, "Well, my dear girl, I cannot help being somewhat vexed; you are a good girl, Victorine, a very good girl; and it is quite excusable in a mother to regret that her child does not share in our triumphs of virtue. I have no fault to find with you, Victorine, none whatever, and as Mimi says you would have as good a chance as any to be Rosiere; what a sad pity it is then, that you have such foolish opinions on some few points!"

"Dearest mother," replied Victorine, respectfully kissing her hand, "I am content, if you are satisfied, not to try for the rose."

"Well, well," exclaimed Margoton, "I am proud of my girls, and I think Felicie Durand has but little chance against them."

"You are right there, neighbour Durocher," replied the same person who had spoken before. "You have, indeed, reason to be proud. How lovely will your charming Lisette, or Caliste either, look at the feet of Monsieur le Prieur, in the chapel, with the crown of roses on her brow!"

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Again Lisette blushed as she smiled her thanks, whilst the beautiful eyed Caliste, displeased at the evident preference given by their neighbour to her sister's beauty, turned abruptly towards her mother, and inquired, "if they had not better arrange something for the comfort of Monsieur D'Elsac. My uncle's horse is still at the door," she said, "and he has himself not been asked to take food in our cottage. Victorine has, indeed, mentioned it to you, mother; but her words, no doubt, fell unheeded." The manner, perhaps, more than the words of Caliste, was an intimation to the neighbours to depart, and as they left the cottage, the woman to whom she more particularly addressed her looks, vented her displeasure in words.

"How intolerably proud that girl is!" she said; "and, after all, her sister Lisette is by far handsomer. I think Victorine, too, is very pretty; and as to Mimi, there is no doubt she will soon be her superior in beauty."

"I like Caliste much better than Lisette," replied the person to whom she addressed herself, "for though she is so proud, yet the other is very selfish. Caliste may speak rudely, but she will do you a kindness; as to Lisette, she is wrapped up in selfishness and conceit."

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Such were the comments made upon two of the chosen maidens of Salency; and whoever will remember that the heart is full of evil, will no longer wonder at the faults of these young girls. Both Caliste and Lisette kept up an outward semblance of virtue, the one from pride, the other from the desire of being flattered and admired; but as the motives which guided their actions were not all powerful, the moment they were really tried they failed in influencing their conduct.

When left alone, Margoton and Dorsain had much to say on family matters, and the mother expatiated largely upon the late election. "Brother," she said, "Caliste and Lisette have by this shown you how well the villagers regard them. Mimi, too, is an universal favourite; but my poor Victorine,—is a heretic, brother, a decided heretic. Never shall I forget the day that our sister Pauline took the babe to her home; but I thought I was dying then, and my husband thought so too, and what could Valmont do with a young babe? Pauline was not a heretic then—she became one about a year afterwards; but somehow or other we forgot to send for Victorine, or we never had a good opportunity of fetching home the child. Thus things went on, and never shall I forget

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our astonishment on our first seeing our daughter, when the deaths of Pauline and her husband caused her suddenly to be restored to us.

“Victorine was then fifteen, and mistress of twenty louis in gold; but on account of her heresy, Monsieur le Prieur took it from her for the benefit of the church, and to expend in masses for Pauline and Basil’s souls, but he allows us to keep Victorine with us, at least till she is one and twenty, for he hopes a constant communion with Catholics will, in the end, work her conversion. When she is one and twenty, she must either renounce her heresy publicly in the chapel of St. Medard, or else be banished from Salency.”

Margoton then went on to speak of her other daughters, and, encouraged to talk by Dorsain, she acknowledged that the proud spirit of Caliste made her often tremble before it, whilst the excessive self-conceit of Lisette prevented any reproof being of use to her. Mimi she mentioned with less pain; her faults being still those of a child, had not yet brought with them a sting to her mother’s heart.

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When Valmont returned from his own vineyard, whither he had gone that morning, he inquired of his wife, “who had been elected amongst the villagers to stand for Rosiere.” Margoton told him with pride of their two children being selected, with Felicie Durand, a girl well worthy, she owned, to be chosen with her own daughters.

Durocher, with more coarseness than his wife, upbraided Victorine for not striving for the rose with her sisters. “Were you but cured of your folly, child,” he said, “there is no doubt of your success as Rosiere, for you are a great favourite, Victorine, notwithstanding your heresy.”

Victorine could have asked, had she thought it right, if it might not be this very heresy which made her beloved. She had been taught by her aunt Pauline to seek after peace, and to pursue it, for such is well-pleasing in the eyes of our God. And that person who strives not with his neighbour, who is content with his own situation, and willing to give way in what is right to others, will most probably, if he act consistently, be beloved by his friends and neighbours. To her father’s remark she made no reply, but there was that in her heart which made her at rest. She did not desire the crown of roses; she did not wish to be exalted above her young friends. She knew wherein true happiness consists, and she was fully aware that such distinction could not confer true happiness.

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What especially impressed this upon her mind was the perceiving a cloud upon the brow of Caliste, and a flush on her cheek, which betokened resentment or anger. When alone with this sister, she could not get her to acknowledge what vexed her; but Lisette was not so backward with her information.

“It is not my fault, you know, Victorine,” she said, with an affected air, “if I am considered superior to my elder sister. It is ridiculous in Caliste to be angry about that. She ought to conquer her great pride, and then she will be more agreeable and more beloved. She fears me for a rival, Victorine. She is not jealous of Felicie Durand—indeed, I know she would prefer her being elected before me; but I cannot help being a younger sister, neither can I ungratefully quarrel about a preference our neighbours may choose to give me over Caliste.”

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“Then you think,” said Victorine, “you will be the chosen Rosiere.”

“I have very little doubt of it,” she answered, “for Caliste has shown her pride to our neighbour, Madame Goton, and she is the marchande de mode of Madame la Baronne de Salency.”

“But I thought,” said Victorine, “that the rose was to be given without prejudice or partiality.”

“So it is,” replied Lisette, angrily, “and it is by failure of courtesy and civility that Caliste will lose it.”

Victorine sighed, for she saw clearly that a breach was made between her two sisters that nothing but time could heal. The elder, in her pride, shunned compassion, whilst the triumphant self-conceit of the younger was a perpetual gall to her sister.

Thus was peace banished from the household of Durocher, and Valmont and his wife were in a perpetual excitement, lest Felicie Durand should be elected, and their own children passed over. Mimi was wholly for her sister Caliste, in opposition to Lisette, whilst Caliste felt her cause a failing one, and had the mortifying assurance she should have to yield the triumph to a younger sister.

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Victorine felt for all, and did not know what to desire, for whichever way it turned out, it would bring sorrow to the family in one or other of its members—and thus passed the first four days of Dorsain’s visit at Salency.

It was on the Sunday morning, being the first of June, that the election was to be made, after Prône, in church. Prone is an exhortation or lecture, read by the priest at mass, in which he announces the holy days of the ensuing week.

Caliste, Lisette, and Felicie Durand, attired in white, walked together to church, and sat side by side during the service, all eyes being fixed upon them. Dorsain, with his sister and her husband, and Mimi, were also there, but Victorine, who could not join in the service, remained at home to pray for her sisters. Whilst thus left to solitude, she had time given her not only gratefully to thank God for not being one in the strife, but also to implore that the lesson might be beneficial

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to her family.

From Mimi she learnt that Caliste had reason to believe that Lisette would be preferred to herself, the beauty of her younger sister having attracted the attention and admiration of Madame la Baronne, whose husband was to proclaim the Rosiere.

Earnestly did she pray that the disappointment might be blest to Caliste, and, after shedding some tears for this sister's sake, she prepared to receive her in the manner that would be most agreeable to a proud and disappointed mind. Being led to see that this trial might be, in the end, a blessing to Caliste, Victorine became composed, and even happy, for that peace of God, which passeth all understanding, was shed upon her mind, and she knew that in life or death He was with her, her friend, her guide, her consoler, in all trouble. To this divine Friend and Father she intrusted her sister; and now, with peace in her mind, its holy calm being visible on her brow, she awaited the return of her family from mass.

But, oh, how different were the feelings of her relatives! Her parents were trembling, lest Felicie should be chosen—Lisette was full of triumphant consequence, and assumed an air of indifference—whilst Caliste never raised her eyes from the ground, her long eyelashes resting on a cheek, the brightness of which proclaimed the intensity of her emotion. p. 82

The exhortation commenced, the subject for that day being on virtue and wisdom, applicable to the future fête. Then came a pause, and Monsieur le Prieur rising, all present rose together, to hear what was the determination of the Seigneur of Salency.

The chosen maidens alone retained their seats. Caliste did not raise her eyes; Lisette looked round for admiration; whilst Felicie seemed to feel no more than the natural awkwardness of such a situation. Not a sound could be heard in the church, so attentively did all listen to the priest. At length he spoke, but the desired words fell not from his lips; what he said was, however, greedily devoured. A few minutes more he held forth, and then added these words. "The pure splendour of this rose unique," he exclaimed, "is at once the price, the encouragement, and the emblem of this our fairest Rosiere of Salency. What more can I say," he demanded, "but that, lovely as this flower appears, yet for once it will be excelled by her to whom its beauty is devoted. Exquisite and charming is virtue, devoid of the graces of youth and loveliness; but when it is adorned with both, then it is irresistible. My friends and children, can you doubt to whom this description is applicable? If so, let doubt be banished from your minds, and receive with joy, in its stead, Lisette Durocher, the chosen Rosiere of our noble and virtuous Seigneur de Salency." p. 83

A burst of applause followed—the parents embraced their daughter, shedding tears of joy, and the service being over, Madame la Baronne came forward and saluted Lisette, whilst the neighbours crowded round to pour forth their congratulations.

Felicie Durand had not expected to be elected; she had, therefore, embraced her successful rival apparently unmoved, but not so her companion. Proudly did Caliste stand aloof; one tear only she had shed, and that had dried ere it fell from her cheek, but casting only one look of indignant anger on those paying court to Lisette, she hastily left the church, wholly unregarded by her parents, and by all save Mimi, who alone amidst that crowd had thought of her. p. 84

With a hurried step and throbbing heart did Caliste hasten to her home, forgetful that Victorine was there, and entering the cottage, hastened to her chamber, throwing herself upon her knees, and giving way to the passions that raged fearfully within her.

"And is it come to this!" she exclaimed. "Must I, the elder born, give place to one, because that her cheek is fairer, and that the brightness of her eye surpasses mine? Miserable Caliste! Unhappy, disgraced creature! How can I bear, rejected as I am, for a mere child to appear in Salency? How can my proud spirit bend, to treat with common courtesy those who have passed me over for one so much more girlish than I am?"

Writhing in agony, she thus gave vent to her passion. But suddenly she was roused by soothing words whispered in her ear, and looking up, she beheld Victorine, whose soft eyes were full of tears for her.

"My sister," said Victorine, "my dearest sister, give not way thus fearfully to regret. Mimi has sent me to you, Caliste. Mimi, who loves you, with tears bade me follow you hither." p. 85

Victorine, as she spoke, embraced her sister, and earnestly implored her to be calm.

"That can I never be," she answered, "whilst I am rejected, and Lisette triumphs."

"But, remember that she is our sister," whispered Victorine; "that her election is happiness to our parents. Dearest Caliste, wherefore be so dispirited? we all love you dearly; let us not then grieve our parents by not participating in their present cause of satisfaction."

"Victorine," replied her sister, "what cause have I to sooth my parents? Have they forgotten that I, too, am their child, as well as Lisette? Yes, they have forgotten it, Victorine; and in the moment when I most need their comfort, they have passed over their unhappy child, to triumph with her who is triumphant. No, I will not think of them," she added, "for they have already forgotten me. But, what am I saying—they no more regard me; in Lisette's glory they have lost all remembrance of Caliste's downfall."

"Do not say so," replied Victorine, "how proud they were at your being chosen, Caliste; they love p. 86

you dearly, and even now I dare say they are seeking you."

"Victorine, you speak not what you know to be true," replied the excited girl. "Have not our father and mother continued to upbraid you from the day we were chosen, even to this very morning, because your heresy has prevented your trying to be Rosiere? Would that it were you that were elected, Victorine! To you I could give up the rose with half the sorrow I feel now."

"Ah! sister," she answered, "I thank God that I have not tried with you and Lisette; your very words make me rejoice in my quiet situation. You say you could have given up the Rose to me, but only consider, and you will acknowledge that that feeling would have passed from your mind the moment that I tried for it, with a chance of success, considering my right equal to your own. Caliste, again and again must I thank my God that I have not been in the struggle; and, oh! my beloved sister, what would I give that you might be led to feel as I do, that happiness consists in peace—that peace which the world cannot give nor cannot take away; for it is not made up of perishable things which moth or rust can corrupt, or thieves break through and steal!"

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"Victorine," exclaimed Caliste, "I am no heretic; I cannot follow the counsel you give; I must labour to gain praise, I must desire merit; and, in ardently aspiring to gain this Rose, I but follow the wise injunctions of a member of our church who has instituted this ceremony, which our priests approve."

"But consider," replied Victorine, "what are the fruits of the Divine Spirit as mentioned by the Apostle. Are they not all in opposition to such a display as our fête of the Rose? All love is banished, Caliste, at present from our house, and even our little Mimi is as excited as any of us. When love departs, my sister, peace must follow; and only now perceive the state of our hearts. In sympathy for you we must all grieve; but sorry am I to own that even Mimi is roused to anger, and to that jealousy which is the most mischievous of all feelings. If, then, peace is fled from us, we must be in error, and following the counsel of those who are not really disciples of our Lord."

Whilst Victorine spoke, Caliste listened, and even seemed soothed by her words. "You may be right," she said, "in all you say, for of this I am convinced, I should be much happier now if, like you, I had refused to try for the Rose. As it is, I shall never think of this day without pain, neither can I feel for Lisette the affection I once felt for her before we were rivals to each other. From the first it has been a cause of much sorrow to me, for, from the first, I was aware of the preference given to Lisette; and from that moment I believe I have been in one constant state of vexation or painful excitement."

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At that moment Mimi came into the room to tell her sisters that their parents were within sight; and, kissing Caliste warmly, the child expressed her displeasure that she had not been the chosen Rosiere. "Next to you, Victorine," she said, "I am sure Caliste deserved it, and I know it was only given to Lisette because she is a favourite at the château through Madame Goton, the marchande-du-mode."

Victorine tried to silence the child, and succeeded by proposing that they should go down to meet their friends, and scarcely were they in time to receive the party.

Caliste had shed no tears, but the eyes of Mimi were red and inflamed, and slight traces of the same kind of sorrow were visible on the countenance of Victorine. Mimi was not slow in explaining the cause of her grief, for resolutely did she declare aloud, "that if Monsieur le Baron only knew her sisters as well as she did, Victorine would be chosen first, and Caliste next, before Lisette."

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Sincerely did Victorine feel for her elder sister when the chosen Rosiere entered the cottage. With an air of affected indifference Lisette replied to the congratulations of the neighbours, and even professed to think that the choice had been a partial one. "I could never fancy that I should have to take precedence of an elder sister," she said, "and then Felicie Durand is so charming a person that I assure you I felt it no little compliment to be chosen in the trial with her and Caliste. As the youngest of the three you know, I could not have expected to be Rosiere, for I am only sixteen, and Caliste is nearly three years older."

Thus did she enumerate, with an assumed air of innocent unconsciousness, every reason she could think of for her own non-election—not so much to vex Caliste, as she most assuredly did, as to raise her own merits the more above her competitors; for she knew not these words of Holy Writ: "If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit, and let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, and envying one another;" "and favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised."

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But to speak of Caliste. Whilst her sister thus called upon others to compliment the idol of the day, she stood aloof, her speaking countenance and flashing eye betokening her resentment. It was useless for Victorine to try, by whispered words of affection, to soothe her; Caliste smiled fearfully as she returned her answer in low words, "Never, never," she said, "can the sting in my bosom be removed. Let the poison work, Victorine, it is not your hand that has placed the venom there."

Sorrowing at her disappointment, Victorine would have led her from the room, but she refused to accompany her. "No, I will stay," she said, "I will hear every reason why I am rejected, and my younger sister exalted over my head."

Mimi heard these words; and the excited child, irritated at the sister whom she least loved

gaining the crown, turned towards Lisette and passionately addressed her—"Lisette!" she exclaimed, "I wish you would now forget you are Rosiere, surely we have had enough about it. Let us talk of something else, or, if you wish to go on, pray tell neighbour Elise that Monsieur le Prieur himself said that Victorine would be the chosen of all if she would attend mass with us; did he not, mother?" inquired the child; "and did he not come here and talk for an hour to Victorine, two months ago? and did he not promise her, if she would attend mass, she should be the Rosiere this year, and that she should publicly become a member of our congregation on the same day? So, after all, Lisette," she added, "if Victorine had pleased, she would now be the Rosiere."

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"You do not know what you are saying, child!" exclaimed Lisette, for a moment assuming the angry countenance of Caliste. "You have not got a correct account of what happened, Mam'selle Mimi."

"Yes, but I have," she answered; "though I know you don't like to hear of it, Lisette. Uncle Dorsain," she added, addressing him, "you might have had all three of your nieces chosen by the Salenciens instead of Felicie Durand."

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Whilst Mimi had been speaking, Victorine had left the apartment to make preparations for their dinner, or else she would probably have tried to stop her little sister; as it was, the child, who feared no one else, and who often felt much annoyed by Lisette's assumption of her rights, was glad to mortify her. Lisette and Mimi had both been somewhat spoiled as the two youngest, and the extraordinary beauty of Lisette made her still a favourite and often a successful competitor over Mimi with their parents. And now, this rivalry was manifested by the eager desire of the child to repeat what she knew would vex her sister. "Uncle Dorsain," were her words, "ask my mother if she might not have had my three sisters chosen together, instead of Felicie Durand."

"That she might!" exclaimed Durocher, proudly, but with an air of vexation; "and had you, Mimi, been Victorine, that triumph would have been obtained by our family. Most anxious is Monsieur le Prieur, brother Dorsain, for the conversion of Victorine: it is astonishing what pains the good father has taken with the girl; and it is only a few weeks ago he came here to assure her he would secure the crown to her if she would attend mass regularly. The girl obstinately refused the offer, and it was in anger that he left us."

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"And wherefore did she refuse?" inquired Dorsain.

"It was all obstinate folly," replied Valmont; "she declared herself happy without it; and even went so far as to quote Scripture against the fête of the Rose."

"What could she say?" demanded the quiet Dorsain, all astonishment.

"She said what is very true!" exclaimed Mimi; "she told us it would make us unhappy and dissatisfied with each other, and the words she used from Scripture, uncle Dorsain, were these: 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.'"

"And she called the fête of the Rosiere a root of bitterness!" exclaimed Lisette. "Did you ever hear such nonsense, uncle?"

"I do not think it nonsense," said Mimi; "I think Victorine was very right."

"You are too young to judge Mimi;" replied Lisette, "when you are as old as Monsieur le Prieur, you will probably agree with a wise man in preference to a young girl of seventeen."

p. 94

Mimi, in warmth, took up Victorine's cause; and it was with some difficulty their father silenced them; but the quiet D'Elsac was much struck with what had passed, and his eyes were gradually opening to the fact that Victorine was indeed right, and that the root of bitterness was springing up in the family of his sister.

When once the idea was raised, he became much alarmed, considering the purport of his visit. "Victorine, there is no doubt, is the most sensible of her family," he thought, "but I could not think of having a heretic in my house: then, Caliste looks so fiery, and Lisette is so selfish, and Mimi is so passionate, that I dare not offer a home to any of them. Well, I have not, at present, mentioned the purport of my journey hither; and, if things continue as I fear they will, I shall certainly travel back alone."

On the following morning Lisette, dressed in her holiday attire, went to the château to pay her compliments to Madame la Baronne de Salency. The young girl really looked uncommonly beautiful, and her mother, in pride, having embraced her, watched her up the village street, expressing aloud to her brother her satisfaction in being parent to such a child.

p. 95

Dorsain felt that his sister's rose had many a thorn; he did not say so, however, though the words trembled on his lips, and the thought would not be banished from his mind; and, for the first time in his life, he rejoiced that he was childless. But D'Elsac was in such a deep darkness then, that, beholding faults in his nearest and dearest connexions, made him look upon men with disgust; for he saw not, nor knew of that blood of the Lamb, which, "though men's sins be as scarlet, yet shall it wash them white as snow."

When Lisette returned she had much, very much, to say on the condescending kindness of Madame, neither did she hesitate to add a little to that lady's words.

"Monsieur le Baron will conduct me himself from our cottage," she said; "for he has promised not

to go to Paris till the ninth of June, on purpose to be present at the fête of the Rose, which is to be held at his château, and Madame asked me whom I had chosen for my companions for the day, and she was pleased to express a wish that Victorine should be amongst the number.” p. 96

“But Victorine never goes to mass!” exclaimed Mimi, “and you know the Rosiere always attends vespers.”

“Well, that wont signify,” replied Lisette, tossing her head, “for once in a way Victorine may oblige a sister.”

“Anything else I would willingly do, dear Lisette,” replied Victorine, “but my parents having permitted me to stay away from mass, I cannot accompany you.”

“But Madame has commanded your attendance!” exclaimed Lisette.

“She has no power to command me to do anything I think wrong,” replied Victorine, “and in this point I must not obey her; with my mother’s permission I will go up to the château, and excuse myself for opposing her wishes.”

“How unkind of you, Victorine!” said Lisette, bursting into a passion of tears, “for I told Madame you would be sure to accompany me, and she said it would improve the procession if my two sisters followed me and the Baron.” p. 97

Victorine appeared vexed, and, taking Lisette’s hand, she said, “would you wish me to do what I think wrong to give you an hour’s amusement? I cannot act against my conscience, dear sister. I cannot accompany you to chapel.”

Lisette flung her hand from her as she replied, “Do as you like, Victorine, but it is hard that the very reason which makes me elected Rosiere should cause such jealousy in my two elder sisters. I might have hoped that Caliste and Victorine would rejoice in the honour done me.”

Victorine appeared more and more grieved by this answer, but she said no more; and, having obtained her mother’s consent, she went to the château to excuse herself to Madame la Baronne.

That lady received her kindly, and even approved her conduct, though she did not agree in her opinions. She regretted her remaining an alien from the Romish church, and promised her, if she would renounce her heresy, she should be the elected Rosiere of the following year. But this offer did not tempt Victorine; she could not behold the unhappy state of her sisters without dreading to become their rival. p. 98

Madame then expressed her hope that Victorine would accompany her sister to the fête at the château; and, with a complimentary message to her mother, she dismissed the young girl.

And now came the important business of preparing dresses for the fête. The Rosiere and her twelve female friends were all to be attired in white, and all, with the exception of the Rosiere, were to wear blue ribbon scarfs placed over one shoulder and tied under the other. They were to have no coverings on their heads, for the fête was in the warm month of June, but the Rosiere was to wear a crown of roses, made by her twelve friends.

Now D’Elsac was an hourly witness of the patience of Victorine. She it was who made her sister’s dresses, for Lisette was in and out of the cottage every instant to talk of the fête, whilst Caliste felt too bitterly to set herself to work for an affair which she could not bear to think about. Mimi was too young, and the mother too old to employ themselves, and thus it was left to Victorine, who had never expected aught of pleasure in the affair. p. 99

One morning Dorsain entered the cottage, and found Victorine working as usual, whilst Caliste was seated near her, her employment cast from her, and her whole appearance expressing the utmost dejection. At sight of her uncle she roused herself, and for a short time her excessive mirth, and even the great wit with which she spoke, astonished him. The quiet man was somewhat startled by her manner, and he looked at her earnestly, half alarmed by her wild and extravagant merriment. He soon remarked that the smile seemed only to be on her lip, for every now and then her countenance changed, and expressed the deep dejection he had noticed on his entrance. He saw too that Victorine laughed not with her, and did all that was in her power to check her exuberant gaiety. The steady look that Dorsain gave her at once put to flight all assumed merriment; she suddenly ceased speaking, sighed deeply, then throwing her working materials farther from her, with a hasty movement, she left the apartment.

Victorine’s employment, too, fell from her hand; with the tear in her eyes she looked after her sister, then, echoing her sigh, she set herself with a sad heart to finish the work which must be done, and which necessarily detained her from comforting Caliste. p. 100

“Your sister, Victorine, seems far from well,” said Dorsain; “know you what ails her?”

“Dear uncle,” she replied, “Caliste will not now acknowledge even to me what vexes her; but it is easy to see she feels most bitterly the losing the Rosiere’s crown.”

D’Elsac for some minutes seemed lost in thought. “Poor girl!” he murmured, “poor girl! I should not have thought it would have so disappointed her.”

“You forget, then, how she is situated,” replied Victorine. “From infancy has Caliste been taught to aspire to the rose, every year has she ardently expected it; now this time her name is on the list, and her own sister, younger by three years, steps forward and takes it from her. Our

parents, too, rejoice with the child that rejoices; they love one daughter equally with the other; they are content that the Rosiere is in their family, and they, perhaps, have not given it a thought that the greater the triumph is to Lisette, the greater is the defeat to poor Caliste. Then, alas! my sister has none to look to for comfort, and she is overwhelmed with despair; she has been tried for worldly virtue and goodness, and she has been rejected; and she is now writhing under the shame, and unable and unwilling to turn to Him who says, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.'

D'Elsac had already been led to see that Victorine was right in refusing to be a rival to her sister; he was therefore inclined to listen to what she said, though he tried to make himself believe that, as she was a heretic, he should not be led by her in anything; however, he went on conversing with her about Caliste, and even about Lisette. Victorine could not deny that Lisette in her selfish triumph spared no opportunity of exalting herself at the expense of Caliste, neither could she excuse this sister from the fault that Dorsain charged her, with cruelly rejoicing in every pang of jealousy that the poor girl suffered. Though Victorine could not excuse her conduct, yet she laid it to its right source, the total ignorance of Lisette on religious subjects, who considered an outward appearance of virtue sufficient in the eyes of a just God, and that the guidance of the thoughts and evil passions of the heart were only so far necessary as to obtain for herself the perishable Rosiere's crown.

D'Elsac inquired if after the ceremony the Rosiere was peculiarly noticed amongst the Salenciens.

"Monsieur de Montforlaine has given an annual rent of one hundred and twenty livres to the Rosiere," replied Victorine, "and this gives the office some consequence. Those too who have been Rosieres are always treated with respect in Salency, even after their reign is over."

"Then Caliste will have to endure Lisette's superiority very long," said Dorsain.

"Till the time she is herself Rosiere," she replied; "at least whilst she remains in Salency."

Here a pause ensued, during which D'Elsac saw the tears roll fast down the cheeks of Victorine, so as almost to prevent her continuing her employment. He was a kind-hearted man, and grieved to see her tears. "Victorine," he said, lowering his voice, "you have no idea what business it was that brought me to Salency; your aunt D'Elsac is not so strong as she was some years back; she wants an assistant, and she would prefer a niece to a stranger."

"Then you will take Caliste!" she exclaimed; "you will take Caliste from Salency, will you not, uncle Dorsain?"

The good man looked annoyed as he replied, "My dear Victorine I love quiet; how could my wife and myself endure the haughty and proud airs of Caliste? No, Victorine, it was not Caliste I desired to adopt as a daughter."

Victorine could not but understand the kind old gentleman's words; she kissed his hand in token of her gratitude, and then with many thanks she tried with caution to make him comprehend her situation. "If it but depended upon myself," she said, "oh, how happy would it make me to live so near Swisserland; so near my oldest and dearest friends; so near my first, my happiest home; so near my beloved aunt Pauline's grave; but no, uncle Dorsain; no, I must not think of it; I have a duty to perform here. I ought to comfort Caliste, and I only can, because she feels that the Rosiere is a younger sister to me, as well as to herself."

D'Elsac could not be offended by such a refusal. "Victorine," he said, "pray tell me upon what motive do you act?"

She smiled, though the tear still trembled on her eyelid, as she replied playfully, "By the same motive, uncle Dorsain, which you acknowledged just now. I too love peace. I love it dearly, but pardon me if I say that the peace after which I pursue is not of so transient a nature as yours. You seek but the peace of good nature and cheerful countenances. My peace is the peace of the heart; the peace that a young child feels upon its mother's knee. My Heavenly Father's arms I know are around me; they will, I feel assured, never be withdrawn; and whilst I do what He points out as right to be done, the peace and confidence of the loved child no earthly power can take from my mind. Dear uncle, Dorsain, I must not then accept your kind offer, for I must now give the comfort of sympathy to my sorrowing Caliste; and if I left her now, peace would be banished from my mind, for I should be acting against my conscience, and that ever brings punishment in its rear."

"When I hear you speak, my dear niece," said Dorsain, "my conscience gives me many a pang for my unbrotherly conduct to that dear sister Pauline who performed the tender part of mother to you Victorine. Though a few miles, comparatively a few miles, separated us when I heard that my sister was a heretic, I at once determined to associate with her no more, and now that I have the will, the power is no longer mine to visit her."

"Your estrangement was a great grief to my dear aunt," replied Victorine, "and had not my uncle's very bad health disabled him, he or my aunt would have forced upon you a visit; but he was too ill to leave home, and she had no one to take her place with him or with me, and before I was old enough to assist her he was no more, and circumstances were changed with us. She did, however, to the last, often talk of you, hoping you would meet, if not in this world, in the next."

More was said upon this subject, and it was not till some time afterwards that the conversation was renewed, when D'Elsac said, "Then I must take Lisette, I suppose, with me to Grenoble, for when you flatter her she is good tempered, and I own I am afraid of Caliste."

p. 106

"Lisette will not, I think, leave Salency whilst she is Rosiere," replied her sister. "She could not make up her mind, I fear, to give up her crown, thorny as it appears to others."

"I will ask her," replied D'Elsac, "but I acknowledge to you, Victorine, I rather hope a refusal. If you will not return with me, I prefer the hired labour of a stranger."

Dorsain then sought Lisette to learn her mind. He found her deep in consultation about the only subject that now occupied her; and, as Victorine expected, she refused at once the invitation, scarcely deigning to clothe her answer in courteous terms.

"Well, I am heartily glad of it," thought her uncle. "She has no pity for her sister's disappointment; she thinks of nothing but herself. What peace could I have hoped for in my family with an inmate so fearfully selfish?"

D'Elsac was thus, as it were, forced to think of Caliste; but it was with such repugnance that he could not make up his mind to offer to her the situation he had offered her sisters. He had never seen her brow unclouded; never seen that beautiful lip divested of its scorn never heard one expression from her that did not betray a mind full of vexation, jealousy, and passion. To her, therefore, he would not address himself, though he watched her with great anxiety, allowing the days to pass till the 8th of June, the morning of the fête of St. Medard.

p. 107

What a beautiful and lovely morning was that in Salency, and how eagerly did the eyes of all the family of Durocher regard the weather, though very different were their feelings on the subject! Lisette had been kept awake by the thought of her approaching triumph; Caliste, too, had not slept; but her pale countenance and hollow eye told a tale of sorrow and dejection.

Scarcely was a word spoken at the morning's meal, save by Valmont, his wife, and Lisette. Caliste refused to eat, but, urged by Victorine, she drank some coffee, though she would not, or could not, taste any food. D'Elsac regarded her with grief, for he feared he knew not what by her manner.

The repast being over, and their parents gone, Lisette, annoyed at the silence on the affairs of the day, introduced it herself, by demanding of Victorine, "If she still refused to accompany her to the chapel."

p. 108

"My parents, and Madame La Baronne, have accepted my apologies, Lisette," she said, "I wish that you too were content; I shall watch you to the chapel doors, and even hope to be present at your fête this evening."

"I wish you would dispense with my company also!" exclaimed Caliste with a bitter tone; "for, to confess the truth, my head throbs fearfully, so that I can scarce endure the pain it gives me."

"What!" exclaimed Lisette, "do you too refuse to accompany me, Caliste; alas! how unfortunate am I, possessing as I do three sisters, and yet there is not one amongst them who rejoices in my triumph."

"Because you are so often cross and ill-tempered," replied Mimi; "and if people will be cross, and will be ill-tempered, they cannot expect that others will love them."

Lisette deigned not to notice these words of her young sister; but, turning to Caliste, she inquired, "If she really was so very unamiable as to determine to stay from her fête."

"If you felt the intolerable anguish in your head that I do in mine," replied Caliste, "you would think *me* very unamiable to press you to go."

p. 109

"But I cannot, nor will not dispense with your company, Caliste," was her answer; "unless Victorine will go in your stead. You can wear the same dress; for how odd it would look if I had no sister with me!"

"Indeed," replied Caliste, with an air of nonchalance, "I will not ask Victorine to go in my stead, neither will I promise to go myself. Cannot you take Mimi in my place?"

"Mimi," repeated Lisette; "why, she is at least a head shorter than Felicie Durand; for, if she goes instead of you, Caliste, she must walk with Felicie." "No," Caliste, "I will not have Mimi," she added, "and I will appeal to my father to command you to go."

"In your selfish triumph, Lisette," exclaimed Caliste, with bitterness, "you seem wholly to forget the feelings of your relatives! I tell you again that my head is in that state, it will half kill me to go to the fête."

She said no more, but walked out of the room, and up stairs, where Victorine found her some time afterwards, extended on a bed in a restless and feverish state, between sleeping and waking. But as Caliste left the room, Victorine with much gentleness proposed that they should seek some other young girl to fill the place of Caliste in the procession. "Indeed, indeed, Lisette," she said, "our sister is far from well, and I fear the excitement of the day will make her worse."

p. 110

"It is only a jealous fit," replied the Rosiere; "only a jealous fit, sister Victorine, and nothing shall induce me to give up her attendance."

"But if it is what you say it is," exclaimed Victorine, "dearest Lisette, are you not irritating, instead of soothing your patient! My sister, vex her no more; you have obtained the crown from her; is not that sufficient? must you triumph over her also?"

"Pshaw," replied Lisette, sullenly, "I like to punish jealous people, it does them good."

"But can you be happy?" said Victorine; "can you be at peace, when another is suffering, I grieve to own, severely?"

"And why not?" she answered. "If Caliste could, she would have been Rosiere, and would not then have cared for my feelings. I have no necessity, then, to spare hers. You are sufficiently unkind, Victorine, to remain at home, pray content yourself with doing so, without keeping my other sister with you also."

p. 111

Dorsain, who was present, ventured to put in a word in this place. "Really Lisette," he said, "I would caution you not to urge Caliste too much, she looks exceedingly ill."

"Monsieur D'Elsac," replied the Rosiere, "allow us young people, I entreat, to settle this matter amongst ourselves. We shall fight it out very amicably together, but when others interfere with us it only makes matters worse."

The quiet man drew back, only venturing to say, "Well Mam'selle Lisette, do as you propose; settle the matter, amongst yourselves, but let it be quite among yourselves—let no fourth person be brought in."

"Well said, uncle Dorsain!" exclaimed Mimi; "well said, uncle Dorsain! Mind, Lisette, you are not to ask our father to command Caliste to do as *you* please; mind that, Lisette—mind that."

"You are all against me, I see," replied Lisette, shedding tears for very passion—"you are all against me; but I might have expected it. I might have known others would be annoyed at any preference shown to me."

She left the room as she spoke, and in half an hour afterwards Caliste was sent for by her father, who commanded her to accompany her sister to the chapel.

p. 112

"I will obey you, sir!" exclaimed Caliste, proudly, as she raised her throbbing head, and gazed fixedly on her father. "Yes, I will obey you, sir, whatever it may cost me!"

Dorsain was alarmed by the wild expression of her eye as she spoke, and he even ventured to hint his fears to Valmont on her departure, but the father laughed them to scorn, declaring it was, as Lisette said, mere jealousy; and if she stayed away from the ceremony it would injure her character fearfully in all Salency.

"She must learn to command herself," he added, "she is now nineteen; and if she cannot command herself now, what will become of her?"

Thus ill or well was poor Caliste to be dragged through the ceremony; and after an early dinner the family of Durocher retired to dress. Victorine, who was soon ready, went to assist Caliste, whom she found seated by the side of the bed, her head resting on the pillow. At sight of her sister she rose, assumed an air of astonishment at her own idleness, and hastened to arrange her hair. Victorine wished not to encourage this frame of mind, she therefore offered to dress her sister's hair, and to fasten her gown; and as she did so she could scarcely restrain her tears for Caliste's disappointment. She longed to speak some kind word to comfort or sooth her, but how could she do so, for pity suits not a proud heart, and Victorine felt it was not a moment to say anything that *might* make her worse.

p. 113

Victorine, however, making some excuse for leaving the room, urged Margoton to permit Caliste to remain at home; but the mother, not alarmed herself, saw nothing to fear, and, with her husband, agreed that she would lose her character as an amiable girl, if she stayed away from chapel. What, then, could Victorine do? she could but dress her sister in silence, though in her heart she grieved most bitterly for her.

Victorine, on looking at her sparkling eye and blooming countenance, was struck by an unnatural beauty that glowed there; and she made some remark which escaped from her lips ere she was aware that in beauty the Rosiere had forced upon herself a rival.

In reply, Caliste warmly embraced her sister, and, as if softened by the action, her natural feelings found vent; and whilst her head still rested on her sister's shoulder she exclaimed, "Dearest Victorine! what would I not give if I had never been a rival to Lisette; what on earth can ever repay me for my lost peace? Oh, you know not how I sigh for peace—peace not for my body only, but for my mind. Too late have I found out that you, indeed, my own Victorine, have learnt the secret of true happiness—for you have found out the path of peace; and if I am spared but another day, be you my instructor in that path, and then will you be my guide to heaven."

p. 114

Victorine could no longer restrain her tears.

"Weep not for me," said Caliste, soothingly, "weep not for me, dear Victorine. Alas! if you but knew the feelings of my heart only a moment back, you would loath me, and cast me from you. Ah! shall I ever know peace again?"

The voice of Valmont was now heard calling for Caliste, and hastily did she embrace Victorine, and descend the stairs. She looked round her on entering the sitting room, but her eye rested



not on any one object; but there were all the family assembled, dressed in their best, the Rosiere impatiently expecting her companions.

At sight of Caliste her brow clouded over; for she could not but be aware that for this day, when least she had desired it, her sister's beauty would outshine her own. Turning to Victorine, she pettishly asked her, "Wherefore she had not attended to *her* dress as well as to Caliste's? Is there any fault in it?" she said, "for I suppose I shall be most regarded; I pray you, Victorine, set it right, if any fault is visible."

p. 115

In a short time the twelve young girls, the companions of the Rosiere, were assembled in the cottage. They were all drest in white, with blue ribbon scarfs tied under the left shoulder, the two ends floating at the pleasure of the wearer. They were some of the best-looking maidens in the village; but none could compete with the daughters of Durocher. An equal number of youths wearing the Rosiere's livery of the blue ribbon scarf now made their appearance, and with them came a band of music, and soon the village street was filled by the inhabitants. The Rosiere having spoken a few words to her own attendants, chose to retire till sent for to head the procession; but Victorine remained with Caliste, who, seating herself in a corner of the apartment, was watching all that passed with a look of proud contempt.

p. 116

Suddenly the band struck up in loud and joyous tones, the youths unfurled their banners, the maidens drew together, and Lisette appeared from the innermost apartment to receive the Seigneur de Salency. The next minute he had entered the cottage, and advancing towards her, addressed her as the Rosiere, and claimed his right of leading her to the church.

Lisette bowed as she listened to his compliments, then, ere she gave him her hand, she approached her parents, and on her knee asked their blessing, bending down her head to receive it.

"And now I claim the honour of leading off the fairest of Rosieres!" exclaimed the Seigneur, raising her from her kneeling attitude, and leading her by the hand to the cottage door.

Margoton shed tears of joy at the honour done her child, for the Seigneur seldom claimed his right of leading the Rosiere to church; indeed he spent most of his time in the capital, and seldom was present at the fête of the Rose. The neighbours crowded round to compliment the parents; and none thought of Caliste but Victorine and Dorsain.

p. 117

As Lisette and the Seigneur reached the cottage door they paused for the maidens and youths, whose business it was to attend the Rosiere; and then, as Caliste rose from her seat to accompany her sister, her head became so confused, that had not Victorine been near at hand, she would have certainly fallen to the ground. Victorine would have pleaded her cause to their mother, but Margoton was too much occupied with their friends, and Caliste also, feeling that it was but a momentary affection, declared she would proceed.

"Lean upon me, dear niece," said the kind hearted Dorsain, "my arm will support you if you must make one in this procession."

This unexpected tenderness roused all that was amiable in the mind of Caliste, and with the impetuosity of her nature which made her too often show her contempt of her neighbours and acquaintances, she seized her uncle's hand and pressed it to her lips. "Our Lady bless you!" she murmured; "our Lady bless you for your kindness to me, but yet I must not accept of it, for you must not mingle among the Rosiere's attendants."

Victorine, in alarm for her sister, and yet very unwilling to appear at mass, applied to one of the young girls, imploring her whisperingly to watch over Caliste, who she feared was seriously ill. Scarce had she time for this before the procession commenced, the band and banners preceding the Rosiere, who leant on the arm of the Seigneur de Salency, then came the young girls dressed in white, with the blue scarfs tied under their arms, amongst which the now excited Caliste walked with a stateliness that could not but command attention; and lastly came the youths, twelve in number, wearing the Rosiere's livery.

p. 118

On did the musicians and procession pass between two rows of spectators, down the village street, followed by Lisette in conscious triumph; once only did she turn her head to see her train of attendants who came behind her, but her eye resting on the almost unnatural beauty of Caliste, who walked next to her, struck with envy at beholding it, all the self-conceit of her own countenance passed away; and Dorsain, who had remarked her glance, saw that even in this hour of triumph the Rosiere was not content, for she felt she had a rival—a successful rival in beauty.

As D'Elsac watched the speaking countenances of the two sisters, he could have wept for very grief. Here were two girls whose beauty was pre-eminent, highly gifted by Providence, and possessing in reality all that could make life desirable; but, instead of being happy and content, the love of admiration had rendered the one miserable till her bodily health had suffered, and the other even in her success was envious of that beauty which illness bestowed upon her rival. Then did his thoughts wander to Victorine, and he turned towards the cottage, but she was not in sight, and he could not but recollect how she had refused the offer of the Rosiere's crown because she knew it would drive all love and peace from her mind. Yes, you are right, Victorine, he thought; true, most true, are your words; this distinction is indeed a root of bitterness, and, unless you can point out a method of extraction, much I fear has its influence taken an immovable hold upon the minds of your unhappy sisters.

p. 119

The procession had now reached the church, and, Lisette being led to the centre of the aisles, she was visible to all around. A Prie Dieu or kneeling stool was then placed for her use, and the service of vespers commenced, being led by Monsieur le Prieur, the same priest who pronounced her the Rosiere. The maidens and the youths surrounded her, but she was distinguished from amongst her young companions by being all in white, for she wore no scarf, such being the wonted custom at Salency.

p. 120

Whilst the service continued D'Elsac anxiously watched the countenance of Caliste, and more than once he was half tempted to step forwards and lead her from the church; every eager gaze, every look cast upon Lisette was a source of jealousy to Caliste. She could not forget that as the elder she ought to have been in her sister's stead; she could not either forget that Victorine too had refused that crown which Lisette would soon obtain, and which she herself so ardently desired, and as the service was chaunted in a tongue she knew but imperfectly, she attended not to the words, her whole thoughts being engrossed in comparing Lisette to Victorine. Like Dorsain she was led to acknowledge the superiority of the one sister's principles over the other. The one had refused to strive with her lest she should make her miserable, the other had striven and made her miserable.

p. 121

Bitterly did Caliste rue this strife; but, through the blessing of God upon the words of Victorine, this poor girl for the first time loathed herself, and her own vile nature which made her envious of a sister's prosperity. Caliste was alarmed at this insight she had obtained of her own heart, and she was troubled so much within herself, that she rose suddenly clasping her hands; and, had not those near her restrained her, she would have fled from the church to seek her sister—that sister who had told her with tears of the depravity of the human heart. "Oh, Victorine!" she inwardly exclaimed, "what would I give to be like you; to possess feelings like yours, which are at peace with God and man; for me, wretch that I am, I am jealous of my own sister; and I tremble before a God who knows my inmost thoughts."

Impatiently did she wait the concluding service, her countenance changing every instant with the workings of her mind, whilst D'Elsac, as he watched her, became in a short time almost as excited as herself.

But the service was concluded, and again the Seigneur took the hand of the Rosiere to lead her from the church, and this time the priests headed the procession. Whilst moving Caliste seemed more easy, she felt the affair would soon be concluded; but though she could not urge on the party, yet still in hopes of soon being at liberty to converse with her beloved Victorine, she was certainly more composed. They had now reached the chapel of St. Medard where the Rosiere was to be crowned, and gradually did the procession enter the ready open doors. The Seigneur led Lisette to the high altar, where Monsieur le Prieur was ready to receive her. Here she was bid to kneel before the priest, and, for the first time that day did the cheek of Lisette turn paler than heretofore. She bent her beautiful head upon her bosom, whilst her suppliant attitude and her extreme youth made D'Elsac for awhile forget her selfish conduct, and to feel with Margoton there was cause to triumph in being so nearly connected to that fair young creature. All the villagers stood round; the Rosiere's crown, being then taken from the high altar, was presented to Monsieur le Prieur by a priest.

p. 122

The crown was formed of the loveliest roses that could be procured in Salency; the flowers were wove together by a blue ribbon, the two ends of which hung down gracefully, being bound together by a ring of silver. This custom was instituted by Louis XIII. who, whilst staying at Varennes in the neighbourhood of Salency, sent his captain of the guard to the village to present the Rosiere with some blue ribbons, and a silver ring to wear at her coronation.

p. 123

Kneeling did Lisette wait to be crowned, whilst Monsieur le Prieur standing over her held the crown in his hand above her head, first blessing it, and then commencing a discourse on wisdom and virtue, which lasted perhaps ten or fifteen minutes, during which the object of the fête was never allowed an instant to be forgotten. He ceased, and was just preparing to place the crown upon the head of Lisette; the first note of the organ began to be heard, commencing the solemn Te Deum, when a piercing shriek was heard through the chapel, the music ceased, the roses dropt from the hand of the priest, and all looked earnestly for the cause of the interruption.

The shriek had come from the lips of Caliste, and, it was evident, that now she could no longer restrain emotions which had distracted her heart for days and days. She approached her sister, her eyes frightfully extended, her whole countenance glowing with excitement, and, laying her hand on the crown, she exclaimed, "It is Victorine's! it is Victorine's! Victorine is Rosiere! Victorine alone deserves to wear this crown." She would have said more, her gestures and her features betraying the utmost excitement, when suddenly her countenance changed, her eyes became fixed, and, again uttering a piercing shriek, she fell backwards into the extended arms of her uncle.

p. 124

What a scene of confusion ensued, the ceremony still unfinished, whilst the parents of Caliste rushed forwards to the unhappy girl, forgetting in their alarm all thought of the Rosiere. The next instant Caliste was borne from the chapel, whilst the villagers, most of them followed, many eager to know the result, and many from real anxiety to assist the sorrowing parents. Thus, in a moment, was the chapel almost deserted save by the astonished and overpowered Dorsain, the neglected Rosiere, the Seigneur, and the officiating priests.

p. 125

"I thought it would come to this!" exclaimed the uncle after a painful silence; "I thought it would. Caliste has not been herself for the last week: poor girl, poor Caliste! the disappointment I am

afraid will make her seriously ill."

"Oh, it is but the heat of the day I trust uncle," replied the offended and angry Rosiere, rising from her knees before the altar, and arranging her crown which had been but awkwardly placed on her head. "I can assure you I felt it very much myself just now. I have no doubt Caliste will be well enough to dance at the fête this evening."

The kind-hearted man shook his head mournfully as he said, "My dear niece, I am afraid you are deceiving yourself. I am afraid your poor sister is seriously indisposed."

"Let us hope for the best," interposed the Seigneur de Salency kindly.

"Ay, uncle, let us hope for the best as Monsieur le Seigneur says," exclaimed Lisette. "I can't believe myself it is anything more than the heat, judging by my own feelings."

At that moment Mimi ran into the chapel, her eyes red with weeping. "Uncle Dorsain," she said, "my mother has sent me to you to beg you to stay with Lisette till she can come to be with her. Caliste is very ill I fear," added the affectionate child, "very, very ill. She does not know any one but Victorine; she has called so often for Victorine, and she will not loose her hand, but keeps her close to her side. Poor, poor Caliste!" she continued with passion, "I hope that you are now content Lisette, you have killed Caliste by your triumphing over her as you have done." p. 126

Lisette was not in a humour to bear this affront, and she was about to make a very angry retort on the child, when she perceived that the villagers were once again entering the chapel to see the conclusion of the ceremony, so turning to her uncle, she whispered, "You see they do not want you at home, uncle Dorsain, so you may as well stay with me."

D'Elsac whispered to Mimi to run and tell her mother that he would remain with Lisette; and the chapel being once again filled, Monsieur le Prieur, laying his spread hands upon the Rosiere's crown, repeated a blessing, and the organ again commenced a Te Deum.

The procession then left the chapel of St. Medard, and in a spot chosen for the purpose was the Rosiere presented with a bouquet of flowers, an arrow, and two balls, such being the custom for many generations, and still carried on, though the reason for presenting these particular offerings is completely forgotten in Salency. p. 127

It was now the hour of the fête, and though usually the Rosiere returns to her home, yet Lisette would not do so, fearful lest she should be detained there; so taking the unwilling arm of D'Elsac she accompanied the villagers to the château where the fête was to be given. It was during this walk that Lisette gave full vent to the bitter passions then raging in her bosom. She abused Caliste, calling her selfish and jealous; she blamed her parents for indulging her by remaining at home; she called Victorine a hypocrite and unsisterly, and, as to little Mimi, her displeasure against her knew no bounds. "Never was any Rosiere so neglected by her own family as I have been," she said; "and even now at my own fête, they choose to remain absent."

She shed tears of passion as she thus poured forth her selfish sorrow, whilst her uncle made no reply, in silence listening to her words. p. 128

On arriving at the château the Rosiere was received with shouts of applause; and, before one dance was concluded, Lisette to all appearance had forgotten that she had a sister existing. Not so Dorsain; he sat apart from the villagers, watching the thoughtless and unfeeling girl, his affectionate heart picturing to himself the sorrow of his sister's family. Surely the time *must* come, he thought, when the eyes of Lisette will be opened. Surely she cannot long remain in such total ignorance of her own bad conduct. And this is the Rosiere, the chosen maiden of the village! Oh, Salenciens, how ignorant must you be! how dark must be your state when, judging only by outward seemings, you crowned this girl for virtue! D'Elsac shed tears when he thought of this, and when he remembered that Caliste was the one chosen next to her sister, he wept still more bitterly for the state of the human race in general. Alas! he inquired, where does virtue dwell? It has been imagined to leave the crowded cities, and to reside in lowly cottages; but here, as it were, are the hearts of two peasant girls laid open for our inspection, and, oh! how black and sinful do they appear. D'Elsac sorrowed as one without hope, for his religion taught him that without merit no man can see the Lord; and still grieving he felt the hand of some person upon his shoulder, and looking round he perceived it was Margoton. p. 129

"Brother," she said, "our dear child is, I trust, better. I have left Victorine to attend her, indeed she will not let Victorine go out of her sight; but Valmont thought we had better make our appearance, if only for an hour, at Lisette's fête. The Seigneur has shown much kindness and condescension to Lisette, and it would not do for us to appear inattentive for so much goodness, though I must own I shall not be easy till I return to my poor child."

"Then if you must stay here," said Dorsain, "if you must do so much violence to your feelings, I think you had better go nearer to those who are dancing."

"Yes, I know I ought," she answered, "but I am ashamed for my children's sake. Too, too many suspect the cause of my poor Caliste's illness. Oh, Dorsain, how proud I was of my two daughters! how neglectful of Victorine! and now my beautiful girls make me blush for them, and my modest Victorine by her own unobtrusiveness has attracted, it is true, but little admiration, yet nothing but respect and love can be attached to her name." p. 130

"But Lisette," inquired Dorsain, with an air of astonishment, for though he had heard words from

her lips during their walk to the château that made him ashamed for her, yet he believed they were known only to himself. "What of Lisette, sister?"

"Look at her now!" exclaimed her mother. "Look at her, Dorsain. Would you think by her countenance that at this moment the sister, who was her chief companion in infancy, was lying on a sick bed, to which she has been the innocent means of bringing her?"

Dorsain sighed deeply when his eye rested on Lisette, then dancing under the trees, and laughing and conversing with her partner with all the selfish frivolity of her nature; but just at that moment her father approached her and whispered something in her ear, and even at that distance her uncle could see by the light of the lamps near which she stood, the expression of her countenance change to angry discontent. Her mirth ceased however, evincing itself so openly, and on the first opportunity she withdrew with her partner from the observation of her father. p. 131

The mother repeated D'Elsac's sigh, and then left him, to show herself to the dancers. Scarcely had she gone, before her brother, now at liberty to leave, set off to the cottage to inquire after Caliste. The village street was deserted, as it had been on the day D'Elsac first arrived there; and, unnoticed by one individual, he reached his sister's cottage. The door was half opened to let in the air, for it was a warm evening; and, by the light of a lamp, he could perceive that Caliste was extended upon the bed, which I have before mentioned as one of the chief articles of furniture in the kitchen. Close beside her couch sat Victorine, still wearing the white dress put on for the fête; and at her feet was Mimi, whose head rested on her lap, and who was evidently in the sweet sleep of childhood.

For a moment, or more, all was silent; and D'Elsac had leisure to remark the softly serene countenance of Victorine, whose sweetly expressive face was sometimes turned towards Mimi and then towards Caliste. It was evident that Caliste slept not; for D'Elsac heard her moan, and he could remark that, when the sound reached him, Victorine looked grieved, though she spoke not, fearing to rouse the invalid. Suddenly, however, Caliste addressed her, and though her uncle could not hear her words, yet her manner was energetic, and like one still suffering from excitement. p. 132

Victorine tried to sooth her, bending over her, and arranging her pillows; during which movement Mimi awoke, and inquired of Caliste "if she felt herself better."

"Yes, my little Mimi, I am better," she said, "that is, my head does not pain me as it did; yet, for all that, I am perhaps more miserable than ever. Oh! what shall I do, Victorine, what will become of me? At this moment I would gladly change place with the lowliest and most abject of God's creatures."

"Dear Caliste," replied the astonished child, "how can you say so; you, who are so beautiful, why even Lisette, the Rosiere, was jealous of your beauty more than once this very day."

"Ah, it is that!" exclaimed Caliste, sitting up in her bed, and clasping her hands together, "it is that very jealousy, Mimi, which I fear will ruin my soul and my body. Oh, Mimi, guard against jealousy, strive against envy as you would against a desire to murder your own mother." p. 133

The child seemed frightened by her sister's agitation, and clung closer to Victorine; whilst Caliste continued—"Oh, if you knew the bitter passions raging in my breast this day, if you knew how first I despised, then hated, Lisette; how I should have rejoiced had her beauty been torn from her, and how I should have triumphed in her agony! Oh, wretched, wretched girl that I am, and she too, she spurred me on, she gloried in my misery, she gloried in my downfall; and, for revenge, I would have been glad to have seen her dead at my feet. Do not come near me, Victorine," she added, "do not pity me, I do not deserve compassion. I hate and loath myself; would I could show to Lisette my repentance, but what will that avail me?—The sin is unwashed from my heart, my conscience drives me to distraction, and there is no peace left for the miserable, undone, Caliste."

"But nobody need know your thoughts, but Victorine and myself," urged Mimi; "and we will not tell of you, sister."

"But God knows them," she replied in a hollow voice, that made D'Elsac start back from the door. "He knows them and I know them, and surely I shall be punished for them severely." p. 134

She ceased; and, hiding her face with her hands, she gave way to violent emotion. Victorine allowed the first burst to pass away; and then, putting her arm round her, she gently soothed her by kind words, entreating her to listen to her. "Dearest Caliste," she said, "when I told you the Rosiere's crown would bring sorrow to our home, you did not believe me. Now that you have painfully learnt this lesson, my sister, surely now you will believe me, when I say I can point out to you a path to peace. Vile as our hearts are by nature, dear Caliste, yet did our Lord God *bless* the sons of Noah, even though he had just declared that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. You have done wrong, Caliste, you have sinned grievously; you have been in darkness and in error, and you now feel shame and remorse. My sister, that shame is not of the natural man, it is a gift from God, and He has said, 'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceful habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.'" p. 135

"Ah, Victorine," she replied, "wherefore is it that you alone can sooth me? wherefore is it, that in listening to you, I hope some day to be at rest?"

"Because," answered Victorine, "the faith in which I have been reared is one of love, of joy, of peace, of hope. I have been told that the God who has made me, being infinite, must also be perfect in holiness and power. He has promised perfect peace to those whose minds are staid on him. On his word do I rely with full confidence, as the child does upon a parent's. And as I have learnt, so would I teach you, dear Caliste, that our God is love, and those that turn to Him he will in no wise cast off."

"Would that I could think as you do!" exclaimed the poor girl; "would that I were a heretic like you, Victorine, and that I might but be permitted to read in that book you have studied from childhood!"

D'Elsac was now aware that the fête had broken up, and the villagers were returning to their homes; and, unwilling to be found where he was, he left the spot; and, taking a turn, he presently came back to the cottage. He found all the family assembled in the kitchen, when he returned; and he came in just in time to hear Valmont rebuke Lisette severely for her conduct during the day.

p. 136

She replied with passion and insolence to his displeasure; and the father irritated, again reproved her, commanding her to be silent, and to go up to her chamber. She obeyed him so far as to leave the apartment, taking no heed of Caliste, but muttering out her discontent at the behaviour of her relatives towards her, and she even proceeded to some kind of threat which, for the time, was unnoticed.

Valmont next spoke with some bitterness to Caliste, and then left the apartment in displeasure.

With some difficulty, D'Elsac supported, or rather carried, Caliste to the chamber above; for her father's words had so grieved her that she was immediately taken worse; and then, leaving her to her mother and Victorine, he left the cottage, unable to sleep, thinking that a walk in the quiet moonlight would do him good.

When he returned he found the door of the house still open and Mimi asleep upon the bed. He watched by his little niece for a considerable time till Victorine appeared, and said, "it was her intention to sit up all night with Caliste," and then recommended him to go to bed. "I cannot sleep," he said, "I shall sit by the fire to-night, and then I shall be at hand if you want anything for poor Caliste." Victorine thanked him for his kindness, and seeing that Mimi still slept on, she would not rouse her, but went up again to her sister's chamber.

p. 137

It was a long and weary night to many in that cottage; and when morning dawned, Victorine was aware that her sister was much worse than she had even feared. A medical man was sent for, who pronounced it a fever; and in a short time the poor girl was completely unconscious of all passing round her. In the excitement that ensued, no one thought of Lisette, and the evening had nearly set in before Mimi suddenly declared that she had not made her appearance that day. It was in vain Valmont and D'Elsac inquired of the neighbours if they had seen her—they received the same answer from all; and Mimi soon discovered that she had taken some clothes away with her. And now, indeed, were the family of Durocher to be pitied;—the eldest daughter in a state of delirium, and the third having disappeared in such a manner that no traces of her could be found. It is true they knew Lisette could not be in distress; for, amongst the gifts made to her the day before, she had received the yearly income of the Rosiere, which is one hundred and twenty livres; a sum of no little importance to people living in the humble mode her parents did.

p. 138

It was impossible, however, long to keep the affair a secret from Margoton and Victorine: and the heart-broken father—for he really loved his children—was forced to leave, what he imagined to be, the dying bed of his unhappy Caliste, to seek after that unnatural sister who had helped to bring her to that state.

What a household of sorrow was the kind D'Elsac left to superintend! and, had it not been for Victorine, the poor man would have added another to the causes of grief in that cottage. Now it was that Victorine's character shone forth; she was the nurse of her sister, the consoler of her mother and her uncle, and the gentle guide and director to the young Mimi.

Tenderly did she watch over all, bringing peace to their minds from that source from which peace alone can spring. Even in that time of trial was the sweet conviction brought to the mind of this young girl, that it was Divine Love that chastened them; and even then was she enabled to perceive that our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

p. 139

Perhaps Margoton suffered more from the bad conduct of Lisette than from the really dangerous state of Caliste; for Lisette had been a source of greater pride to her, and now bitter was the change of pride to shame in her bosom. To Lisette she had made her sisters give way; she had herself submitted to many a whim which she would not have done from Caliste or Victorine, and how had she returned that indulgence, but by cruelty and ingratitude!

This time of mourning was through the goodness of God blest to Margoton and her brother, and as Caliste began to get better, they would entreat Victorine to talk to them of what she had learnt in Geneva, and relate all she knew of her Aunt Pauline's motives for changing her faith. Victorine loved the subject, and taught them what she could with joy and gladness.

p. 140

Caliste was at length declared out of danger, and immediately afterwards Valmont returned with the news that Lisette had married a young man with whom she had danced at the fête. Her answer was to be given that very evening; for she had promised to meet him again when the rest of the family were in bed. Irritated by her father's displeasure, and urged by her companion, she left her home, whilst her mother and Victorine were with Caliste, and whilst D'Elsac was gone out for a walk to calm his mind.

Lisette had married a youth without principle; and already did he show that her life with him would be far from a happy one. Her money, little as it was, was an object to the young man; and he at once obtained possession of it, taking her with him to Paris, where they were married, and where the husband, irritated at her earnest entreaties to return to Salency, began, as I have before remarked, to show already his brutal nature. "It is of no use," he would say to her, "you have lost your character in Salency; if there was the slightest chance of your getting anything by going there, you should go tomorrow; as it is, if you go back there, you may remain. I shall not take the trouble of sending for you again to Paris."

p. 141

The proud heart of Lisette was not yet humbled; for her beauty gained her much notice in Paris, and she had not attempted to make any apology to her father, or to beg his forgiveness, though it was known to her he had followed her to the capital.

Such was the painful account Valmont brought of the fate of the most beautiful maiden in all Salency; and the broken-hearted parents felt that they had none to blame but themselves for her conduct. Valmont's heart was softened, and he shed many tears when he again beheld Caliste; whilst the afflicted family mourned together for the rash and misjudging Lisette; though they all agreed that, as she did not desire pardon, it was better for the present to leave her to herself.

On Valmont's return, D'Elsac prepared to leave Salency, for he had been absent much longer than he had intended; but, before he went, he took an opportunity of telling Margoton and her husband the real motive of his journey, though he added he could not suppose they could now consent to part with another child.

p. 142

Margoton and Valmont had for some time felt how painful it was to meet their neighbours, those very neighbours who had assisted in the triumph of Lisette; and, as Caliste's conduct was not free from suspicion, they replied to D'Elsac in a way he little expected, by proposing that they should sell their little property in Salency, and all go to live near Grenoble, where he might take first one and then the other of their children, without choosing one in preference to her sisters. This plan particularly suited his wishes; and as to Victorine, her happiness was almost unbounded at returning so near her dear Switzerland, particularly as her mother confessed to her before their departure, that it was in the earnest desire of seeking after that heavenly peace which had been the means of preserving Victorine through the trials that had nearly destroyed her sister's earthly and eternal happiness.

It was on the 8th of August, just two months after the fête of the Rose, that Margoton Durocher, her husband, and her three daughters, first attended the Protestant chapel at Geneva. D'Elsac too was there, and the merry hearted Mimi.

p. 143

Thus was the peace of mind of Victorine blessed to many, and had she too striven for the earthly roses, she would have added another pang to the heart of her parents, and deprived herself, for a momentarily or hourly gratification, of much lasting happiness.

G. Woodfall and Son, Printers, Angel Court, Skinner Street, London.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE YOUNG LORD, AND OTHER TALES; TO WHICH IS ADDED VICTORINE DUROCHER \*\*\*

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