

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: The Silver Lining: A Guernsey Story

Author: John Roussel

Release date: January 13, 2009 [eBook #27798]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by StevenGibbs, KarenD, and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net>

\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE SILVER LINING: A  
GUERNSEY STORY \*\*\*

# THE SILVER LINING

[Pg 1]

---

## *A GUERNSEY STORY.*

---

BY

**JOHN ROUSSEL.**

---

**Guernsey:  
FREDERICK BLONDEL GUERIN,  
"THE SUN" OFFICE, HIGH STREET.**

**1894.**

---

### INDEX.

---

[Pg 2]

CHAPTER	I.—THE RESULTS OF DISOBEDIENCE	3
	II.—A LITTLE GIRL'S CHANGE OF LIFE	15
	III.—THE BOARDING SCHOOL	24
	IV.—THE INFLUENCES OF A GOOD HOME	33
	V.—THE REWARD OF INORDINATE AMBITION	45
	VI.—NEW ACQUAINTANCES	54
	VII.—AN ABRUPT DISMISSAL	62
	VIII.—AN UNPLEASANT VISIT	72
	IX.—DECEPTIONS	79
	X.—"TWIXT LOVE AND DUTY	84
	XI.—BUSINESS	91
	XII.—A STRANGE MEETING	96
	XIII.—SUPERSTITION	102
	XIV.—FAILURE	107
	XV.—DARK DAYS	115
	XVI.—SHADOW AND SUNSHINE	125
	XVII.—THE EFFECTS OF A SERMON	130
	XVIII.—SUCCESS AFTER SUCCESS	135
	XIX.—TOM'S INTERVIEW WITH MRS. VIDOUX	143
	XX.—TOM'S VISIT TO HIS UNCLE	148
	XXI.—THE ENCOUNTER	153
	XXII.—FATHER AND DAUGHTER	159

XXIII.—A SECRET CORRESPONDENCE	<a href="#">163</a>
XXIV.—MR. ROUGEANT GOES TO CHURCH	<a href="#">169</a>
XXV.—LOVE TRIUMPHS	<a href="#">173</a>
XXVI.—WEDDED	<a href="#">183</a>
XXVII.—RECONCILIATION	<a href="#">189</a>
XXVIII.—A SAD END OF A MISSENT LIFE	<a href="#">197</a>
XXIX.—DOMESTIC HAPPINESS	<a href="#">205</a>

# THE SILVER LINING.

## A GUERNSEY STORY.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE RESULTS OF DISOBEDIENCE.



ne fine summer afternoon—it was the month of June—the sea was calm, the air was still, and the sun was warm.

The mackerel boats from Cobo (a bay in the island of Guernsey) were setting sail; an old woman was detaching limpets from the rocks, and slowly, but steadily, filling up her basket. On the west side of the bay, two air-starved Londoners were sitting on the sand, basking in the sunshine, determined to return home, if not invigorated, at least bronzed by the sea air. On the east side, a few little boys were bathing. A middle-aged man, engaged in searching for sand-eels, completed the picture.

A little boy, who might have been nine years of age, was standing in the road gazing upon this scene. The way in which he was clothed, betokened that he was not one of the lads that lived in the vicinity of that bay. He was dressed in a well-fitting knickerbocker suit, and his polished boots, his well combed hair, denoted that he was an object of especial care at home. He possessed a very intelligent air, a fine forehead, rather large eyes which were full of expression, and his frowning look, the way in which he stamped his little foot, denoted that he was of an impulsive temperament. This little fellow had some very good ideas. He had determined to be good, and unselfish; and he tried to learn as much as he possibly could. His mother had told him that later on this would help him in life.

Once, an inquisitive pedlar, noticing his intelligence, and his garrulous disposition, asked him jokingly if he ever intended to marry. Upon which Frank Mathers (this was the boy's name) assumed a serious air, and giving his head a little toss he answered, "I do not know yet, there are so many beautiful little girls everywhere, one does not know which one to choose."

A physiognomist might easily have seen that in this little boy's soul a struggle was going on. "Shall I go?" he was saying to himself; "shall I go and amuse myself?" His conscience had a great power over him; but the beautiful sea was tempting, each wave as it fell produced a sound which was sweeter to his ears than the sweetest music.

"Your mother has forbidden you to go," said his conscience; "you must obey her."

He continued to remain undecided between pleasure and duty, the strife going on meanwhile within him. All at once, he espied on his extreme left four small boys about his size, who were coming out of the water. How they laughed; how joyful they seemed to be; how they made the water splash and foam around them. Frank immediately began to run at full speed towards them, and covered the space of sand which separated him from the little boys in two minutes. He arrived breathless near the group of children who were dressing themselves. He looked at them, and was asking himself if he must go nearer to them, when one of the group looked at him with a surly air. Little Frank translated this into: "What business have you here?" and retreated.

He began to examine the man who was looking for sand-eels. The fisherman was digging in the gravel with a spade, and now and then a few of the little fishes were dislodged from their hiding place. They wriggled in such a lively fashion that Frank was greatly amused, and forgot, for a time, all about his first desire of a run in the sea.

He laughed aloud when he saw a big sand-eel, bigger than any which the man had yet captured—for he took the trouble to go and see in his basket—escape into the

water and swim out of the man's reach.

The fisherman was evidently annoyed at having lost this fine specimen, and when he saw this little fellow laughing, and standing quite close to his basket, he grew angry, and in a rough tone of voice, speaking in Guernsey French, he exclaimed: "Begone, you impudent little rascal."

Now, little Frank did not know French, and consequently did not understand a single word of what this man said, but he hastily retreated. "He must have uttered something terrible," he said to himself; "what an ugly face. Why is this man vexed with me? I have done nothing to grieve him; only bent over his basket and laughed when I saw that fish escape; but why did not the man laugh also? It was so amusing."

[Pg 6]

He looked round to see whether he could discover any of those little boys who had attracted his attention when he was in the road, but none of them were visible. There were a few persons here and there, but no one was near him. He made sure of this by directing his eyes successively in the direction of every point of the compass. The "sand-eel man" was still busy, but he was far enough. Frank hastened behind a small rock and began to undress. As he did so, he experienced a series of queer sensations. He was tasting pleasure at the expense of his conscience, and, struggle as he would, he felt unhappy. It was the first time that he thus openly disregarded his mother's commands, and it cost him something to do so.

It did not take him long to divest himself of his clothing. He was soon in the water, dancing and romping. The water around him resembled that of Lodore.

He now felt happy, having forgotten all about his mother and the errand which she had sent him to accomplish.

The water was warm; the little green crabs that walked sideways passing quite close to him, amused him considerably. He passed a portion of his time chasing them. Then he waded farther into the water till it came up to his hips. Ah, this was pleasure indeed! He would not have exchanged his place for a suite of rooms in Buckingham Palace.

He had been in the water for about a quarter of an hour. He glanced round to see if the fisherman was to be seen. No trace of him now.

"He has gone home," he thought. He began to feel cold. "I must go and dress," he said to himself, "or I shall catch cold, and then mamma will know that I have been bathing."

[Pg 7]

Frank proceeded towards the place where he had placed his clothes, but as he approached the shore, he found that the water seemed to be getting warmer. This discovery was the cause of his staying five minutes longer in the water than he would otherwise have done.

Then he again betook himself towards *terra firma*. "Hullo, what's this?" And he held up a boot. "How strange, it looks exactly like mine," he muttered. Then a thought—a flash shot through his brain, immediately followed by a pang through his heart. The thought—"where are my clothes?"—the pang—the result of his disappointing glance towards the place in which he had placed them. He was out of the water in the twinkling of an eye. The boot which he had found was in his hand. Where were his trousers? where was his coat? There was his shirt being knocked about by the waves! He rushed upon it, threw it on the gravel near his boot, and began tremblingly to search for his other garments. He at last succeeded in bringing together the following collection: One pair of trousers, one stocking, one boot, one shirt. That was all.

He was now shivering from head to foot, his teeth chattered in his mouth, his whole appearance was one of utter wretchedness. He did not cry; he was too miserable; he only kept muttering: "I will never disobey mamma any more; I will never do it, never, never."

He looked round to ascertain that no one was looking at him. What was his vexation to discover the man with the sand-eels eyeing him, a repulsive grin covering his whole face, and a small black pipe stuck between his teeth.

[Pg 8]

This sight, instead of discouraging Frank, made him assume an air of bravado. He took his shirt, wrung out the water, shook it and proceeded to put it on. How cold it was; how it stuck to his little body. It only made him shiver the more. He put his stocking on the left foot; then he put on his trousers, and lastly, his boot. This boot he put on the right foot so that his feet were both hidden from view. Then with a heavy and repentant heart—what person is not repentant when he sees himself in some nasty scrape caused by his own sinfulness?—he directed his irregular steps towards his home. A curious sight to gaze upon was this little fellow as he wearily plodded on his way.

He had not advanced twenty yards when he took off his boot and put it on the other foot. He could not endure the pain that it caused him. He had not been accustomed

to go without stockings, he had never tried the experiment before, and he wondered why his feet were so tender. He rose and began to walk once more. It was an unequal walk, like that of a person with a short leg. He stopped again. Some gravel had found its way into his boot, and the torture which it caused him was unendurable. He carefully withdrew all the pain-inflicting pebbles, brushed off the gravel that adhered to his stocking, and resumed his laborious task of walking. When he came into the road, the people which he met laughed at him. "Ah; what nasty people there are in these places," he thought. He fancied he was being punished. He had hoped to have had a lot of fun. He would have returned home, invented some pretext for having been longer than usual; and now, what a wretched plight he was in. Why was he not punished in another way? this was too severe, he had never sinned at that amount, he was receiving extra payment.

[Pg 9]

Thus soliloquized our little man when he arrived near a farm-house called "Les Pins." He heard a pig squeak, and hastened along as fast as his naked and now sore foot would allow him.

There, in the farmyard, was a sight which he had never before witnessed. One man, a butcher, was pulling on a rope which was tied around a porker's snout. Three other men were forcibly pushing the animal along. They made but little progress however, for master piggy placed his feet so firmly on the ground that it required all the efforts of the four men to make him move.

At last he was with difficulty brought near the scaffold; the altar upon which he was to be sacrificed to supply the voracious appetites of man.

He was forcibly lifted upon the wooden bench and firmly held down. Then the butcher twisted the piece of rope around his hand and the pig's snout, and unsheathing a sharp knife, he plunged it in the animal's throat. The porker's life-blood gushed out in a red stream. Frank fairly danced with joy. He forgot all his troubles while witnessing those of the pig. The latter tried to shake himself free. He filled the air with protestations against the treatment to which he was being subjected, he invoked his gods, but all in vain. Firmly held down by the four men he soon ceased to struggle and lay quite still.

"It does not seem to me," Frank heard one of the men remark, "that he has given a very violent shake before dying, as porkers generally do." "Oh, he is dead enough," said the butcher, "fetch the water and let us make haste." The men obeyed the order which was given rather peremptorily and the half drunk butcher followed them, so did a lad of fourteen years (the heir to the estate), who, according to a Guernsey custom, had been holding the pig's tail.

[Pg 10]

Frank was just considering whether he would go nearer to the animal when the latter gave a jump. In a moment piggy got down and galloped in an awkward fashion straight in the direction of Frank, who uttered a cry of terror and ran away as fast as his legs would carry him. He forgot all about his exposed foot, and received a few nasty bruises and cuts against the sharp stones that were placed in the road for macadamizing purposes.

He cast an anxious glance behind him to see if the porker was following him, for he had now no other idea but that the pig was being sent to complete the punishment which he thought had been dealt out to him for his disobedience. But the porker was not to be seen. He had fallen dead after having run a few yards. When Frank came higher up the road, he proceeded to examine his foot. It hurt him considerably. He tied his handkerchief around it and resumed his walk. Seeing a great gap in the hedge he looked through it and saw that the men were plunging the porker in a great tub full of steaming water. Then followed a scraping with ormer shells, and, in a few minutes, the black pig was divested of his hairy coat. His skin was white and smooth, like those which Frank had seen at the meat market.

Not caring to see more, and feeling very cold, he resumed his journey homewards. He was so excited with what he had witnessed, that he did not think so much about his wretched condition as he would otherwise have done, and when he arrived in front of his father's house, at the Rohais, he was almost cheerful.

[Pg 11]

But he suddenly stopped short. "If I go inside with this countenance on, mamma will punish me severely," he thought.

He therefore called to his aid all the hypocrisy which his years were able to muster, and assumed a most miserable expression. But this was not enough to satisfy Frank's idea of the exigencies of the present situation. He doubled his fists, rubbed his eyes vigorously, and uttered a very plaintive and doleful cry.

Thus prepared, he entered the house by the back door, keeping a sharp look out through the corner of his eyes for his mother. She was not in the kitchen; he opened the door of the parlour; his eyes reddened and moistened by the friction to which they were being subjected, while his cries were heart-rending. Mrs. Mathers was not in the parlour. He stopped his sham crying, sat himself on a chair and listened eagerly for the sound of approaching footsteps; ready to recommence his little game

as soon as his mother entered the house.

No sound of approaching footsteps were however heard. Frank Mathers was now quite chilled, although the weather was very warm. His excitement had abated and he was feeling down-hearted. There was no fire in the room. Frank fetched a large coat (his father's) and wrapped it around him. He was busily engaged in this operation when his mother suddenly appeared upon the scene.

She wore slippers, which accounted for his not having heard her footsteps.

"Well?" she said, wondering what her son was about, "what are you wrapping yourself up for?"

[Pg 12]

Frank was taken by surprise. He looked up with a very confused air. His mother misinterpreted his look. "Don't be silly, child," she said, "have you carried that letter to Mr. Gavet."

"Yes, mamma," mumbled the little fellow, "but——" and he unbuttoned his coat and exhibited his dilapidated state before the eyes of his astonished mother. "What *have* you been doing?" she questioned anxiously. "My clothes were caught by the sea," he sobbed, and genuine tears flowed down his cheeks.

Then he confessed everything to his mother; how he had been tempted to enjoy himself despite her orders; how he had watched a man who was catching sand-eels; and, finally, how his clothes had been washed away by the rising tide.

When he had finished speaking, he raised his eyes to see what kind of look his mother wore. Perceiving a cloud of sadness hanging over her brow, he jumped up and exclaimed: "Oh, mamma, do not look at me so; I will never disobey you any more."

The mother took the now repentant son upon her knees, and, after having shown him the consequences of disobedience; after having spoken to him of the pain which he caused her through showing a disposition to do wrong and of the sin which he committed, she instructed him tenderly, and made an impression on his soft heart, such as a mother alone knows how to make. Then she kissed her son. "You forgive me, then?" said the boy. "Yes, my dear, I forgive you."

Frank Mathers was so impressed with his mother's love that he silently determined never again to grieve her. "Now let me change your clothes. You might catch a severe cold and perhaps be ill for weeks after this. Do you feel ill?"

[Pg 13]

"No, mamma, I am cold, that is all."

When Frank was eating his supper that evening, his heart was full of thankfulness. "What a good mother I have," he thought, "I will never do anything contrary to her orders any more." He suddenly stopped eating. The thought of the porker struck him and he called out gently: "Mamma."

"What is it my dear?"

"A dead pig came running after me."

Mrs. Mathers looked somewhat anxiously at her son. Was his mind going out?

"They had killed a pig at a farm, and when they were gone to fetch some water, the porker jumped down and came running after me," said the little boy.

The slight shock which the mother had received, had sufficed to flush her cheek.

There was something strange in that bright tint on her face, it glowed with a strange light. Her eye had a kind, but far away glance; an almost divine expression. It was full of tenderness and melancholy. She seemed to belong to some other world then; her whole soul seemed to shine in that sweet face. This was how she looked as she gazed upon her son that evening, while he was finishing his supper, seemingly not at all astonished at his mother's silence. He had grown accustomed to these moments of pensiveness on his mother's part. Of late, she often fell into a strange reverie, and little Frank was yet too young to understand these symptoms always followed by a short, hollow cough. His mother was attacked with phthisis.

When he had finished his supper, Frank again turned towards his mother.

[Pg 14]

"How can a dead pig run?" he asked.

"The pig was not dead," said his mother; "now make haste and go to bed. I don't want to have to nurse you to-morrow."

The little boy obeyed, muttering to himself: "The pig *was* dead. I believe what I have seen. Mamma must have misunderstood me."

[Pg 15]

---

## CHAPTER II.



Miss Rader was a tall, stiff, sour-faced lady of four-and-fifty. She kept a school for young country ladies at a place called "Fardot," in one of the parishes adjoining the Forest.

Among the pupils who were unfortunate enough to fall under her harsh rule was a certain little girl whose name was Adèle Rougeant. She was the daughter of an avaricious farmer who lived at "Les Marches," in the parish of the Forest.

This little girl's mother had now been dead three years. Adèle was then only four years of age.

"You will place our daughter at Miss Rader's school till she is seven years of age," were the instructions of Mrs. Rougeant to her husband on her death-bed.

This was not all; Mr. Rougeant was solicited by his wife to place Adèle for ten years at a boarding-school in "the town," where she would receive an education such as pertained to her rank and fortune.

Mr. Rougeant would gladly have sent his daughter to the parish school, till the age of fourteen. Afterwards, he would have had her taught to work. He would have had to pay only one penny a week at the parish school, whereas he now paid five pence. Soon, he would have to disburse from fifty to sixty pounds a year for Adèle's sake. "What extravagance," he muttered between his teeth. But he dared not go against his promises to his dying wife. Mr. Rougeant was superstitious. "If I fail to fulfil my promises to my dying wife, I shall most certainly see her ghost," he said to himself. So he preferred to part with a portion of his income in exchange for a life unmolested by apparitions.

[Pg 16]

It was the month of August of the same year in which the events narrated in the preceding chapter occurred. The pupils of Miss Rader were all assembled to receive the prizes which they were supposed to have won.

The reward-books were handed to the pupils by an elderly lady—Mrs. Lebours. She was standing in front of the row of young girls, surrounded by half-a-dozen satellites of her own sex. Miss Rader was sitting near the group of "young ladies."

Mrs. Lebours began: "First prize for French has been won by Adèle Rougeant, but the committee of ladies have decided that as she is about to pursue her studies elsewhere, she will not receive the prize. It will be given to the one next to her, who is going to remain under Miss Rader's excellent tuition."

This little speech having been delivered by Mrs. Lebours, who meanwhile flourished the reward-book; Miss Rader approached Adèle, and tapping her unkindly on the shoulder, she whispered to her in a whistling tone, her snaky eyes expressing the kindness of a tiger: "You see what you gain through wanting to leave my school; you lose a beautiful book."

Adèle was not unhappy. On the contrary; she experienced an elevating, martyr-like sensation. She turned towards Miss Rader.

[Pg 17]

"I have earned it?" she questioned.

"Yes, but—"

"I am satisfied," she said; then, quoting as near as she could a phrase which had attracted her attention in one of the rare books which she had cast her childish eyes upon, she added, "We do not go to school to obtain prizes, but to acquire knowledge."

Miss Rader was seated in her former place when Adèle finished. Her upper lip was slightly curled up, she was gazing upon Adèle with a look of supreme contempt.

The distribution of prizes was soon finished. The children were dismissed for the holidays and sent home. Adèle bore her little head up proudly. She had been wronged. She felt a thrill of pleasure as she entered her home at "Les Marches."

In acting as they had done, the committee of ladies had placed themselves lower than her. She felt it, and prided herself upon being ever so much better than they were. When her father came in she called out to him: "I earned a prize, but they would not give it me as I was going to leave school."

"Humph!" he said moodily, "I am afraid you over-estimate your intellectual capacities. Carry this letter to your uncle Tom at the 'Prenoms.'"

And he handed his daughter a scrap of paper.

Adèle did immediately as she was bid, not daring to speak when she heard her father's gruff tone.

The farm of the "Prenoms" was only half a mile distant from "Les Marches," and

Adèle did the distance in ten minutes.

She gave the letter to her uncle. "You will have to wait for a reply," he said.

[Pg 18]

Her uncle was a man who never said more than was absolutely necessary.

"Seat yourself; here is a chair for you," said her aunt.

Adèle took the preferred chair, and her aunt began to question her.

"So you are going to a boarding school," she said; and Adèle felt that there was something sarcastic in her tone.

"Papa wants me to," she mumbled timidly.

"Oh, it is not so much Alfred's wish," significantly said Mrs. Soher (Adèle's aunt), as she turned towards her step-mother who was seated on a "*jonquière*," engaged in mending a pair of stockings.

Near her sat a young boy who looked a little older than Adèle. He was mischievously occupied in knotting the skein of thread which his grandmother was using.

Adèle resented what she knew to be a slight cast upon her dead mother's memory, but she did not speak. Her aunt had always been hostile to her, she knew not why.

Old Mrs. Soher raised her hoary head and remarked: "In my time, young girls like Adèle used to learn to read and write,—and work."

Adèle felt very uncomfortable. She wished her uncle would make haste and write his reply; but he sat at his desk, passing his fingers through his hair; a method with which he was familiar when puzzled. Then he rose and cast a significant glance at his wife who followed him out of the room.

The old woman espied her prankish grandson. She immediately broke out into a violent fit of scolding: too animated to be serious. "Ah! but what next, you wicked little rascal. Knotting my thread; but I'm sure. I have a mind to slap your face. Just look at what you have done. Why did you do it?"

[Pg 19]

Tommy—the little boy—giggled. "I was tired of sitting here doing nothing," he answered impudently; "why don't you tell me a story."

"Well, now, be a good boy; do you know where the bad boys will go?"

"With the devil."

"Quite right; now, you will be good."

"Tell me a tale; you know, something about the old witches," said Tommy. "How do they make people ill?" he questioned pulling impatiently at his grandmother's shawl.

"They give themselves to Satan," answered the grandmother.

"How?"

"They sign their name, writing it backwards with their own blood."

Adèle shuddered; although she was a country girl, she had never heard anything of the sort before. She listened attentively.

"You told me they were given books; did you not?" questioned the lad.

"Yes they receive one or two infamous books, which they cannot destroy after they have taken them, neither can anyone else do away with these bad books. Yet, I remember quite well when there was one completely annihilated.

"It was when one of my aunt's died. She was a terrible witch; alas, the chairs; and all the cups and saucers, bowls and plates on the dresser danced when they carried her body out of the house."

Adèle laughed.

[Pg 20]

Tommy looked at her. "Oh, it's true," he said, "you can laugh if you like—ain't it grand'ma?"

Mrs. Soher went on: "When we cleaned out the house, we found one of those awful books. No one dared to open it, yet everyone knew by its funny covers, its queer print and its yellow paper, that it was one of the 'devil's own.' My sister, who, by the way, was not very superstitious took—"

"Superlicious! what's that?" questioned the boy.

"People who don't believe in all sorts," immediately explained grandmamma.

"Now where was I? ah, my sister took the book and threw it into the fire but it did not burn!"

"Oo-oo," ejaculated Tommy.

Adèle began to be credulous. It must be borne in mind that she was only seven years old.

Grand'ma proceeded: "She snatched it again from the fire and put it on the table. Now it happened that on that very day, my brother was going to seek for shell-fish at a place called *La Banque au Mouton*. He said that he would take the book and place it under a big stone; then, when the tide rose, it would be covered over, and, we all hoped, altogether destroyed.

"He took it as he had promised to do (we were gone home to dinner then, for we did not care to eat in the house of a witch), and placed it, so he told us, under a big stone which he could hardly lift."

"Ah, the Evil One was caught," remarked Tommy.

"He is not caught so easily as all that," said his grandmother. "When we returned to our work, do you know what we saw?"

"No!"

"We beheld the book laid upon the table."

Tommy opened his mouth wide enough as to be in danger of dislocation, then he closed it with an exclamation: "Ah-a!"

Adèle dared scarcely breathe.

"That's not all," continued Mrs. Soher, "we were determined to get rid of the book. This is what we did.

"My brother spoke to the minister about it. The clergyman declared that the book could only be stamped out of existence by a special process. He went to what had been my aunt's house, and summoned my brother and those who were there into the kitchen. Then one man thrust a bundle of furze into the oven and set it alight. Another one threw the book amongst the flames and firmly secured the door.

"'Down on your knees,' commanded the minister. Everyone obeyed. The clergyman prayed aloud, when in a few moments, piercing shrieks were heard issuing from the oven. The whole company were in a state of horripilation. The clergyman ceased praying. He simply said with quivering and pale lips: 'The book is burning.'

"The cries ceased. The door of the oven was opened. The book was reduced to ashes."

The two children were awe-stricken.

They sat as still as two mice, breathing only as much as was absolutely necessary. It was Tommy who first broke the silence.

He was more accustomed to hear these strange tales than his cousin, and, consequently, got over his fright sooner.

"How did the book shriek," questioned the boy.

The entrance of Mr. Soher and his spouse disturbed the proceedings. Adèle was very glad of it, for she was anxious to be back home before dusk.

Handing her a piece of paper, Adèle's uncle bade her be sure to give it to her father. He enjoined her not to lose it, but to hold it tightly all the way home. "Don't put it in your pocket," he added as the little girl was preparing to leave.

Adèle did as she was bid; she could not put the missive in her pocket, because—there was no pocket to the dress which she wore.

She hastened home. The story which Mrs. Soher had recited had shaken her nerves.

As she neared her father's house, she was tempted to look at the writing on the paper. There was a brief struggle within her. At last her conscience prevailed over her curiosity.

She met her father who was waiting for her on the threshold and handed him the paper. He ran his eyes over it and muttered audibly: "Let him go to the dogs, then, if he wishes to do so."

As soon as Adèle was out of the "Prenoms" the two garrulous women began to talk about their little visitor. As was their wont, they (especially the younger Mrs. Soher) cast upon Adèle all the slander and scandal which they were capable of. Their epigrams were as devoid of wit as they were coarse.

Mr. Soher, who sat near, did not join in the conversation. He professed to be a very religious man, but he rarely occupied himself about his household duties. His wife was just saying: "When one thinks that if that little brat of a girl had not been born,



we should inherit all my brother's property," when the man rose from his chair. "I am going to the prayer-meeting," he said abruptly, and his puritanical form as suddenly left the room.

"Now, it is time for you to go to bed," said Mrs. Soher to her son, when her husband was gone.

"I don't want to go yet," replied Tommy.

"But you must go, and you will go now; I'll not listen to your nonsense; come, do your hear."

"Ah! let me stay a little longer, ma."

"No, not one moment; come along."

"Only one minute," pleaded the spoilt child.

"Bah! what do you want to stay for?" said his mother, re-seating herself.

The minute passed away, so did many other minutes, but Tom did not stir.

After again trying in vain the power of her pleadings and commands, the weak-minded mother took her son by the sleeve of his coat. "Come," she said, "to bed with you."

Tommy began to cry.

She dragged him out of the room and up the stairs. He screamed and kicked, but was finally placed in his cot. Mrs. Soher had hardly stepped into the kitchen, when her son was heard crying.

"I am frightened," he bawled; "the fire—the witches—the book."

"Bah!" said his mother, "he'll go to sleep soon." And so he did.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE BOARDING-SCHOOL.

---



Mr. Rougeant had returned early from "the town" on that Saturday afternoon. He was now perusing the *Gazette Officielle*, the only newspaper which he ever cast his eyes upon. The servant—a good old Guernsey soul, who had been in the service of the family for ten years—was busily engaged in preparing the dinner. Contrary to the farmer's orders, Adèle had been sent by Lizette (the servant) to fetch the cider.

Unluckily for the little girl, Mr. Rougeant did not care to go to the expense of buying a tap. In its stead he had a number of small holes bored in one end of the cask. In these holes, which were placed vertically, one above the other, tight fitting wooden pegs had been driven. One of these pegs he drew out when he required some cider.

When Adèle entered the cellar, mug in hand, she examined the cask. She did not know which peg to take out, neither did she care to return into the kitchen with an empty vessel. She ventured cautiously to pull out one of the pins. It fitted tightly. She jerked on it. The peg came out; so did the cider. She hastily replaced the peg in its place, but the cider spurted all over her clean white pinafore. Timidly, she went back to the kitchen.

"I did not know how to——"

She did not finish. The servant perceived her plight, and, with a gesture, silenced her. She hustled her out into the vestibule, threw her a clean apron, bade her put it on, and proceeded to the cellar. She speedily caused—or thought she caused—all traces of the little girl's blunder to disappear.

When she returned, Mr. Rougeant was talking to his daughter. He was saying: "Listen, Adèle. Miss Euston's collegiate school for ladies will re-open on Tuesday next, September the 13th, at half-past two o'clock. A few boarders received."

"How would you like to go there?" he asked of his daughter; merely for form's sake, however, for he had already resolved that this would be, if possible, Adèle's future home, for some ten years at least.

"I don't know," said the little girl, placing her thumb in her mouth;—a sure sign of mingled deep-thought and puzzlement—a mode of expression which, by the bye, she was not to enjoy much longer. These gesticulations are not in harmony with boarding-school etiquette.

Her father did not make any other remark. He placed the newspaper on one side, and fell to work with his dinner.

This important piece of business having been accomplished, he started to go to town on foot.

His interview with Miss Euston resulted in Adèle being accepted as a boarder. She was to be entirely entrusted to the care of Miss Euston, and, lastly, Mr. Rougeant was to pay an annual stipend of fifty guineas.

When he came back home, Adèle's father sank in a chair. He was tired. Moreover, he was annoyed. The fifty guineas which he had promised to pay each year vexed him.

[Pg 26]

He said to himself: "This daughter of mine will run away with all the profit which I am making out of my newly-opened quarry. But, since it must be, I cannot allow myself to violate the promises made to the dying. I must try and see if I cannot save a little more than I have done lately. This servant costs me too much. I must get rid of her somehow. Another one, a French one for example, would work for four or five pounds less a year."

In this puzzled state he descended to the cellar. He had an implicit belief in cider as a general restorative. His scrutinizing glance soon detected the ravages caused by Adèle's blunder. "What a fine excuse," he mumbled—and he grinned.

He entered the parlour where Lizette was setting things to rights and demanded in an imperative and angry tone: "Who has done that mess in the cellar?"

"I did," quietly answered the servant, anxious to shield Adèle.

That fib she soon repented to have uttered.

"I give you a month's notice," said Mr. Rougeant, and he was about to disappear when Lizette, feeling that she was not required any more, and moved to the quick, turned towards her master.

"I can go now," she said.

"Well, go; so much the better."

That same evening, Maît. Jacques (Mr. Rougeant's workman) drove Lizette in the "spring cart" to her mother's cottage.

Adèle wept. Her father silenced her with a frown. "You will commence school on Tuesday next," he said.

The little girl looked at her father in surprise, and, an inward emotion completely mastering her, she recommenced crying.

[Pg 27]

"How shall I be able to speak to those English people?" she sobbed.

"You can talk English, can't you?" was her father's not over-consoling remark.

"Only—a—little."

"The person to whom I spoke is a nice lady; now, don't be silly, child."

"The little girls will laugh at me," she said, drying her tears with her pinafore.

Her father did not answer her, but sat meditatively pulling on his enormous nose.

It was nearly midnight when Adèle managed to drop to sleep.

Tuesday came. Her father drove her to town in his old phaeton. Then, taking her by the hand, he led her at No. —, Grange. The two were ushered into a small, but prettily furnished drawing-room.

After a few moments, Mdlle. Parmier entered the room, and after having conversed in French for a few minutes with Mr. Rougeant, the latter withdrew, bidding good-bye to his daughter who watched him disappear with a dazed and stupefied air. "Is this a dream?" she thought. "Ah! would that it were." Never before had she spoken to a lady from town. She listened to hear Mdlle. Parmier's harsh voice bid her follow her, but, instead of doing so, the little French lady advanced towards her and in a gentle tone of voice (so soft, that Adèle stared at her in astonishment) said: "*Miss Euston va bientôt venir. Croyez-vous, ma chère, que cette nouvelle demeure vous conviendra?*"

"*Oui*," answered Adèle, greatly relieved that there was at least one person here who could talk in French.

[Pg 28]

Then, while the lady occupied herself with a book, Adèle was busy picturing to herself the dreadful Miss Euston. Her father had said that she was a nice lady; but, alas, how could she? Did she not speak in English? How was she going to answer her? "She will certainly laugh at my bad English," Adèle thought; and her lips moved about uneasily, and her eyes were moist.

She looked towards Mdlle. Parmier. She saw four or five ladies in a confused group; she wiped away the tears that obscured her vision.

"Ah! if this lady were head mistress?" she went on thinking. "Oh! my clothes, they are not so pretty as those which the little girls who were in the playground wore." She listened tremblingly for the sounds of approaching footsteps. How she wished that the ordeal of the first interview would be passed. She grew so excited that she would have given anything to be out of that room. Any sudden catastrophe which would have averted the terrible ordeal of confronting Miss Euston would have been welcomed by her. Had she been alone, she would have tried her voice to see how it sounded in English, but Mdlle. Parmier was there; so she only coughed a little to clear her throat. She tried to cough softly, as she had heard Mdlle. Parmier do; but she fancied her voice sounded hoarse and vulgar. She cast a gaze towards a mirror placed at one end of the room. What a plebeian figure!

Hark! what was that? a soft tread was heard approaching. The French lady looked up from her book, and fixing her eyes encouragingly on the little girl, she said: "*Miss Euston sera bien aise de vous voir; parlez-vous l'anglais?*"

[Pg 29]

"*Un peu, mademoiselle,*" said Adèle, and the door opened.

The dreaded form of Miss Euston entered the room.

"Dis is de yong Ma'm'sel Rougeant," said the French lady, introducing Adèle to the newly-arrived lady.

The latter, a tall, refined and amiable lady, advanced towards Adèle with a pleasant air, and such a kind smile lighting up her intelligent features that the little girl felt immediately drawn towards her.

Miss Euston at once saw that Adèle was timid and feeling very uncomfortable.

She took the child's hand in her own and said kindly: "I am very glad you have come, Adèle; but, your hands are quite cold; come nearer to the fire."

Adèle stood up. Miss Euston put the chair nearer to the fire, placed the child upon it, and began to chat in quite a friendly way.

Mdlle. Parmier retired. Adèle's fears had vanished like a cloud of smoke. She felt more than simple admiration for Miss Euston; she experienced a kind of veneration for her.

Had an angel from heaven entered the room instead of this lady, Adèle would not have been much more dazzled than she now was.

"Do you understand English?" inquired Miss Euston while helping her pupil to warm her hands.

"Not much, ma'am."

"Then you shall soon learn, for I can see a pair of intelligent eyes beaming under those chestnut curls."

Adèle smiled. She felt a kind of bitter and sweet happiness. The dreaded introduction was over, but now there were the little girls to encounter. What kind of reception would *they* give her?

[Pg 30]

"I am going to have two new dresses for you to try on presently," said Miss Euston; "now, come, let me show you your bed chamber."

Adèle was delighted with her bedroom. How neat the little crib looked. Miss Rader had told her that the people from town never had white linen; they knew not how to wash, and, besides, the smoke caused their once white linen to look grimy.

After having asked Adèle if she was pleased with her room, and the little child having answered: "Yes, ma'am, very much," Miss Euston led her into the schoolroom where about twenty young girls were assembled. They were being directed to their respective places by Mdlle. Parmier.

Miss Euston told Adèle that she would not do anything that day but familiarize herself with her new surroundings.

She gave her a nice book full of beautiful pictures to look at. Then she began to attend to a class of the bigger girls.

Adèle felt her heart sink a little when Miss Euston left her, but she managed to pluck up courage and was soon absorbed looking at the beautiful pictures in her book. She timidly raised her eyes from time to time and gazed upon the young group of girls who were near her. Two of them she perceived were looking at her, and exchanging glances, after which they tittered.

This made Adèle's blood rush to her face. She knew they were laughing at her and she felt uneasy. "I am as good as they are. Just let them wait till I have my new dresses," she thought.

[Pg 31]

She made up her mind not to look at them and kept steadily looking at her book. But

the pictures had lost their charm. Her little soul revolted against the treatment to which she was being subjected by these two little girls.

When the time for recreation arrived, Miss Euston took Adèle by the hand and led her up to two other girls; one about Adèle's age, the other two years older. She told them to take care of their new and future companion. She was sure, she added, that they would make things pleasant for her. "Yes, ma'am,—come," they said to their new acquaintance. They led her out of the schoolroom and amused her during the whole time that was set apart for recreation purposes. By the time the bell rang for the pupils to form classes, the three little girls were as friendly as could be. Adèle forgot all about the little girls that had laughed at her.

Later on in the evening, she discovered that her two little companions were the only boarders beside herself.

The day after her entrance, an event occurred which deserves perhaps to be narrated.

Adèle walked alone down the Grange, turned to the right, and not knowing where she was going, found herself in a lane called George Street.

She was busily engaged contemplating a poor little crippled girl, when the latter's crutch slipped and she fell prone on the road.

She got up quickly, however, seized her crutch and looked anxiously round to see if someone had perceived her.

Adèle stood near, smiling.

The girl in rags went up to her. "What'r'yer laughin' at, yer dressed up doll?" she said. (Adèle had one of her new dresses on.) "If you don't stop it," she continued threateningly, "I'll give yer such a bloomin' smack as 'l' make you think you're in the beginnin' o' next week."

[Pg 32]

Adèle did "stop it," and hastily walked away.

"What!" she said to herself, "can these little girls from town beat you soundly enough to make you think you are in the beginning of the week to come? They *must* be clever. I will ask Miss Euston about it."

[Pg 33]

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE INFLUENCES OF A GOOD HOME.

---



ten years have elapsed. On a stormy September afternoon, in a room of a two-storeyed cottage, situate at the bottom of the Rohais, a woman lay dying. Her husband knelt beside her bed, holding his wife's hand.

The stillness that prevailed was only disturbed by an occasional sob from the husband, and the short irregular breathing of the dying woman.

The breathing suddenly became more regular. The husband looked at his wife. He saw that she wanted to speak to him, and immediately approached his head nearer to her.

"I am going, John," said the woman in a faint tone; "I feel that I am rapidly drawing nearer the end. I know you will take care of our son, and—if ever you marry—"

Here she paused as if unable to go on.

"Oh! don't mention that, I will never marry again, dearest. I will look forward with eagerness to our second meeting. I shall meet you there, Annie," he said, and, pressing her hand between both his own, he gazed earnestly into his wife's half-closed eyes.

Mrs. Mathers sank back on her pillow, exhausted with the effort which she had made to speak those few words. Presently a change came over her face. Her husband beckoned to Marie, the servant, who hardly dared to approach, awed as she was at having to witness a person in the grip of death.

[Pg 34]

The end came, swift and pangless. The soul passed from the body to its eternal resting place.

Marie stood beside the bed, her big eyes fixed on the corpse, hardly able to believe her senses.

"But, I thought Madame was better, much better," she said, half aloud, half to herself.

"Ah! unfortunately," said the widower, "'twas only the lull before the storm—a state which is common to people dying from consumption. Make haste," he continued to

the bewildered Abigail, "put the blinds down."

Marie did as she was told and the man proceeded downstairs.

In the kitchen, seated on a chair, a boy was sobbing. His father had just told him that death had visited them. And the boy felt completely weighed down with grief. His mother had been so good to him. "Such an excellent mother," he said to himself; "ah, how I shall miss her."

He sobbed silently; the hot tears were few and far between. His grief was too intense to be demonstrative.

He stayed there for fully an hour, in the same attitude, bowed down as it were by this heavy load which had fallen upon him.

Let us go back into Frank Mathers' history—for Frank Mathers it was who mourned his mother's loss—for a few years.

Mr. Mathers, his wife and only son were seated round the fire one evening.

"You will be fourteen years of age to-morrow," said Frank's father, "it is time for me to think of finding you a situation."

Frank did not answer, the idea of leaving school did not please him; he looked up from his book for an instant, then pretended to resume his reading.

[Pg 35]

"I shall talk to Mr. Baker, the grain merchant; as you have a liking for books, I think you would do well in his office. Would you like to go?" said his father.

"If you think I am old enough to leave school," mumbled Frank.

"Certainly you are old enough," said his father, "we can't afford to keep you at school all your life."

Mrs. Mathers looked at her son sympathetically, she knew he loved his school immensely.

"You will only have to be at the office from nine till five, and, if you are diligent, you shall be able to study a few hours every day," she said.

"Yes," said the boy reluctantly.

In less than a week after this, Frank had left school and was settled in Mr. Baker's employment.

The winter was beginning to make itself felt, and the days were growing shorter and shorter. Ah! how Frank liked these winter evenings. He took his books, and, drawing his chair near a small table close to the fire, he kept plodding on, evening after evening, educating himself constantly.

At the age of nineteen, he obtained a situation as clerk in a bank. He possessed a good knowledge of English and French. He was also acquainted with German, Latin and Mathematics.

He had learnt unaided two systems of shorthand: one English and one French.

Neither was he ignorant of other useful sciences, of which he had striven to acquire at least a few elements.

Thus armed for the world's battle, he thought himself almost invulnerable. "I am bound to succeed," he sometimes said to himself. "I have done all that I possibly could do towards that end. I don't believe in chance. 'What a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'"

[Pg 36]

If ever a youth deserved to succeed, it certainly was Frank Mathers. He had sacrificed many pleasures for the sake of better fitting himself for life's struggle. Often, when his companions invited him to spend an evening in questionable pleasures; "No, he would answer, I have no time for that." At last, they ceased to torment him.

He liked these evenings spent at home, quietly, near the fire, alone with his mother, who sometimes lifted her eyes from her knitting or sewing, and affectionately gazed for a few moments upon her son.

They were nearly always alone, mother and son; for the father, who was a carpenter, spent his evenings in the workshop.

As her son neared his twentieth birthday, Mrs. Mathers felt that she would never live to see it. She was very anxious for her son's future. After all, would he always keep in the path in which he was now walking?

One evening when she felt worse than usual, her anxiousness for her son's welfare rose to such a pitch that she ventured to speak a few words to him.

"Frank," she began, "you know that I am not in very good health."

"Yes, mother."

"I don't think I shall live long," continued she, "and, I should so much like to know if you have formed a decision to be a noble, good, and upright man."

[Pg 37]

"You are not going to die," said the youth in a half-frightened tone, "you will be better soon, I hope."

"No," she said, "I am slowly but steadily declining;" then she added in a very affectionate tone: "Will you promise me, Frank, that you will always strive to do what is right?"

"Mother," replied the son, his voice quivering with emotion: "I will be good."

Neither of them said another word for a few minutes. Their hearts were too full. Affectionate love, grief and resignation were filling their souls.

Soon, the father entered and the family retired.

Next day Mrs. Mather's prophecies were fulfilled. She felt much worse and stayed in bed. In less than a week, she was dead and buried.

Thus deprived of his mother, Frank Mathers felt intensely lonely. He suppressed his grief as much as possible, but it could be seen that he suffered.

He had his father, 'tis true, but Mr. Mathers was a man of a gloomy temperament. But a young man of nineteen ought not to be attached to his mother's pinafore! The house seemed so empty, it seemed quite large now, a roomy house with no furniture. The air he breathed was not perfumed with the sweet breath of love as it was wont to be.

He grew melancholy. He had never been of a very bright temperament, and the life of self-sacrifice which he had hitherto led, had not helped him towards being cheerful.

Besides, there was no one to cheer him now, no kind word to spur him on. "Ah! life without love," he sighed, "life without love is hardly worth living."

[Pg 38]

From bad he went to worse. He almost ceased to eat. He lost a great deal of his former activity and was often absent-minded. His employers noticed this, for he often made false entries in the books.

One morning, the manager of the bank thought fit to speak to him. "I cannot make out what ails you," he said, "but you will have to be more careful in the future."

"Pull yourself up, Mr. Mathers, try and take more interest in your work, or I shall feel obliged to dispense with your services altogether."

"I must try," answered Frank. "I *will* try, Sir."

And try he did, but all to no purpose.

A cloud seemed to hang over him; he was in a state of lethargy. "Am I going mad?" he said to himself more than once. No! he was not insane, not yet at any rate; he simply took no interest in life. Nothing seemed to distract him; he cared for nothing, spoke to no one except when questioned.

His father and Marie often tried to coax him into conversation.

In answer he sometimes said "Bah! life is but an empty bubble," oftener, he said nothing at all, but gazed fixedly at the floor all the time.

A few days after the manager had spoken to him, he ceased to go to work altogether. He did not send a letter to his employers, telling them of his intention to leave; of what use was it? everything was nothing to him.

It was not for his departed mother that he grieved. He grieved not. He hardly gave her a thought now, and, when he did, his eyes seemed to brighten up and his lips muttered: "Thou art happy."

[Pg 39]

The doctor who examined him shrugged his shoulders. "Hypochondria," he said as he met the enquiring glance of Mr. Mathers; then he added: "He will probably be better in a few weeks."

The neighbours, without being consulted, said: "He is mad."

The days came and went, and after a few months of melancholiness he grew a little bit better. His father noticed that he began to take an interest in the culture of the garden.

"I shall have to find work for him," thought Mr. Mathers, and, one day, when his son seemed in a more joyous mood than usual, he spoke to him.

"Do you think that if I built a greenhouse you could take care of it?" he questioned.

"I think so," said his son.

"Work is slack just now," went on Mr. Mathers, "I might as well put up one in the garden as do nothing."

"I think I should very much like to grow tomatoes and grapes," Frank remarked.

"You feel better now, then," said the father. These were the first words which he ventured to speak to his son about his health, now that the latter's senses seemed to have returned to him.

"Have I been ill?" said Frank; and then after a pause—"Of course, I have not been very well lately,—yes, I am better, I think I am myself again."

"Well;" said his father, "it is agreed, we shall have a greenhouse. I think you had better go in the garden and see if you can find something to do there."

[Pg 40]

Frank did as he was requested. The garden at the back of the house was a small one, covering some twenty-five perches; of these eight were to be blessed, or cursed, with a glass covering.

While Frank was engaged in tying up some Chrysanthemums, he was joined by Marie, the servant.

"Doin' a bit o' work, Master Frank," she said.

"Yes, a little," he replied.

"Well, that's better than mopin' about doing nothing," was the not over-particular rejoinder.

Frank smiled. "Well," he said, "a fellow must do something when he can, but there are times when he cannot."

"Perhaps," said Marie, rather absent-mindedly, as if she had not understood the meaning of his words.

She glanced around her, to make sure that there was no one about; then she came quite close to Frank. "Have you heard the news?" she said.

"What news?" questioned Frank.

"Why, they say your father is goin' to marry; didn't you know?"

Frank's face became livid, his lips tightened, his pruning knife dropped from his hand.

"What?" he exclaimed, as if he had not fully understood.

"Your father's going to marry again," said the servant in an undertone, "and I'll tell you who told me so, it was Jim Tozer, her brother; he ought to know."

"The brother of whom?" questioned Frank mechanically.

"The brother of Miss Tozer," informed Marie.

"I should have thought that your father would have stuck a little more to his word, for when your poor, dear mother was dying, she mentioned something to your father about marrying. He pretended to cry, and bawled out: 'Don't mention it, I'll never marry again; I'll never marry again.'"

[Pg 41]

"And mother been dead only five months," said Frank, more to himself than otherwise.

"But it won't be yet, you know," said Marie. "Jim Tozer told me they would probably wait till next year."

Then seeing Mr. Mathers coming towards them, she pretended to gather some parsley close by, and quickly re-entered the house.

Frank's father did not talk to his son then, but began taking measures for the greenhouse.

As for Frank, he was extremely angry with his father. He thought that his mother's memory was being slighted; but he resolved not to say a word about it to his father, and to let matters stand as they were.

Time passed on. The winter was over. It was the month of April. The birds sang in the trees, the grass was springing up, the fields were being clothed in verdure. Nature, which had lain so long dormant, was awakening. From the trees which looked dead a few weeks ago little buds were peeping forth, taking their first view of the world.

Frank Mathers was filled with delight as he watched this development of nature.

One evening when he had just finished planting some tomatoes, he was surprised to see his father enter the greenhouse.

Mr. Mathers' face was rather pale. He looked agitated.

"They look well," said the father, meaning the tomato plants.

[Pg 42]

"Yes, they *do* look well," answered his son; "I was just thinking as much before you came in."

There was a long silence here. Frank knew that his father had something to communicate to him, and he guessed what it was. However, he did not help him out of his embarrassment.

Finally, after several preliminary hems to clear his throat, Mr. Mathers began: "It is a good thing that the tomatoes are planted; to-morrow you will not work, I suppose."

"I hope I shall, I have all these boxes to clear away."

"Yes, yes, but to-morrow I am going to be married."

Frank did not answer. He raised his eyes and looked straight at his father. His lips quivered and refused to utter a sound.

The son's gaze was more than a match for the father's. Mr. Mathers was not yet so hardened as to laugh and look back defiantly at his son. He, however, recovered his self-composure, tried to make himself believe that he was in his perfect right, and in a well-feigned voice—"Well?" he said interrogatively.

Not a word came from the son's lips; a deep sigh escaped him. He stepped forward and walked out of the greenhouse, leaving his father there—alone.

The couple were quietly married at the Greffe the next day.

Frank went about his work as usual, and when he came in to dine, his step-mother was awaiting him, her face beaming with smiles.

When Frank found himself thus confronted by Mrs. Mathers No. 2, he did not feel nearly so hostile to her as he had felt towards his father.

[Pg 43]

He could not however welcome her warmly when his heart clamoured otherwise. He was not a hypocrite.

When the husband advanced with his wife, the youth took the outstretched hand and in a cold tone, his lips still uttering what his heart did not inspire, he said, as if welcoming a stranger: "I am happy to make your acquaintance, madam."

He soon perceived that he had gone rather too far. He had acted on the impulse of the moment. In fact, he had dug the abyss that was ever to lie between his step-mother and himself.

"After all," he said to himself, "it is better to obey one's heart." He did not even stop to think that there were two powers at work.

He was more to be pitied than blamed. He had loved his mother dearly, and now that she was dead, he revered her memory.

He now perceived the influence of a good home. It had rescued him from a life of idleness and perhaps of vice. The genial atmosphere of their little parlour had kept him at home even more than his books, which he, however, cared a good deal for.

But now, it was all finished. This place would no more be home. It was a house, a comfortable dwelling place; that was all. He would now have to live amongst unattractive and semi-hostile surroundings.

Through his own fault, he would suffer. One thought however strengthened him. Thousands of others had suffered for conscience's sake. He remembered how his blood rushed to his face, when he read about the tortures of the martyrs of religion; or the driving into exile of the patriots of Poland.

[Pg 44]

Strengthened with these thoughts, he rose, more determined than ever to do right; to champion the good; to work; to study; to strive to acquire wisdom.

[Pg 45]

---

## CHAPTER V.

### THE REWARD OF INORDINATE AMBITION.



Frank Mathers had hours of dejection. Like every other person, he had his faults. In one of these fits of depression he grew impatient. Then, his ambition turned in the wrong direction. He was seized with a mania for getting rich quickly.



How to proceed, he did not know.

At last he thought that if he could invent something useful, and patent it, he would soon acquire what he so much desired to possess. Now, there are thousands who are constantly trying to do as much, but they are as likely to succeed as they were when they first began.

Frank was one day walking along a country lane when he perceived a cow which had broken loose.

She galloped about, her tail erect, her head lowered.

He pursued the animal, and after a prolonged chase and much dodging and capering on the part of both, he managed to grasp the rope which was tied round the brute's horns. He held it tightly and proceeded to tether his captive. But when he had driven the peg in the ground, he noticed that it was very easily pulled up.

He pondered over this as he proceeded towards his home. Suddenly, he slapped his forehead. "I have it," he said to himself. "I will have a peg, which, when being driven, will go all right, but when pulled about, will release two small prongs at the sides. This will make it impossible for anyone to pull it up; a small knob will be affixed which, when turned, will replace the prongs, and the peg will come out in a jiffy."

[Pg 46]

"Ah!" he went on thinking, "this would be a useful thing, an article which would command a ready sale. Besides, it would be used wherever a good gripping peg would be necessary."

He was enthusiastic. His mind was already full of different schemes which he would start when he had acquired fame and riches.

When he came home, he was so sure of success that he imparted his idea to his step-mother, with whom he was not generally very confidant.

Poor Frank! the volley of mockery which he received quite baffled him.

"So you think to make your fortune in that way," she said. "No, no, my boy, you never will."

"But don't you see that it's a most useful thing, that—"

"Stop, stop," she interrupted, "don't make me laugh. Do you think that people are going to listen to your nonsense? Why! your peg would get clogged with earth and would not act."

"Wouldn't it though, at any rate, it's worth thinking over, so I'll do that."

"If you choose to spend your money in that fashion, you can do so," retorted the lady, smiling contemptuously.

"You won't laugh at me this day month," thought Frank as he made his exit.

Once alone again, he grew more determined than ever. His mind was completely dazzled with the bright future before him.

Next morning, he posted a letter to an inventor's agency in London. He stated that he had invented something he knew would be useful, and very much in demand if manufactured. The letter went on to detail in full length the "safety peg." Then he went on to say that he would very much like to have it patented and if they would kindly send terms and advice in the course of a mail or two, he would be thankful.

[Pg 47]

Two days afterwards, he hoped to receive the joyful news. "They will certainly write soon,—such a valuable article—besides, they have an interest in its being patented," he said to himself.

He accordingly watched for the postman, and as soon as he saw him, his heart beat wildly. To think that he had the precious missive. He approaches, and now he is going to open the gate,—no, he passes without even looking in the direction of the house.

"Surely he must be forgetting," thought Frank, and he shouted: "Mr. Pedvin, have you any letter for me?"

"No; not to day," said the postman—and he went on his way.

"What are they up to now?" thought the youth, "they ought to make haste. I'll wait till to-morrow, and if I don't receive any news, I'll send them a note, and a pretty sharp one too."

Next day he again watched for the postman's arrival. He felt miserable; the state of uncertainty in which he was, caused him to be depressed. Still he could not imagine that the letter would contain anything contrary to his hopes.

The idea was so far from his wishes that he shook it away at once; he could not even

[Pg 48]

bear to think of it.

But the postman came not, and it was now ten o'clock. He remembered with pain that the day before he had passed by at half-past nine.

"I must attend to my work," he thought, "he will come presently." He went about the greenhouse, watering his plants, but every other minute he opened the door and anxiously watched for the bringer of good news to put in an appearance.

He came at last. He handed a letter to Frank who ran towards him to receive it.

"You seem very much in earnest," remarked the postman, "maybe it's a love-letter. And from London too," he added noticing the post mark.

"I'm not so foolish as that," said Frank; as if such letters were below his dignity; "this is about an invention which I am going to have patented."

The postman showed the whites of his eyes, then turned on his heels and continued his journey.

Frank tore open the envelope, unfolded the letter and read:—

"London.

"We are in receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, and have much pleasure in informing you that your invention has not, to our best knowledge, been patented or manufactured.

"We think it would prove very well in rural districts.

"The best way for you, would be to secure it by provisional protection for nine months.

"Please forward us £2 10s., and we will send you, at our earliest possible convenience, the necessary documents."

"Hurrah!" shouted Frank joyfully. "I'll send them the money as soon as I can."

He read the letter a second time to make sure that his eyes had not deceived him. Suddenly he stopped reading. No, it was not in the letter. A thought had struck him. "I will have to mention the money matter to my step-mother, for she keeps the keys of my drawer," he said in a soliloquy.

He went into the kitchen. Mr. and Mrs. Mathers were there. Frank flourished the letter in his hand and exclaimed: "My invention is likely to be a success." And, holding the letter in both his hands, he read it to his parents.

He emphasized the points that were in his favour, with all the force which he was capable of displaying.

Mrs. Mathers looked satisfied enough till her step-son came to the money matter. Here her face lengthened and as soon as he had finished reading she said: "Clever people; they think they are going to pocket all this money with a few words of flattering."

"Someone must pay for the one pound stamp and other expenses," answered Frank.

"After all this spending of money, perhaps it would not prove," rejoined Mrs. Mathers.

"We won't know if we don't try," retorted Frank; "people don't make fortunes staring about them with their hands in their pockets."

"But you don't mean to say," almost angrily said Mrs. Mathers, "that you would send them your money in that fashion?"

"I do," answered the young man in a decided tone. He was growing impatient at what he thought to be a wanton check of progress on his step-mother's part.

Here, Mr. Mathers left the room without having said a word.

Frank watched him disappear and then remarked: "Do you think these people are going to work for nothing? They would be fools."

"Oh! 'tis not *they* who are fools," sarcastically remarked his step-mother.

The young man waxed hot. His whole being was rising in wrath within him. He, however, mastered his passions. It was his duty to bend, and he did so. "If I could convince her, if I could make her feel as I myself feel," he thought.

For one minute he was silent, not knowing how to begin the speech that was to bring conviction into her soul.

"Ah!" he thought as he looked at his step-mother who had resumed her work as if the debate was settled, "she checks me when I try to push myself; she tries to nip my

plans in the bud. When, with a few words of encouragement, I might soon be a rising man. But I must convince her—I must. If I don't succeed in doing it, I will act alone. The money is mine, why should I not be able to do what I like with it. If, however, I could bring her to think as I do."

"I have always tried to push myself," he began in a somewhat tender and pleading tone, "and you never give me one word of encouragement or praise."

Mrs. Mathers looked up: "You try in the wrong direction," she said, "earn money by all means, but don't throw it away like a simpleton."

Unheeding this, Frank resumed: "If I do not try and make life a success I don't know anyone who will do it for me. I have studied. Many an evening have I sat up with my books thinking of the use my knowledge would be to me in future life; many an outing have I denied myself for the sake of studying; many a pleasure have I sacrificed for the sake of acquiring knowledge. I did not care, work did not seem heavy, because it carried with it a hope of future happiness. I worked on till late in the evening. I rose early in the morning to resume my studies. And, if sometimes I felt discouraged, worn out by the ceaseless toil, I said to myself: 'Take courage—science is bitter but its fruit is sweet.' I have tried to cultivate myself as much as possible, to fill my mind with all that is noble, pure, and elevating—to acquire good habits by shunning bad society and by reading good books—in short, I have sacrificed my past self for the sake of my future self.

[Pg 51]

"And now (his tone grew inexpressibly sad), when I try to gather a few of the fruits which I have grown, you throw yourself between fortune and me.

"It is exactly as I was reading in a book the other day, in which the writer said: 'The cause of many failures is that men wait for something to turn up instead of turning up something for themselves'—"

"You and your books," ejaculated Mrs. Mathers,— "but I'll have no more of this begging and grumbling; do as you like, throw your money to the dogs, give it to whomsoever you choose. Perhaps, when you know the value of money, you will learn to appreciate it more. For my part, I will have nothing more to do about this tomfoolery."

Frank left the room with a light heart. He was free, at liberty to do whatever he chose. He chuckled to himself: "Liberty *is* sweet. I will now show them what I can do when I have no one to hinder me. However, I will wait a day or two before sending the money. I must not act too quickly,—I will think it over."

[Pg 52]

He went about his work. He felt that manual labour was almost below his dignity now. What! he, an inventor—a benefactor of mankind—the probable millionaire of years to come—he, who would soon be looked upon as the foremost man of the island, pointed at and envied by everyone—watering tomatoes. Oh! it certainly was below his rank. However, he would work yet for a few days and then, well then he would appear in his proper sphere.

Poor fellow, he had yet another of life's lessons to learn. He little imagined the crushing blow that was to fall on him and scatter all his hopes.

That evening he went to bed with his head brim full of ideas and plans for the future. His heart overflowed with delight. He dreamt of nothing but inventions, huge fortunes and fame.

Next morning, when he awoke, his head had cleared, but his ideas were the same. He never doubted for a moment the certainty of his success.

During the course of the morning there were instants in which he felt less confident. What if he did not succeed—what would his step-mother say—what would he himself do, he who had made this scheme part of his being. But he would prosper, why, here (looking at the letter) was the opinion of people who had been amongst inventions for years.

A shadow seemed to cross the path of the greenhouse. "I think someone has passed by," he thought, "I will go and see." Suiting the action to the thought, he sprang at the door and opened it. What was his astonishment to see the postman. Two days following! it was an event, for they seldom received letters.

[Pg 53]

On hearing the noise which Frank made on opening the door, the postman turned round and handed him a letter. He was agreeably surprised to see that it was from the inventors' agency, but his delight was soon changed into bitter anger and bitterest disappointment when he had read its contents. It was worded thus:

"London.

"DEAR SIR,—We are sorry to inform you that the invention we were about to patent for you, had, we have just found out, been patented before.

"The inventor, we have learned, ruined himself in trying to push it."

He read it twice over. Alas! it was too true. Sadly and mournfully he went into the house, there to think of his misfortune.

He entered the little parlour, threw himself on a chair, took the letter from his pocket and re-read it.

He crumpled the letter in his hand and exclaimed: "'Tis too true, there is not the slightest hope; ah! this is indeed a cloud with no silver lining."

He rose, paced the room in an agitated state and muttered: "But yesterday, I thought myself a rising man, now, I have utterly failed; that upon which I had set my heart, upon which my thoughts had dwelt and upon which my hopes had been built, has fallen to the ground."

"Such joy ambition finds," something seemed to echo within him.

[Pg 54]

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### NEW ACQUAINTANCES.

---



For a week or so Frank Mathers grieved about his misfortune. At the end of that time, an event occurred which completely distracted him.

He was taking a walk a few miles from his home, not far from the Forest Church. When he came near the farm of "Les Marches," he perceived a man, who, seated on a branch, was sawing it. This branch projected over a quarry which was filled with water.

Suddenly, the branch gave way, and Mr. Rougeant (such was this man's name), fell into the water.

Frank at once ran towards the spot, taking off his coat as he hastened along. He was a good and plucky swimmer. When he came near the quarry, the drowning man was struggling for dear life. Frank seized the position in a moment. He saw that it would be useless to jump into the water, because, when once in, he would not be able to reach the edge of the quarry, for the water's surface was quite four feet below that of the ground. There was not a moment to lose. The man had already gone down twice; he was coming up for the second time. Frank took his coat in one hand, and, leaning over the edge of the quarry at the risk of falling in himself, he caught hold of a tuft of grass with the other hand, and awaited the drowning man's appearance.

The farmer rose to the surface, struggling. His eyes were dilated, his whole countenance presented a frightened and imploring appearance.

[Pg 55]

He uttered a cry, 'twas a cry in which he poured forth all his soul; his last and supreme appeal to heaven and earth; but one word, but ah! what a deep prayer to one, what an earnest appeal to the other, were centred in that word: "Help."

"Seize this, seize this," cried Frank.

The drowning man saw the dangling sleeve, his last chance of salvation. Frantically he clutched at it. Ah! he has missed it. No, as he was going down for the third time he threw out his arm once more. It was a forlorn hope, but it was successful. He caught hold of the coat with both his hands and raised himself. He found a creek in which he placed his foot, and with Frank's manly help, was soon extricated from his perilous position.

Mr. Rougeant was panting for breath, and exhausted, but saved from a watery grave.

Frank bent over the man he had rescued, dried his face and took off his boots, examining him meanwhile. Mr. Rougeant, whom we did not describe when we first met him, was a man of medium height. He had broad shoulders, a powerful chest, an almost square head and a formidable nose. Under his nasal organ, there bristled a short moustache.

When he had partly recovered his senses, he looked around him. "Where is my saw?" he questioned, then he added: "My hat, where is it?"

The hat, probably a leaky one, had gone to the bottom.

Frank was as much amused as he was astonished to hear him. He replied: "I suppose they must both be given up as lost."

[Pg 56]

"It is a pity," said the prostrate man, "it was a good saw, and a brand new one too."

The man spoke in the patois of the island, a kind of old Norman French which the young man understood very well. He, therefore, answered in the same language.

"Shall I go and call your people?" Frank said after a while.

"No, thank you, I think I can walk home."

He stood up and they both proceeded towards the farm-house.

"Not a word of thanks," soliloquized Frank, as he surveyed the strong frame and the powerful limbs of his companion.

Just then the farmer turned abruptly to him: "A good thing you were passing near at the time of the accident. I might have been drowned," he said.

"I am very glad of having been of service to you," answered Frank.

"You're a good fellow," resumed the farmer looking at him and nodding. "It's not everybody," he continued, "who would have had the sense to do as you have done."

They arrived at the farm-house, a two-storeyed house, without any pretence at architecture, and with a slate covering: the house was surrounded by stables, pigsties, a small garden and a conservatory. In front of the house was a parterre, most tastefully arranged with flowers which surrounded an immense fuschia, five feet in height and covering an area of about fifty square feet.

The two men entered by the front door. Mr. Rougeant led his rescuer into the kitchen. Here was Jeanne, a French servant, occupied in poking the fire.

[Pg 57]

"Ah, but dear me," she exclaimed as she caught sight of the pair, "what has Mr. Rougeant been doing now?"

"I fell in the quarry," said the farmer gruffly, "go and prepare some dry clothing, be quick, make haste."

Jeanne immediately did as she was bid. She did not leave the room, however, without casting an inquisitive glance at Frank.

"Adèle," shouted Mr. Rougeant in a voice of thunder, "where are you?"

"Miss Rougeant is gone, she told me she would not be long," answered the servant from upstairs.

"Oh, yes, always gone," said the father of Adèle, in none too pleasant a tone; "those young girls are always out when most wanted."

Then he began to talk about his quarry. "Only a year ago that quarry was being worked. There were twenty men employed in it. It paid well then. But it's all over now. The man who worked it found a little bit of rubbish in his way, and, like a fool, he got frightened and left working it, and now you see it's full of water. Are the clothes ready?" This was said, or rather shouted to the servant.

"Yes, Sir, they're ready; I'm coming," said Jeanne.

"It's time," said Mr. Rougeant rising, "I am trembling all over now." He had been shivering for the last quarter of an hour.

When he was half way up the stairs he called out: "Of course you will wait till I come down again, I shall not be long Mr. —."

"All right, Sir, don't hurry," answered Frank.

[Pg 58]

Left alone in the kitchen, the young man had time to examine the room. He had never been in a farm-house before.

On one side, ranged along the wall, was an oblong table which was bare. Above it, against the wall, was a shelf on which Frank could discern three or four big home-made loaves of bread.

On the opposite side, was a deal dresser on which were ranged saucers and plates, while cups and mugs were hung upon nails driven into the edge of the shelves; He was in the midst of his examination when someone entered the house by a back door. "Is it the girl of whom Mr. Rougeant spoke?" he wondered. Then he pictured her to himself: a tall overgrown country-lass, with hands like a working man's, and feet! well, one might just as well not think about them, they were repulsively large; it was a blessing that they were hidden from view.

He was in the midst of his imaginations when Adèle Rougeant stepped into the kitchen. On perceiving Frank she was a little astonished, but soon recovered her self-control and assumed a well-bred smile.

The young man immediately hastened to explain the cause of his presence. He was greatly astonished. Here, then, was the corpulent country-girl his imagination had fancied! Before him stood a young lady altogether different to anything he had pictured her to be. "A girl of about seventeen," he tells himself, but later on he discovered that she was one year older than that; plainly, but well dressed. Her gown fitted her slender form to perfection. Every detail in her dress was arranged with such taste, her small shoes, the exquisite lace round her throat and such a charming face peeping out of it all. She was not beautiful, but she was pretty and attractive, she opened her mouth when she smiled as well as when she spoke.

[Pg 59]

"Pray be seated," said the young lady to Frank who had risen on her approach.

Frank sat down, quite confused and ready to run out of the room. He felt very timid, so far, as to be uncivil; in the presence of Adèle. A young man who has spent most of his time alone, studying, will be timid when he meets a representative of the softer sex.

He scarcely lifted his eyes from the floor. He knew she would think him ill-bred, he was ashamed of himself, but he could not help it. He was full of bashfulness. Now, bashfulness is almost always a sure sign of *amour-propre*.

He scolded himself, but his red face grew redder. It was soon of a colour resembling peacock-blue.

Noticing his discomposure, Miss Rougeant could not help sharing some of it, and, doubtless, things would soon have come to an awkward point for both, if Mr. Rougeant had not put in an appearance.

"So this is the gentleman who saved your life?" said his daughter, speaking in English.

In the same language Mr. Rougeant replied: "Yes, this is he."

She had now regained all her former ease, and knowing her father's manners, thanked Frank most cordially.

He stammered out a few words of acknowledgement.

Seeing that her visitor cast glances at the quaint furniture, and anxious to break the confusing silence, Adèle went on: "Doubtless you had not seen a kitchen like this before Mr. —."

[Pg 60]

"My name is Frank Mathers," interposed the young man.

"And mine is Adèle Rougeant," said she.

"Fancy, putting you in such a kitchen. We must go into the parlour directly."

"This is indeed very quaint and certainly primitive furniture. I must explain the use of —, that is if—."

"I should be greatly obliged," said Frank, "but it really is giving yourself too much trouble."

"On the contrary, it gives me pleasure. This"—pointing to a low kind of bedstead—"was the sofa of our forefathers. We call it a *jonquière*. It was formerly stuffed with a weed which still grows near the coast; called jonquier—hence its name. These rods were used to hang the *craséaux* on them. A *crasé*, the singular of *craséaux*, is a lamp of the most primitive type."

"A vessel with a beak in which some oil is poured, and in the beak is placed a wick, while underneath the vessel another one is suspended as a receptacle for the oil which falls from the upper one. Only ten years ago we still used them. I remember it quite well."

"And these are what we call '*lattes*,'" she said, pointing to a wooden rack which hung suspended from the ceiling and parallel to it. "As you see, the bacon is kept there."

She stopped here, and looked anxiously at her father. He was pale and trembling. "Are you ill, father?" questioned his daughter.

"No, I'm not ill, although I do not feel quite well. Make me a *totaïe*," he said, "then I'll go to bed and try to sleep off my indisposition."

His daughter did as her father requested.

[Pg 61]

When she was out of the room, Frank asked Mr. Rougeant what he meant by a *totaïe*.

"Oh, it's a capital thing," responded the latter, "toasted bread soaked in warm cider. You swallow cider and all; if that does not drive a cold away, nothing will."

While the young lady was busily engaged in toasting the bread, Frank thought it best to take his leave.

Mr. Rougeant asked him to pay them a visit on the morrow. The young man promised to call. He managed to overcome his timidity sufficiently to raise his eyes as he took leave of Adèle. Her eyes met his, she blushed and immediately dropped her eyelids.

Through the eyes the souls had spoken.

[Pg 62]

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### AN ABRUPT DISMISSAL.



Next day Frank Mathers prepared to pay his promised visit.

He fancied that he felt very much like William the Conqueror when he set out from Normandy to fight against the English. And probably he did.

While he was dressing with more than ordinary care, his thoughts were all about Adèle.

"'Tis strange," he soliloquized, "such a well-bred, educated and refined young lady in this strange place. She is a rose among thistles,"—he had already formed his opinion of the master of "Les Marches."

"How lonely she must feel living with these two people, one a big-headed, and in proportion bigger-nosed man, the other, an old ignorant hag, her face of a dirty yellow, and her jaw! it reminds me of a species of fish which have a mouth that opens vertically—'Melanocetus Johnstoni'—I think the name is."

Here he finished soliloquizing and dressing.

He cast a glance over his clothes. "They don't appear to fit very well," he thought. "How strange that I had not noticed this before. I feel disposed to put on my best coat instead of this one."

Then he tried to scoff these thoughts away and when they would not leave him, he called himself a simpleton, scolded himself for his fastidious taste, and resolved to start as he was.

It was two o'clock when he called out to his step-mother: "Mother!" (this was a delicate piece of flattery); "I am going to see how the man I saved from drowning yesterday is getting on."

[Pg 63]

"Oh, all right, Frank," answered Mrs. Mathers, pleased to hear him calling her "mother."

The young man stepped out into the open air with a decided gait. After an hour's walk he arrived at the farm-house, heated by his rapid journey.

He was courteously received by Adèle at the door. On her devolved the duties of hostess, which she endeavoured to discharge conscientiously.

She led her guest into the parlour where Mr. Rougeant was seated before a fire in an easy-chair. Frank shook hands with him and inquired how he felt.

"Not too bad, thank you," he replied, and beckoning Frank to a chair close to him, he began to converse about his farm.

Frank listened and answered as well as he could, making a remark now and then about agriculture which astonished the farmer considerably. He had the tact to respect Mr. Rougeant's feelings, and the latter was not slow in showing his appreciation of it.

"You seem to know more about farming than I do," remarked Mr. Rougeant.

Frank felt flattered. He began to talk about agricultural chemistry, but he was soon stopped by his host.

"I don't believe in theory," interrupted Mr. Rougeant, "give me facts, show me results. A great many people write about farming who can hardly distinguish a parsnip from a carrot."

The young man dared not go against the farmer. He saw, by his manner, that he was not a man to be contradicted. He looked at Adèle. She was smiling, but directly her father looked round towards her, her face became as grave as a nun's.

[Pg 64]

Mr. Rougeant continued triumphantly to talk about his farm. It was all the world to him, and almost the only thing about which he could converse.

He never read a book.

During the conversation Frank learnt that he had about one hundred vergées of land, one fifth of which he kept, the remainder was let to other farmers. He had but one workman, a man about sixty years old, who had worked for the Rougeants for more than forty years. His name was Jacques Dorant. Then, there was his horse; it was old now, but still good. Ah! when he was younger, he was a splendid horse, such strength, such form, such a fast trotter, frisky, but as gentle as a lamb.

Thought Frank: "If he is to be credited, there has never been such a horse since the days of Bucephalus, the famous horse of Alexander."

During the whole time that they had been in the parlour, the young man had not found courage to address a word to Adèle. He was very careful about his tenure. He spoke in a voice which he endeavoured to soften; he uttered the best English which

he could frame,—for Mr. Rougeant spoke in English this time—and when there was an opportunity of displaying his talents, he availed himself of it with eagerness.

Once, he made a serious blunder. He talked about turnips which he had seen growing in a field close by. At which the farmer laughed: "Well, I never, turnips, ha-ha...."

Frank felt stung. His face coloured deeply, his head was on fire. What did *she* think of him? Through the mist that seemed to gather before his eyes, he managed to glance rapidly in the direction of Adèle. A thrill of delight shot through his veins. She was looking at her father with an offended air, her lustrous eyes seemed to issue forth a censoring light.

[Pg 65]

"Of course, you will stay in to tea, Mr. Mathers," said the farmer after a few minutes of silence.

Frank accepted the invitation thankfully.

Adèle left the room to help to prepare the tea things.

Left alone with the farmer, the young man looked about him more freely. He noticed that the room was very plainly furnished. His eyes alighted on a painting which represented a cow standing near a cattle-shed. "What a shocking display of art," he said to himself. "Infringement of the rules of perspective, shocking chiaroscuro, bad composition...."

Mr. Rougeant casually noticed him. "So you are having a look at my cow," he said, "a friend of mine painted that picture; he was a real artist." Then he paused, examined it like one who understands his business, and continued: "Yes, yes, exactly like her, the little white patches and that little bump on her back. I gave my friend ten shillings for that painting; just think, ten shillings, seven pounds of butter. But," he added by way of consoling himself,—for his avaricious heart was already revolting against this useless expenditure of money; "it's well worth that, it's the very likeness of my 'Daisy.' My daughter had the impudence to tell me once that I ought to put it in the wash-house. Alas! young people will always be young people."

[Pg 66]

Struggle as he would, Frank could not refrain from smiling. His host took it for a genuine smile of admiration and looked at him approvingly.

At this stage, Adèle announced that the tea was served.

Whilst they were at the meal, Frank was in great perplexity as to how he should avoid breaking any of the rules of etiquette in Adèle's presence.

He was so much in earnest about doing things properly that he committed several blunders. Once he almost overturned his cup, then he blushed till his face was all discoloured, and bit his under lip savagely. A minute after that, while gallantly passing a plate containing *gâche à corinthe* to Adèle, he knocked it against the sugar basin, upset the latter, and sent the pieces of sugar and cake flying in all directions. He grew angry with himself, and completely lost his head. Mr. Rougeant complained of not being hungry. Frank, who misunderstood him, answered: "Ah! I see." Another blunder.

At last the meal was over. The two men rose and returned to the parlour. The first remark of the farmer was: "In my time, servants used to eat at the same table as their masters, but our Miss says that she will not have it. I let her have her own way sometimes; it does not cost me more, so I do not care."

He called out to his daughter: "Adèle, make haste, so that the gentleman may hear your playing."

"I am coming soon," was the reply.

The farmer went on to Frank: "The instrument which she plays is a violin. For my part, I do not care for it. It does not make enough noise. Give me a harmonium or a cornet. But my daughter persists in saying that she will not learn anything but the violin. Perhaps it's better after all," he added, suddenly thinking of the outlay required for a new instrument.

[Pg 67]

Adèle came in with her violin, which she at once carefully tuned. She appeared confident of success. She placed herself opposite her father and nearly alongside the young man.

"Fire away!" said the father, "what are you doing now?"

"I was just seeing if the strings were well tuned," she said. "It is of no use trying to play if the instrument is out of tune." These last words were spoken to Frank.

"I cannot play on the violin," said he.

"Ah! then you won't criticize me," said she.



She bent her head over her instrument, and began playing. She forgot the outward world, her whole attention was concentrated on her violin as her slender and nervous fingers guided the bow or pressed the strings.

It was a sweet soft tune—like her voice—her face wore a tender expression. Then the music swelled, became louder and louder till it reached its climax; the bow bounded over the strings, the fingers of the left hand rose and fell in quick succession, her expression was now animated, her face aglow.

Frank was sitting with his eyes fixed upon the fair musician. He had never imagined that an instrument could be made to express such feelings.

He noticed that Adèle would have to turn a leaf. He could read music, so he rose, scanned the music, was soon on the track, and turned the leaf in due time.

[Pg 68]

Adèle finished playing soon after.

Her face was slightly flushed and triumphant.

Frank congratulated her warmly in a select speech which he finished thus: "In short, your playing seems to have as much power over my feelings as Timotheus' had over Alexander's."

The farmer's face was ominous. He had begun to entertain suspicions when Adèle had looked at him reproachfully before tea-time. Now his imagination had ripened into certainty—so he thought. The young people must be for ever separated. He said roughly: "There are other things which are more important than fiddling, one of them is to know how to live."

Frank looked at Adèle, she looked back at him. Their astonishment was diverting to witness.

Quoth the farmer gruffly to Frank, "I am going to retire, I think you had better do the same."

"Is the man going mad?" thought Frank. He looked at Adèle, then suddenly took his hat and his departure.

The young lady followed him to the door. She was extremely vexed at her father's demeanour. She spoke a few words to Frank as he stepped outside.

"I hope you will not take my father's words too seriously," she said, "I am very sorry—it's shocking—I am exceedingly angry with him—a fine way of thanking you—you to whom he owes so much."

As he pressed the delicate hand which she tended in farewell, Frank said: "I quite forgive Mr. Rougeant, there are strange natures," and he walked away.

He had gone by the back door, why, he did not know. As he passed the stable, he saw a man engaged in cleaning, a horse. "Come what may," he said to himself, "I must have a chat with this fellow."

[Pg 69]

"Good evening," he said, speaking in French, "cleaning up a bit?"

"Good evening, sir," replied Jacques, speaking in broken English. "You needn't talk in French, I know English; I learnt it when Jim Tozer worked here."

Said Frank inly: "Jim Tozer, the name seems familiar to me. Of course, my step-mother's brother." Aloud: "You are the only workman here now!"

"Yes, you've been payin' a visit to Mr. Rougeant, you're the gentleman as rescued him from drowning. Lucky for him, old chap, that you were round about there, for it's dead certain he'd ha' gone to bottom."

"You take care of this horse?"

"I take care of pretty nearly everything round about here, for the bos doesn't do much now, but he gives a reg'lar 'go at it' now and then though."

"I suppose you like this job," remarked Frank, meanwhile scanning the horse and forming his opinion of this member of the equine genus. Here is his judgment: "A famous trotter! a spirited steed!—indeed!—an old nag not worth half-a-guinea."

"What job?" said Jacques.

"Working about here, I mean, working for Mr. Rougeant."

"Well, ye-yes, but you've got to know how to tackle the gov'nor; he's a quair sort. I've worked for the Rougeants for forty-two years, and the old fellow's never given me more than my day's wage." Then he added in an undertone, "He's a reg'lar miser, he's got some tin! They say he's worth four hundred quarters."

[Pg 70]

Four hundred pounds income, was to old Jacques a large fortune.

"Ah," he went on, "if only I had four hundred pounds capital, with the little that I have scraped together, I would not trouble to work any more, I would have enough for the rest of my days. We live on thirty pounds a year, me and my old missus.

"We're not allu's feastin', you see; besides, the house we live in is ours. Built with my savin's when I married, it was——"

"Mrs. Rougeant is dead, is she not?" questioned Frank, anxious to learn more about the family.

"Dead! o' course she's dead," said Jacques, "she's been dead now for—let me see—twelve—thirteen—fourteen years!—her daughter was about four years old then."

"So Miss Rougeant is now eighteen."

"Yes, Sir, an' a fine girl she is,"—this was said with a wink and a nod.

"She seems to have been very well educated," said Frank.

"I should think so," said the labourer, opening his eyes wide. "Why, bless you, Sir, she's been at a boarding-school all her life; she only came to live here last year, after having been absent for nearly ten years. I bet she don't get on too well with the guv'nor, he's such an old feller for brass. She's a good 'un, too; now and then she goes to see my old missus, and she isn't partic'lar about givin' my daughter's mites a tanner, although I'll lay ten to one she's not allowed too much. And her flowers; have you seen 'em? Why there's not many a gardener as 'u'd arrange 'em in sich a bloomin' style."

[Pg 71]

"Has Mr. Rougeant always been the sort of man that he is now?" inquired Frank.

"No, not when the lady was alive; I s'pose it was her as made him spend some money on improvements. The year before she died, he took off the thatched roofs and put slate instead, then he built that there little conservatory, but as soon as she was gone, he began to pinch and screw; why, fancy, he used to shave himself, but now his razor's broke, he says he doesn't care to buy one, the bloke." Jacques heard a clock strike. "I must make haste to finish this," he said, "then I'll put on my togs and go home; my missus'l jaw if I'm not in time for the grub."

"Good-night, then," said Frank.

"Good-night, Sir," shouted Jacques.—"Whog back old mare—steady!" Frank heard him say as he walked away.

Going home, he wrapped himself up in deep thought. The way which seemed clear yesterday, was now full of obstacles. Mr. Rougeant was rich; judging from his demeanour he had probably already chosen his daughter a husband—would that she were poor.

He looked to see what redeeming feature he could find on his side. None. He had never felt so little as he now did.

[Pg 72]

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

### AN UNPLEASANT VISIT.

---



When Adèle came back from shutting the door after Frank, her father looked at her with a hard, scrutinizing gaze, but did not say a word.

It was just like him. He very rarely spoke when he was angry; he would mope about for whole days, his face covered with innumerable wrinkles.

This anger on her father's part did not pain Adèle so much as it had formerly done. Her heart revolted at the thought of being always made to bend under her father's stern will.

Like the terror-stricken few who would do battle for their rights, but are awed by countless numbers, Adèle had up to this time quietly submitted to her father's iron rule; but now she felt inclined to rebel.

Accordingly, instead of trying to coax her father into wearing his ordinary face, which was none too pleasant, she pouted.

The old man noticed this and chuckled to himself: "Ah, ah, you think a great deal of this young fellow. I'll teach you to keep up the honour of the family."

He was so delighted at the prospect of an easy victory that he did not sulk nearly as long as usual, but, to the young girl's astonishment, was quite talkative the next day.

"Your aunt asked me if you would go and take tea with her to-morrow," he said when they were at dinner.

[Pg 73]

Adèle did not answer.

Heedless of her silence, her father went on: "You must go, because you do not go often."

The daughter answered: "No, I do not go often." She thought: "Often enough," for she did not at all relish the idea of a visit to her aunt.

The inmates of the "Prenoms" did not please her. There was her uncle, Mr. Soher, morose and stern. He was one of this class of people who seem to be continually looking upwards, their mind so much occupied in contemplating the upper regions that they continually stumble against the blocks which lie in life's path. He lived, partly on his income, partly on the commission which he secured as agent to a firm of agricultural implement manufacturers, and partly on the money which he made by selling his property bit by bit. He had also advertised himself as auctioneer, house and estate agent, etcetera, but no one seemed to require his services in this line. Averse to manual labour, he could not properly cultivate such a small farm without submitting himself to this "slavish work," as he called it. Accordingly, he was, if slowly, surely drifting towards bankruptcy. He saw this, so did his wife, but neither seemed to care much; they were buoyed up by a false hope, always waiting for something unexpected to turn up, which would rescue them from this abyss.

Mrs. Soher was Mr. Rougeant's sister.

They were the only children of the late Charles Rougeant, of "Les Marches."

She was short of stature, rather stout, her round little face always assuming a certain air of dignity, her light blue eyes wearing a fixed gaze and her tongue always ready to slander. She pretended to be religious, because her husband was so; had he been otherwise, she would certainly have been otherwise too.

[Pg 74]

Then came her twenty-four year old daughter Amelia, the only member of the family with which the reader is not acquainted; and Tom, grown into a lazy, bad-tempered and slouching young man. Old Mrs. Soher was dead.

The home at the "Prenoms" was not a bright one. Mr. Soher did not believe in education. He and his wife were often absent from home in the evening. They went to some meeting, and their two children were left alone. When the parents were gone, Tom left the house, leaving his sister alone and returning about half an hour before his parents came in. His sister said she would tell her father, but, upon Tom threatening her, she kept silent, for she feared her brother who was of a very violent temper.

One day, Tom came in later than usual. When he entered the house, he was astonished to see his father sitting near the fire.

"Well," said Mr. Soher, "what does this mean?"

"I've just been out a little," said Tom.

"I hope you will not repeat this, my son," said the father. Then he showed him how wicked it was to associate with bad companions, the probable results of it; how, when he had once acquired bad habits, he would find it nearly impossible to break with them; how he would be enticed into disreputable places, and a host of other admonishments.

Tom did not answer; he felt culpable, but not repentant. He did not tell his father that this same evening he had entered a public-house for the first time.

[Pg 75]

The days went by. Mr. Soher and his spouse continued to attend to their meetings and their son continued to go out, returning boldly after his parents had come in.

One evening, he came in drunk. Then his father became really alarmed. He felt that he had not done towards his son all that he might have done.

This did not, however, make him remain at home.

"I must attend to my Master's work," he would say. Once, he took his son in the parlour, and after having exhorted him to turn a new leaf he lifted up his voice in prayer. But the son continued to drink and the father to pray, while the mother did as much as she could to shield her dear boy.

Tom had neither the force of will, nor the desire to amend. His home was so dull; there was nothing about it which attracted him; he did not care at all for the mother who tried to screen his faults. She was so narrow minded; always speaking ill of everyone. She knew they were slowly sinking towards bankruptcy, and it was a consolation to her to imagine others in the same position. She saw other people's defects as if through a microscope.

Foolish woman. Even as thou art scandalizing others, thine own nature is being abased, whilst those whom thou dost backbite remain the same.

One glance at the daughter. She was taller and fairer than her mother. Her character was the same as her mother's. Alas! under such tutorship, how could she be expected to be otherwise.

[Pg 76]

When the time came for Adèle to set out to pay her visit to the "Prenoms," she did so reluctantly. It was not a pleasure to her, it was a duty. If she did not go, she thought they would think her too proud. So she made the sacrifice, and went. She determined to show a bright face and to be as pleasant as she possibly could. She arrived at the house of her hosts rather late.

Mrs. Soher welcomed her in a piping voice. She wore her everyday apparel, and that was not of the brightest.

"Come in, my dear; you see, my dear, I have not had time yet to change clothes, but I'll be ready in a few minutes.

"Sit down, my dear; why are you so late? I thought you would come sooner."

Adèle thought: "What a state the house would have been in, if I had arrived an hour earlier."

Mrs. Soher began to dust a secretaire, talking all the while to her niece. "Amelia will soon be down; she ran upstairs when she heard you knock at the door; she does not like for anyone to see her when she is not properly dressed, but *I* don't care, not when it is you, at any rate."

"A pretty compliment," thought the visitor.

When they were all assembled round the table partaking of their tea, Adèle tried over and over again to lead the conversation into a pleasant channel, but all to no purpose. The inmates of the "Prenoms" had to be taught to converse properly before they could do so. Mrs. Soher began to babble in her ordinary way. Her daughter supported her foolish statements. Adèle made no remark. Her aunt noticed this, and after a most scornful remark about Mrs. B.'s character, she said to her niece: "Don't you think so?"

[Pg 77]

Although considerably annoyed, Adèle had not so far made any remark, but she was now directly appealed to. She spoke: "I do not know," she said. She noticed the two women smiling and exchanging glances.

Said Mrs. Soher sarcastically: "I thought you knew Mrs. B."

"Yes," answered her niece, "I know her, but I am continually detecting faults in my temper which have to be overcome; and I find that I have quite enough to do to look after myself without bothering about others."

If ever you saw two people looking six ways for Sunday, it was Mrs. Soher and her daughter.

After a few moments of embarrassing silence, Mr. Soher, who had not yet spoken a word, said something about young people being respectful to their superiors; while Tom laughed at the two women and smiled approvingly at his cousin.

Adèle took her departure early and was not asked to remain longer. When she was once more in the open, she felt a great weight lifted from her breast. She was now free, free to entertain herself with nature, away from the stagnant atmosphere of the "Prenoms." She walked along, her whole being revolting against the useless, ay, more than useless talk she had heard. But when she looked at the flowers that grew on the hedges which bordered the lane in which she was walking, her soul was filled with a sweet balm. Here was the ivy climbing upwards taking its support and some of its nourishment from the hedge which it was scaling, always gaining fresh ground. Such is the man who has risen in the world; he avails himself of his success for a nobler, higher, and mightier effort. There some meek ferns were hiding in a shady nook, away from the sun's piercing rays.

[Pg 78]

The young girl felt a twofold joy: that of being alone with nature, and that of being away from her aunt's house.

At last, she reached "Les Marches." How happy she felt. Not the sort of home she hoped to have some day; but still, it was home. Her father was there, as dumb and as severe as usual, but, to her, he looked quite a nice old man now.

While she was thus engaged in rapturous joy, Mrs. Soher and her daughter were having a fine time of it. "Ah! she *is* a well-bred girl; to interrupt me like that, to answer and lecture me in that way," said Adèle's aunt, then she added: "Fancy that little brat, to try and give me a lesson about my duty towards my neighbour. If she has enough to do to look after herself, let her do it; for my part I'll do as I like. It won't be a young girl who is not yet out of her teens who is going to teach me how to live."

The daughter scornfully remarked: "She has been to a boarding-school, you know."

At which the two women laughed and Mr. Soher smiled, while Tom, profiting by the general interest displayed in the conversation, slipped out of the room and slouched to the nearest public-house.

After having most unduly run down their departed guest, the two women resolved never again to invite her.

And they never did.

Had Adèle heard their decision, she would have felt even more cheerful than she now did.


[Pg 79]

---

## CHAPTER IX.

### DECEPTIONS.

---

n the anniversary of his mother's death, Frank Mathers resolved to visit her tomb. He had not been before; why, he could not explain. However, he determined to make up for past deficiencies. Accordingly, he went with a small bunch of flowers which he placed upon his mother's tomb. He felt a deep veneration for her. He now knew more than ever what she had done for him, and, in his heart, he thanked heaven that had given him such a mother. He could not help wishing that she were still alive, but he felt happy for all that, his soul was full of thankfulness.

This visit did him so much good that he thought he would like to go oftener.

When he came home he was astonished to see his step-mother. She was in a dreadful fit of jealousy. "The booby," she said to her husband, so that Frank could hear; "he was not a little attached to his mother's apron-strings."

Frank did not say a single word and the storm soon abated.

A few days afterwards found him walking near "Les Marches," hoping to meet Adèle Rougeant. He was not successful. Still, he continued his visits, hoping to meet her some day.

He was at last rewarded for his pains. On turning a sharp corner he suddenly met her. The meeting was so unexpected that Frank's nervous system was quite upset. He had come hoping to talk to her. He was to enquire about Mr. Rougeant's health.

[Pg 80]

But now, his courage failed him. He raised his hat, his lips muttered a faint: "How d'ye do?" he smiled in a ludicrous manner and passed on. The young girl who thought he was about his business bowed and went on her way. "He might have said a few words," she thought.

Frank was vexed with himself.

He thought of retracing his steps, but after a moment's reflection he decided not to do so.

The weather began to look threatening. The sun was setting. Huge black clouds were rising from the horizon while an occasional flash of lightning announced the approach of the coming storm.

Frank hastened as fast as he could toward the Rohais. But, he had not gone very far before a heavy shower overtook him.

After all his pains, the only thing which he at last secured was a thorough drenching.

When he came back home, he was down-hearted. Next morning he, however, determined to make one more attempt.

A few days afterwards saw him leisurely promenading round the farm of "Les Marches." It was in the evening and the moon was rising.

He went round by the back of the house through the fields. As he approached, he saw, on the opposite side to the stables, a small garden enclosed with high walls. One entrance, on the side of which he now stood, was by a door. He went towards it. The door was ajar. He entered the garden. Then, and only then, did he begin to reason. What if someone found him there? They would take him for a thief. "I must go," he said to himself; "if Mr. Rougeant found me here, there would be a fine row." But his lips uttered what his heart had not dictated, and he remained in the garden. It was sweet to be near her, it was refreshing to his weary brain to behold the paths which she paraded every day. He was plunged into a deep reverie, when he saw a light at one of the windows. It was she. Immediately after, there appeared another light at the other window. It was he. Frank only cast a glance at the man. He looked at the slender form that approached the window. Adèle looked at the stars for a few moments, then lowered the blind. He saw her shadow for a time, then *it* also

[Pg 81]

disappeared. His heart was beating at a very fast rate. He felt intoxicated. He had seen her; she had appeared to him as an angel. How she had gazed towards heaven! What grace; what bearing!

Happening to turn his eyes towards the other window, he saw that there was no light.

"The old fellow wants to spare his candle," he said to himself; "he is trying to save a farthing."

This was not the case however. The farmer had suddenly thought of the garden door which he had forgotten to bolt as usual. He took his candlestick and went down stairs. Then he put on his boots, and leaving the candlestick on the table he went through the back door and stepped into the garden.

Frank was gazing with fixed eyes at the stars, drinking in the balmy air, when he heard footsteps. Hastily looking in the direction from whence the sound came, he was horrified to see a man coming towards him. There was not time to flee, so he quickly crouched away from the path. Luckily, he was in that part of the garden which was in the shade.

[Pg 82]

He trembled as the farmer approached. Would he see him? He was breathing through his nose; then he fancied he made too much noise. He opened his mouth wide, then he found that his breathing was not even audible to himself. He squeezed his body into the least possible space, and watched the farmer with anxious eyes.

Mr. Rougeant passed by without noticing him. Frank heard him shut the door, bolt it, and—oh, misery—turn a key in a latch. Mr. Rougeant again directed his steps towards him. When he came near to him, Frank was dreadfully alarmed to see the farmer looking straight in his direction. The young man was in the shade, while the moon shone fully on Mr. Rougeant's face. The latter looked straight at the crouching figure, then, suddenly quickening his pace, he went towards the house.

This man was a coward. He had seen the contracted silhouette, but had not had the courage to go up to it; he went hurriedly towards his house, seized an old gun which hung on two rusty nails and walked back into the garden. The gun was loaded for shooting rabbits.

As soon as Frank saw that the man was out of his way, he proceeded to try and find out some means of escape. "He will be back soon," he said to himself, "I must be out of his way when he returns." He went to the door. Impossible to open it. He scrutinized the walls. Impossible to scale them. Time was passing. What was to be done? He heard the door of the house close. The master of the garden was advancing. He saw a pear-tree nailed against the wall. There was not a moment to lose. He climbed the pear-tree. He broke a few branches in doing so, and knocked down a dozen pears. He regretted doing any damage, but he knew it would be better for him, and indeed for both of them, if he got out of the way in time.

[Pg 83]

Just as he let himself drop to the ground on the other side of the wall, the farmer entered the garden. While Mr. Rougeant was engaged in searching for the supposed thief with cocked gun, Frank was walking quickly towards his home.

Of course, the farmer did not find the intruder, but he found the broken Chaumontel pear-tree, and he saw the pears scattered on the ground.

"The unmitigated scoundrel," he muttered, "if I saw him now—looking at his gun—I'd make him decamp. I'd send a few shots into his dirty hide."

[Pg 84]

---

## CHAPTER X.

### 'TWIXT LOVE AND DUTY.

---



One evening—it was the first week in June, about nine months after Frank's adventure in the garden—Adèle Rougeant was tending her flowers.

She had been sewing for a time, and now, feeling a want of relaxation, she went to her parterre. Her violin and her flowers were her only companions. No wonder she fled to them when inclined to be sorrowful.

How beautiful the flower-bed looked in the twilight! The weather had been very warm, the earth which had been previously battered down by heavy rains was now covered with small cracks, little mouths as it were, begging for water.

Adèle supplied them plentifully with the precious liquid.

Then she armed herself with a pair of gardening gloves, and an old mason's trowel (any instrument is good to a woman), and began to plant a row of lobelias all around her pelargoniums.

This done, she looked at her work. There is a pleasure in gazing upon well-trimmed borders, but this pleasure is increased tenfold when one thinks that the plants have been arranged by one's own hands.

The young lady felt this delight: she felt more, she experienced the soothing influence of nature's sweet converse. She looked at the primroses, whose slender stalks were bent and which touched each other as if engaged in silent intercourse. And thus they would die, she thought, locked in each others fond embrace, their task accomplished, their life but one stretch of mutual love.

[Pg 85]

"Ah love! What is love?" she said to herself. But immediately a score of answers came; a dozen vague definitions presented themselves. "Certainly," she mused, "the parents who toil for their children without thinking of reward; love." Then another self within her answered: "It is their duty." "Their duty, yes, but they are not often actuated by a sense of duty; I think it is love."

Then she thought about another kind of love—the love she felt for Frank Mathers. She asked herself why she loved him. He was not bold, and she admired boldness. That she loved him, however, she was certain. Did he love her? "Yes," she thought he did. Then what kept them apart? Who was the cause of it? Her father. "What a pity I have such a father," she sighed; "not content with making himself miserable, he makes me pass a life of anxiety."

At this stage of her soliloquy, she perceived a young man, whom she quickly recognized as Tom, her cousin from the "Prenoms." He came walking towards the house.

As he opened the little gate he smiled broadly. His smile was not a pleasant one, because it was undefined. "Good-evening, Adèle," he said when he came near to her. "How are you?"

"Quite well thank you," she said, "and how are you?"

"Well enough, thanks," he returned, a little cooled down, for she did not take the preferred hand which he was tending towards her.

[Pg 86]

"Are you afraid to shake hands with me?" he asked, half smiling, half vexed.

"My gloves are soiled," replied she, taking off her right hand glove; afterwards shaking hands with him.

"Oh, I see," he said, quite satisfied with the excuse.

In reality, Adèle had not seen the preferred hand; she was busy with her thoughts just then. His manner seemed repulsive to her; she knew not why. She opened the front door and showed him into the parlour. Her father was there, evidently expecting Tom, for he received him with a warmth which he had not shown for a long time. She left them to themselves and was proceeding towards her parterre when her father called out to her.

"What! are you going, Adèle, when Mr. Soher is here; come and keep us company."

The girl retraced her steps. What could her father mean? He had not told her a word about her cousin's visit, and yet, it was evident he was expecting him.

"Where's your violin?" questioned her father.

Adèle fetched the desired instrument. She felt very much like an instrument herself. "Father takes me for a toy," she thought, and then as she looked at the two men engaged in close conversation, a sudden light beamed upon her—he was going to force her into a *mariage de raison*, as the French call it. Everything had been arranged beforehand.

It was all conjecture on her part, but she felt it to be the truth. The more she thought over it, the more she felt convinced of the fact.

[Pg 87]

"Oh, it's disgusting," she thought; and a sickening sensation crept over her.

"Will you give us a tune?" said Mr. Rougeant.

"Do;" entreated Tom.

Adèle took the violin from the table upon which she had placed it, passed the bow over the strings to ascertain if it was properly tuned, then slowly began playing.

It was a simple piece, which did not demand exertion. She did not care what to play. "They cannot distinguish 'Home, Sweet Home' from 'Auld Lang Syne,'" she thought. Besides, they were not half listening; why should she give them good music.

She felt like the painter, who, having completed a real work of art, refuses to exhibit it to the public, on the ground that it is a profane thing to exhibit it to the gaze of unartistic eyes.

When she had finished playing, Tom looked at her. "That's capital music," he said, assuming the air of a connoisseur, then he added: "I s'pose you practice a good bit."

"The grin," thought Adèle, "it's awful; and his eyes resemble those of a wild cat. I wonder if he has a soul; if it shines through those eyes, it cannot be spotless;" then, recollecting herself, she said: "I have been practising now for ten years."

"No wonder you can rattle it," was the rejoinder.

Now Tom was not half so ugly as Adèle imagined him to be. Indeed, he looked well enough this evening, for he had come on purpose to exhibit himself, and was as a matter of fact as well dressed up as he could. His manners were not refined, but they were not absolutely rude.

[Pg 88]

But the girl, whose whole being revolted against this scheme of her father's fabrication, felt naturally indignant and could not help exaggerating his faults.

She felt greatly relieved when her father told her to prepare the supper.

It may here be noted that Mr. Rougeant had now altogether dispensed with his Breton servant. Now that Adèle was growing up, a servant was altogether superfluous, he said. The truth was that this enabled him to save a few pounds every year.

When the table was laid, the three sat down to supper. It being over, the two men returned to the parlour. Adèle was a long, very long time in putting away the supper things.

Her father noticed this, and when she entered the parlour, he remarked: "You've been long enough."

"Provided she has not been too long," put in his nephew, trying to win his cousin's good will.

After one of the most miserable evenings that Adèle had ever spent, Tom took leave of the family.

When he was fairly out of the way, Adèle ventured to ask her father what he had come for.

"He came to see us," he replied, then, after a pause, he added abruptly: "Have you ever thought of marrying?"

"I, marry! you forget that I am but a child."

"A child! why, you will soon be of age."

There was a deep silence for a time, then the father spoke: "Mr. Soher (emphasizing the Mr.) is a nice young man. He means to ask your hand when he is better acquainted with you."

[Pg 89]

"He drinks."

"Not now, I know he used to do so, but he is quite steady now—I knew you would object, I saw it in your manner, the way in which you answered him; somehow or other, you don't seem to take to respectable people. But mind you; if ever you marry anyone else, not a penny of mine shall you have; not one double."

"He is my *cousin-germain*."

"Well, what does it matter? the law does not prevent you from marrying your *cousin-germain*." His tone became bitter. He went on: "I made a great mistake when I promised your mother on her death-bed that I would send you to a boarding-school. What other objection have you to state?"

His daughter looked down, coloured and replied almost inaudibly: "I do not love him."

"Bah! if it's only that, you will get to love him soon enough; I know you will."

Then thinking by her demeanour that he had nearly won her over, he asked: "Shall I ask him to dinner next Sunday?"

"You would only increase the contempt that I feel for him."

Mr. Rougeant was not prepared for this. "I knew it," he said in a vexed tone of voice; "this is the satisfaction you give me for having brought you up like a lady, spending a great part of my income towards your education. I tell you, you are a foolish girl, a simpleton; I won't have any of your nonsense. I will see to this later on."

They retired for the night; Mr. Rougeant enraged at his daughter's abhorrence of Tom, and Adèle deeply grieved at the condition of affairs.

Alas! she knew her father well.

[Pg 90]



She felt that a terrible battle would have to be fought some day; a conflict for love and liberty.

And, raising her eyes to heaven, she prayed that she might have strength to support the fight.

[Pg 91]

---

## CHAPTER XI.

### BUSINESS.

---



While these things were going on at "Les Marches," a great change had come over Frank's life.

His father was one day descending a ladder, when one of the rounds of the ladder broke and his body received a nasty jerk. He placed his hand on his heart and muttered. "I have felt something, I have felt something here." Two days afterwards he died from internal hemorrhage.

So Frank was left to live with his step-mother.

He had now a little money and was considering how he should lay it out. Finally, he decided to build one or two greenhouses. But he wanted some land upon which to build them, and this he did not possess.

There was a field situated behind his garden which belonged to a Mr. Fallon. "This field would exactly suit me," he said to himself, "I must try to buy it."

Accordingly, he set out towards "La Chaumière"—this was the name of Mr. Fallon's residence. When he arrived there, he saw the farmer coming out of his stable and at once asked him if his field was for sale. Now, Mr. Fallon thought himself too much of a business man to answer either "Yes" or "No." "I do not think," he said, "but I can't tell. I must mention it to my wife and think over it, for it's a serious thing to sell one's property."

[Pg 92]

Frank nodded.

Would he call the next evening? the man asked.

Frank promised to call.

The farmer immediately told his wife about the young man's proposal. The worthy couple decided to sell the piece of land, "but," said the cautious husband, "we must sell it at a high price, if we can. I wish it were sold though," he continued, "it's such an out of the way place, and so far from here."

The next evening saw Frank sitting near the hearth of the kitchen of "La Chaumière." The following conversation took place.

"Well, Mr. Fallon," said Frank, "I have come to see if the field is really for sale."

"I hardly know, one doesn't like to do away with one's property."

"You told me you would tell me this evening."

"Yes, I know, but, it's a good field."

"It may be."

"There's a stream running through it."

"I know."

"You would not have to dig a well, and a well costs a great deal of money."

"Sometimes."

"I have a mind to keep it."

"Indeed!"

"Ah! but such good land, it's a pity to give it away."

"I don't want to have it for nothing."

"Perhaps not, but I don't think you would give me my price."

"What is it?"

"Much too cheap. Land is very dear just now, and the prices will always go up."

[Pg 93]

"I don't know about that."

"No, but I do, people are very eager to purchase such fine little plots. This one has all the advantages that it can have, situation——"

"What do you mean?"

"It's situated just behind your garden; where can you have anything better."

"The field is well situated for me, but it's not worth anything as building land to others, it does not border the road," Frank ventured to remark.

"It's a splendid piece of land," continued the farmer, "light, open and yet damp soil, just the sort of thing for tomatoes, I fancy I can see them, as big as my fist——"

"We have not done much business yet."

"I don't know if I shall sell it."

"If that's the case, when will you make up your mind; shall I call again to-morrow?"

"I hardly know"—scratching his head—"such a fine plot, let me see; aloud: It's worth a lot of money."

"How much would you require?"

"Oh! I don't know."

"Well, I'll call again this day week," said Frank, tiring of this useless talk and guessing what the farmer's intentions were. He rose and added: "I hope you will have made up your mind by then."

Quoth the farmer: "I should be very sorry for you to have had to come here for nothing, perhaps we may yet come to terms."

"Will you sell it? 'Yes' or 'No,'" said the young man re-seating himself.

"If you don't mind giving me my price."

"What *is* your price?"

[Pg 94]

"Land is very dear. This piece is situated quite close to town, it ought to fetch top price. There's two and a half vergées to that field. I have heard that some land has been sold for eight quarters a vergée."

"I won't give as much for this one; it's twice too much."

"I should require some money."

"How much?"

"At least one hundred pounds."

"Perhaps I might give you as much, but do state the price of the whole."

"Six quarters a vergée."

"No."

"It would be worth that to you."

"I will give you five quarters."

"It's too low, the field would only amount to two hundred and fifty pounds."

"Two hundred and fifty pounds for two and a half vergées, that is about an acre, is, I should think, a very good price."

"That would only make, besides the one hundred pounds cash, seven and a half pounds per annum. Such a fertile soil. Such a splendid stream. No well to dig. Hundreds of tomatoes weighing half-a-pound each. It's ridiculously low."

"It's time for me to part. Will you accept my price, Mr. Fallon, 'Yes' or 'No?'"

After much grumbling and protestations on the part of the farmer, with assertions that he would be ruined giving away his land like that, the transaction was agreed to.

Going home, Frank reviewed in his mind the state of his finance.

He possessed the house, garden, greenhouse and workshop, minus his step-mother's dowry, and plus five hundred pounds cash. "I cannot do much with that," he thought, "but I have enough to begin with."

[Pg 95]

And now where were his ambitious castles; where was the successful inventor, the possessor of hundreds of thousands—contemplating to build two span-roofed greenhouses in which he would have to work and perspire when the thermometer would often stand at from eighty to ninety degrees.

However, he was full of hope, his ambition had received a severe blow, but it still clung to him. He feared to aim too high now, and failures he dreaded. "I must begin at the bottom of the ladder," he said to himself, "and, with God's help, I shall succeed."

He resolved to work with his brains as well as with his hands. "I have some education," he thought, "and I will seize the opportunities as they present themselves. I do not care for riches now. If only I could succeed in securing enough money to put me out of the danger of want, I should be satisfied."

Since his adventure in the garden, he had not dared to go again near "Les Marches."

He thought that Mr. Rougeant had perhaps recognised him, but, fortunately for him, Adèle's father had failed to discern his crouching figure.

[Pg 96]

---

## CHAPTER XII.

### A STRANGE MEETING.

---

**T**hree months afterwards, Frank was planting his tomatoes in his greenhouses. He had two span-roofs, each one hundred and forty feet long by forty feet wide.

He had sold the workshop which was situated a few yards to the north of the house, and had thus been enabled to build larger houses than he at first intended.

He heard vague rumours about his step-mother going to marry again. If the truth must be said, Frank felt delighted at the prospect of getting rid of her. He had never cared for her much, and, recently, the gap that had always existed between them had been considerably enlarged.

He had been out on business and had arrived rather late in the evening, at which Mrs. Mathers was terribly displeased. "I am not going to sit up all night waiting for you," she said, and then she added in a most sarcastic tone of voice: "Perhaps you have been at the cemetery."

Frank was moved to the quick. He was of a rather passionate temper and he felt nothing but contempt for the person who had made this remark. "I have not been," he said hotly, "I have been about my business."

"I thought that perhaps you had been crying there," she continued with the same irritating smile on her features.

Frank answered: "I might have done worse."

[Pg 97]

"Who would think that of a man of twenty-one," she said. "Of course, you do not care for your poor father; your mother gets all the tears."

Frank quite forgot himself. He looked at her defiantly and said in a low tone half fearing and yet wishing to be heard: "You are a Jezabel," then turned round and left the room.

When he came to think over the last words which he had used towards his step-mother, he felt ashamed of himself. He felt he had not behaved as a man, much less as a Christian. He had gone much too far; he owed her respect.

He thought of going straight to her, and of asking her pardon, but his pride prevented him from taking this wise step. Only for a minute, however; he soon overcame it and resolutely re-entered the room where Mrs. Mathers was.

"I was very rude to you," he began, "I was rather excited, and——"

Without saying a word Mrs. Mathers left the room and, slamming the door after her, proceeded upstairs.

Frank felt relieved. He had attempted a reconciliation. She had refused. He felt a sense of duty done.

We may add that Mrs. Mathers pouted for more than a week.

The second anniversary of his father's death having arrived, Frank, profiting by his step-mother's absence, took a small bunch of sweet scented flowers and proceeded towards the Foulon Cemetery, where his parents were buried.

As he was about to open the gate, he thought he saw the form of a lady which he knew, coming down the road after him. He arrested his steps. The young lady stopped likewise, as if to examine the cottage situated on her left, and, in doing so, she turned her back towards Frank.

[Pg 98]

He did not stay there long, but proceeded up the gravel walk towards the grave, but as he advanced, he thought no more of his mission. "Where have I seen that face?" he thought, "it seems familiar to me."

He was now beside the grave, he placed the flowers near the tombstone, but his thoughts were not with the dead, they were with the living.

All at once, it flashed upon him, he remembered that person. That form, that face, belonged to Adèle Rougeant.

He hastily left the graveyard and almost ran down the walk.

One of the two persons who were standing near the gate said: "That man has seen a ghost."

Frank smiled as he overheard the remark, and, thinking that the young lady had proceeded past the gate, he went in that direction.

He walked for a quarter of an hour, but neither saw her nor anyone resembling her. At last, he gave up the chase in despair. "I must have construed wrongly," he said to himself, "perhaps the person who was standing near the entrance to the cemetery was right, it was her ghost." He mournfully retraced his steps.

It was really Adèle Rougeant that he had seen. She was returning from town, when, instead of going straight home by St. Martin's mill, she went up the Grange, took a peep at her former home, then proceeded by the Rocquettes down the Rohais. Why; the lady readers will easily guess.

She espied Frank, just as he was turning down Foulon Vale.

He was so intent on his mission that he did not notice her.

[Pg 99]

As soon as she saw his eager look and the bunch of flowers which he carried in his hands, a feeling of exasperating jealousy seized her. Where was he going with those flowers? "Alas!" she thought bitterly, "he has a rendezvous with some pretty lass. I will follow him and ascertain, if possible, the truth."

She walked after him, and when he turned round to look at her, she hastily looked the other way. Fearing lest he might recognise her, she retraced her steps and continued her journey homewards down the Rohais, muttering: "A fine place for a rendezvous."

Something within her tried to reason: "He is nothing to you, you have no claims upon him." But what of her future, what of her projected plans, her ideas, her sweet dreams; they were mown down in this huge and single sweep. Life seemed very dark. Up to this, hope had kept her radiant and cheerful, and now, hope was gone, and in its stead, there was a blank.

Arrived home, she fetched her violin and poured forth all her feelings.

She commenced in a plaintive tone, then this changed to reproach, and the conclusion was a wail of despair.

Again she tried to rouse herself; again she tried to reason. "Why am I so concerned about him?" she asked herself. "I must put these foolish thoughts aside."

But love denied what reason would dictate, and she found herself continually sighing.

Meanwhile, Tom continued his visits from time to time, and she received him with as much coldness as she dared.

[Pg 100]

But when she came to think that Frank was an acquaintance to be forgotten, she slightly changed her manner towards her cousin.

Her father was not slow to notice the change. He laughed inly and chuckled: "I knew she would come to love him; but I must not hurry her, she is by nature a slow coach; everything will yet come all right in the end."

The days were lengthening and Tom continued to come as early as he used to do in the depth of winter.

It was now quite daylight when he put in an appearance. One evening he took Adèle for a walk round the garden. Poor girl; she did not love him, but she did not like to speak roughly to him. She felt that she was wronging him. She knew that at each meeting his hope increased. Still, what was she to do? She began to persuade herself that he was not so bad as she had imagined. He was now a reformed man; her father had told her so, and she could see it. If the passion for drink which was still probably strong within him should return! She paused, mused and said with a sigh: "Alas! I do not feel that I love him."

Still; she hardly knew if in the end she would accept him. He would be so deeply grieved if she refused, and then, if she accepted him, her father would perhaps become once more what he was when she was quite a child. She remembered how he used to take her on his knee, and call her his dear little girl.

She went on thinking: "How many people marry without what is generally called love? Certainly, the greater portion. The French have what they call *marriages de raison*, and they seem to agree as well as others."

[Pg 101]

Poor Adèle. How many have reasoned thus, how many are daily giving themselves

## CHAPTER XIII.

### SUPERSTITION.



While Adèle was thus pondering over her natural shocks, Frank was working, full of hope for the future.

His step-mother married, and he was left in possession of the house. He let it to an old couple, Pierre Merlin and his wife. Maît Pierre, as Frank called him, was a man of about sixty years of age. He worked for Frank who found that it was impossible for him to keep things ship-shape without re-enforcement.

This old man gloried in being a true Guernseyman, one of the old stock, of direct descent from those who fought for their country against the band of adventurers who invaded the island under Ivan of Wales. He did not say that the islanders had the worst of the fight. He only spoke in the patois, which Frank understood very well.

This species of the genus "homo" hailed from the parish of Torteval, and, being an old peasant and very illiterate, there is no cause for being astonished that he was superstitious.

Frank perceived this only a few days after he had engaged him. It was a Friday, and the old man who was told to go and gather a few tomatoes—the first of the season—exclaimed: "What! begin on a Friday, but you forget yourself, Mr. Mathers."

Frank laughed at him and told him to go all the same, adding that he was surprised people believed in such nonsense. Old Pierre obeyed muttering: "He is a young man, and he will lose a nice lot of money on his crops, defying fate in that way. But it's as the proverb says: 'Experience is a thing which is bought.'"

[Pg 103]

Although Frank did not believe in any of the old man's notions, the continual remarks which he heard made him eager to know more. When they had dined, the two men proceeded to a garden seat and while the elder smoked his pipe, the younger questioned him.

Pierre was very reticent in his information. What was the use of telling this young man anything; he would not believe him.

As time passed on, he began to have more confidence in his employer, and seeing that he never laughed at what he said, he gradually became more talkative.

One day, when Frank was questioning him, the old man asked: "Have you ever seen the *feu bellanger*?"

"I don't think so," responded Frank, "at any rate, I had never heard that name mentioned before."

"Well," said Maît Pierre, "if you care to listen, I shall tell you all about it; you appear eager to know everything."

He took his pipe from between his teeth; well emptied the bowl, and put the blackened clay pipe in his pocket with studied carefulness. Then he began: "The *feu bellanger* is one of the devil's angels which takes the shape of fire, and goes about at night, generally when it is very dark, and tries to pounce upon some victim."

Here, he stopped and looked inquiringly at Frank, who, in his desire to hear what old Pierre had to say, kept a very grave face.

[Pg 104]

Apparently satisfied at the young man's appearance, the narrator continued: "I have often seen it myself, and once, very clearly. I will never forget it to my dying day. It was pitch-dark and a drizzling rain was falling. I was walking hastily towards my home, when, on my right, I beheld a light. It danced up and down, now it came towards me, then it receded. I confess that I was nailed to the spot. I already seemed to feel its deathly grip. I was powerless to move. I could not scream. It was the old fellow who was already fascinating me. Fortunately, I remembered the words which my father had once told me: 'If ever you meet the *feu bellanger*, my boy, take off your coat, turn the sleeves inside out, and put it on so; it means that you will have nothing to do with it, and that you will resist its efforts to seize you.' I found strength enough to follow my father's advice. Hope must have sustained me. The bluish light remained about there for a few minutes more, then disappeared entirely."

"How thankful did I feel. With all speed, I hastened home to tell my parents of my narrow escape. They congratulated me; my father even took my hand and welcomed me as one risen from the dead."

"How does it kill the people it attacks?" Frank inquired.

"It flies with them to the seaside, or to the nearest pool and drowns them there."

"I once knew a man who was a downright ne'er do well. He was very much addicted to drink. One morning, he was found drowned in a stream."

"But," interposed Frank, "he might have stumbled in the stream whilst in a state of intoxication."

[Pg 105]

"No—no—no," said Pierre, "it was not that; the *feu bellanger* was seen that very night near this spot where the corpse was afterwards found. Some people said that they had heard a scream. I quite believe it. It was the horrible monster's triumphal shout. He was celebrating his victory."

"You don't think it was the poor inebriate's cry for help," said Frank, forcing back a smile.

"I told you it was a shout of triumph," said old Pierre, losing patience and already angry at Frank's demeanour. "Moreover," he added, "I'll tell you something else, I have not finished yet."

"It's a well-known fact that the *feu bellanger* dislikes sharpened tools, and fights with them if he happens to meet them. Being aware of this, my brother and I went to a place where we had seen the monster on the previous night. We had a sharp knife. We placed it with the handle in the ground and the keen blade sticking out."

"We watched from a distance to see if the *feu bellanger* would pass that way, and seeing that it did not appear; when midnight came, we went home. But a neighbour told us on the morrow that he had seen it in the early hours of the morning, fighting against the knife."

"We straightway proceeded to the place where the knife was. Imagine our horror on finding that the blade was covered with blood."

"Some poor stray animal *did* suffer," Frank could not help remarking. Old Pierre was terribly displeased. He rose to go about his work, muttering: "Wait till he sees it, when he gets caught, I bet he'll turn blue."

Frank thought about his labourer's story during the whole of the afternoon. "These superstitions do a great deal of harm to these poor people," he said in a soliloquy.

[Pg 106]

He therefore resolved to try and root out all these strange notions from Pierre's head. He soon felt a kind of ecstasy. It was a glorious thing to help bring about the time when science would sweep away all traces of ignorance.

If the theory of evolution was true, those times would come, so he decided to set to work at once upon this man.

It was a beginning, small perhaps, but he now believed in small beginnings.

He had not yet experienced what it is to try and convert a superstitious man.

It is very difficult to convince an ignorant person.

[Pg 107]

---

## CHAPTER XIV.

### FAILURE.

---



Having made up his mind to rescue Maît Pierre from his superstitions, Frank at once set to work.

So, the day following his decision, he advanced to the attack.

When they were both seated as usual having their after-dinner conversation, Frank began: "Do you really believe all you told me about the *feu bellanger*, Maît Pierre?"

"If I believe it? why, certainly I do."

Frank knew he did believe it, but he wanted to fix the conversation at once. "I'll tell you what this fire is," continued the young man; "it is a light which comes out of the soil, more especially in the marshy places. It is called 'Will-o'-the-Wisp' by some of the country folk in England, 'Jack-o'-Lantern' by others. The true name of this ignited gas is *ignis fatuus*."

The old man smiled. His look at Frank was one of pity. "What a poor young simple-minded, inexperienced person," he thought, and in the voice of a man quoting a passage from Horace he said aloud: "I have seen it on the top of a hill."

"It may be," answered Frank, and, seeing old Pierre's triumphant attitude, he added: "Do you not think that there is a Maker who watches over us? how foolish to think

Pierre suddenly interrupted him: "And Job," he said.

"Oh! that was in the olden times," said Frank; "besides, it's poetic language, you must not take it so literally as you seem to do. Do you know what lies at the bottom of all these superstitions? Ignorance; nothing but the lack of education. Among men of knowledge, nothing of this sort is ever heard of. They do not believe in witches riding on broomsticks. Ah!" he added, seeing Pierre was getting excited; "you believe in witches too?"

"Mr. Mathers," said the old man looking steadily at Frank, "you're a young man, you should not try so to rail at people who have experience; you should not try to make me disbelieve things which I have seen with both my eyes; when you are older, when you have passed through all that I have passed; ah, when you have, as we say proverbially 'dragged the harrow where I have dragged the plough'; then, and only then, will you attempt to remonstrate with elderly people. I think the proper thing for you to do now is to wait till you have gained some experience and not to try and speak about things which you know nothing of."

Frank was astonished at the serious tone in which this little speech was delivered. He began to see how deep-rooted were Pierre's beliefs, but if the difficulties multiplied in his path, his fervour rose also. He had decided to show this man the fallacy of his arguments, and he must accomplish his self-imposed task. He was now very determined; the more so, as he noticed the air of superiority old Pierre assumed.

[Pg 109]

"You have no proofs whatever in support of what you advance," he said, "while I can prove to you that this light seen over or near bogs and sometimes over cemeteries, is nothing but '*ignis fatuus*.' This man found drowned, and all that nonsense, is nothing but what would happen under ordinary circumstances. In a state of intoxication, he walked in the pool and was drowned. Is not that plain enough?"

"The knife covered with blood was the result of some beast cutting its leg with the sharpened edge, every sensible man will acknowledge that; prove to me the contrary, and I will believe you; until then, never.

"And these witches, by the by, you have not told me if you believed in them."

The old man met his gaze defiantly as he answered: "Yes, I do. I do not know if, as you say, they ride on broomsticks; but I'll tell you this: My father was no fibber. He told me one day that a certain woman went at their house from time to time. They never saw her come in at the door like one might see another person do, but she simply fell plump in the middle of the kitchen. She found herself there, none knew how; I do not know whether it was through the ceiling or otherwise, but my father assured me he had seen her come in this fashion more than once."

"Stop," cried Frank, "I never thought it would come to this. It beats all that I have yet heard. And you believe that, Maît Pierre, you who think yourself——"

"My father always spoke the truth," interrupted Pierre, "if a man is not to believe what he has seen, what must he confide in, then?"

[Pg 110]

"You ought to use your reasoning faculties; but, tell me, have you ever been an eye-witness to any of these things?"

"If I've seen any? why, certainly, by the dozen almost. I'll tell you one. I was working some few years ago for a Mr. Fouret. One of his cows having died from milk fever, it was found necessary to replace it. Now old Mrs. X. had two for sale at that time, and knowing that my master wanted to buy one, she offered him hers.

"I must tell you that this woman had the reputation of having the evil eye. Mr. Fouret did not care to refuse her, so he said he would go and see them. He went. When he came back, he told us he would not take them even if Mrs. X. gave them to him for nothing; they were very lean and deformed. So he resolved to risk being bewitched and bought one from Mr. Paslet.

"When he came back to the farm he said to me: 'Pierre, go and fetch the cow which I have bought at Mr. Paslet's farm.'

"All right sir,' answered I, and I started.

"As I was coming back quietly with the beast, whom should I meet but Mrs. X.

"Oh, it's you, Pierre,' she said grinning; 'where have you had that cow from?'

"I explained: 'Master had bought the animal in the morning from Mr. Paslet and had sent me to fetch it.'

"Ah, indeed,' she said, patting the animal; 'she's a fine beast.'

"When I saw her laying her hand on the poor creature, I said to myself, 'she's giving it her.' But what could I do? I said nothing, and the old woman went away.

[Pg 111]

"I had not proceeded more than one hundred yards when the animal began to show signs of illness. However, I managed to lead her to the farm which was not very far. But the beast got worse and worse. Mr. Fouret came to examine her. 'What's the matter with the brute?' he said, 'you've made her walk too fast I'm afraid; she seems to be tired and exhausted.'

"Mr. Fouret,' I responded, 'I came along very slowly, but on the road I met Mrs. X.'

"Did she touch the cow?' he inquired.

"Yes,' I answered.

"What a nuisance,' he exclaimed, and turning to the servant-boy who was there he said: 'take a horse and fetch the vet. as quickly as you possibly can.'

"The veterinary surgeon came. Of course, he was not going to say he did not know what was the matter with the beast, so he said it was—I forget the name now, it was a queer word he said, I know, a name which he was sure we should not remember anyone of us,—and told us to fetch some medicine.

"We gave her the drug. She seemed a little bit better and we left her for the night. In going to have a look at her on the following morning, I found the poor animal dead."

"Well," said Frank, "what proofs have you that it was really this woman who caused your cow to give up the ghost?"

"What proofs?" ejaculated the old man; "well, I think there were proofs enough; but, to be quite sure, Mr. Fouret consulted a white witch. She told him it was an old woman who was jealous of him, and gave my employer a powder to burn. 'You may be certain that the culpable person will come to you, when you have burnt that powder,' she said to him.

[Pg 112]

"Mr. Fouret did as he had been told to do, and Mrs. X. came on the following morning. She said: 'I thought I would call so as to have a look at your new acquisition.'"

"I do not care to hear any more," interrupted Frank; "science and reasoning will in time do away with all this."

It was now time for them to attend to their work. They went. Not one word did they exchange. There seemed to be a gap between them. Old Pierre was vexed at being rebuked by a young man. Frank was in despair.

The next day when they were seated as usual having a chat after dinner, Pierre quietly produced from his pocket the *Gazette de Guernesey*. He had not said a word about superstition during the morning, but silently handed the paper to Frank, pointing with his finger at a paragraph.

Not a word was exchanged. The young man took the paper and read aloud: "Spiritualism. Another convert to spiritualism is reported, the learned ——. He is well known as the able and energetic editor of the ——."

The old man looked at Frank and in a deep voice said: "Is it ignorance?"

"This is a different thing altogether," he responded; "it is not that base superstition about which we were speaking yesterday. Besides, learned people are not always the first to discover trickery."

Then he thought of the superstitious, albeit educated people who frequent the gambling hell at Monte Carlo; and stopped short.

[Pg 113]

Pierre looked at him; "Is it only ignorance?" he again asked.

"Bah," said Frank as he waved his hand with a gesture of supreme contempt; "I don't care what it is, it's very ridiculous and unreasonable."

The old man shook his head. "I believe what I've seen," he said.

Frank waxed hot. "You are then determined to remain in that state of narrow-mindedness, believing in all this nonsense. But, my man, you *must* be miserable."

Again the stolid answer came: "I believe what I've seen."

"Listen," said Frank: "One day, when I was about nine years of age, I was looking at a pig which had been, to all appearances, killed. As I was about to go nearer, the brute jumped down and came running after me. I, in my ignorance, thought it was a dead pig pursuing me, and when my mother told me the contrary, I said as you do: 'I believe what I have seen.'"

Quoth old Pierre: "As you say, it's a different thing altogether."

"Let us go about our work," said Frank; "we are losing our time I fear."

His hope of converting this man was almost extinguished.



"What are my decisions coming to?" he said to himself. "I had once determined to be an inventor, etcetera, and here I am with a face like the tan and tomato-stained hands. When I try to change Maît Pierre's notions, I fail. Notwithstanding, I will not be disheartened. Knowledge is power; if I fail here, I shall not fail everywhere."

Frank Mathers felt himself strong, rather too much so perhaps.

[Pg 114]

It is one of the defects of the self-educated, that they generally imagine themselves much more learned than they really are. Not having anyone to compete with, or a master to show them their imperfections, they rather over-estimate their capacities.

There is also another disadvantage in self-culture. The self-educated man is often only acquainted with the elements of a great many different sciences, but it is seldom that he is thoroughly versed in any single one. There are exceptions to this rule. One is when the student has a decided talent for something, and energy to pursue his studies.

Frank had studied something of almost everything and imagined himself a savant.

From this it must not be inferred that he was uneducated.

But, he lacked that knowledge of the world which is only acquired by mixing with the world.

[Pg 115]

---

## CHAPTER XV.

### DARK DAYS.

---



It was winter, dull winter, when nature rests and green fields are no more.

There was not much work to do now in the greenhouses at "the Rohais."

Frank was one evening taking a walk towards the Côtel Church.

He had some business to settle with his carpenter, who lived near "Woodlands."

Presently, a man who had dogged his steps for some time, exclaimed: "It's you, Mr. Mathers, I thought it was."

Turning round, Frank recognised Jacques, Mr. Rougeant's workman. He thought his heart had stopped beating, so sudden was the thrill of satisfaction that shook its tendrils.

"Yes, it is I," he at last answered; and he shook hands with Jacques as if he had been his most intimate friend.

"He was so glad to see him," he said. "And how are they all at 'Les Marches,'" he inquired.

"Oh, jolly-like," said the man who had boasted that he could speak English; "the squire's in a reg'lar good mood this week."

"Indeed!" said Frank.

"Well, you see, it's no wonder after all; the young Miss's engaged to a young fellow; Tom Soher, I think his name is. I don't like the look o' the chap. He used to drink and there's no sayin'—."

[Pg 116]

He stopped short on perceiving Frank who was leaning against the wall for support; his face of an ashen hue.

Jacques eyed him anxiously. "One'd say you'd be ill," he remarked.

"I don't feel exactly well," said Frank.

"Shall I see you home?"

"No, thank you, I can easily walk there."

"I think I'd better come with you; I know my missus'l be waitin' for me, but I'll come if you think I must."

"No, thank you," again responded Frank; "there are a great many people about—". There! I feel slightly better."

"As you like," said Jacques, who by-the-by was not in the least inclined to accompany the young man.

"I'll go alone," said Frank; "Good-night."

"Good-night, Sir, I hope you'll be better soon," said Jacques, as each one betook himself towards his home.

Frank was completely weighed down with this piece of unexpected and unwelcome news. He did not go to the carpenter's residence; he forgot all about it. He went straight home. How he arrived there, which road he took, which door he entered by, he did not know; but he found himself in his bedroom, seated on a chair and gazing into space in blank despair.

This was the end of everything.

He pictured to himself her lover. He did not know him, but he succeeded in forming in his mind one of the biggest monsters that ever inhabited the globe in the shape of man.

And Adèle; he knew she must have been forced into it by her father. "How she must groan under this yoke. To have to listen to that vicious being with the prospect of one day being his wife." Why had it come to this, why was the world so formed. Ah! the wicked world we live in, the abominable, corrupted world. When would the millennium come. When would all this unhappiness be swept away from the earth's surface.

[Pg 117]

Alas! he would die before that time; so would thousands and millions of others.

What had the world done that it must thus be continually sacrificed. What had he done. Others were happy; surely no one had ever met such a deception before. People had to suffer sometimes, but not such intense, heart-rending suffering as he now endured.

He was full of despair. Before him, there was nothing but darkness. The more he thought over his misfortunes, the more hopeless life seemed to be.

The candle was now nearly burnt out, but he heeded it not. He waved his hand near his face as if to scatter his thoughts. "Why did I rescue him when he was drowning. (He was thinking of Mr. Rougeant.) I risked being pulled into the water, I might have been drowned; and this is the reward." Ah! how humanity must suffer. If there was no joy, no real happiness on this earth, why live, why continue to endure all this. Schopenhauer was quite right when he said life was not worth living. Henceforth, he would be a pessimist. Three cheers for pessimism!

Ah! the wicked world we live in.

The candle had now burnt itself out but the young man remained seated, his hands thrust in his pockets, his eyes gazing at the floor, and his heart in "kingdom come."

[Pg 118]

When the clock struck twelve, he awoke. He had fallen asleep and was a little more composed than before. He undressed and went to bed.

He awoke early in the morning. He was crying. What was the matter with him. It dawned upon him: he was going to have a fit of melancholy.

He felt it, but he was powerless to prevent its intrusion. He was like the man who stands between the rails, and suddenly sees a train advancing at full speed towards him and remains with his eyes riveted on the instrument of his destruction, seemingly powerless to move, till the engine crushes him in its onward course.

When Frank descended to breakfast, old Pierre and his spouse noticed his wan look. "I think master's going mad," said the man to his wife, when Frank was out of the room. "I don't know what ails him, but he seems very pale and strange."

The young man wandered aimlessly. Nothing interested him, not even his books, these companions which he had cherished so much. He tried to find pleasure in them. "If I had something to do, something to occupy my thoughts," he said to himself, "I would be much better. Work is the balm which heals my wounds, it sets me on my feet again. I will work, I will study."

He soon found out that work in itself could not heal his wounds. Then he grew still more despondent. What was the use of working if work did not bring a reward. It was all very well to toil, but to work like a slave, without the prospect of utilizing one's power after having continually striven to acquire it, was discouraging.

He therefore put his books aside and his melancholy grew deeper and deeper.

[Pg 119]

One day he was seized with anxiousness for his soul's future. He had not done what he ought to have done. He greatly frightened Mrs. Merlin, when he entered the house and exclaimed: "I'm lost; I'm lost."

"Don't say that, Mr. Mathers," she said. "You have always been a good man."

"Good!" he exclaimed, his eyes dilated, the muscles of his face working convulsively; "good, yes, for my sake, because I hoped in my selfishness to reap ten times the outlay. Don't you see," he continued, "that I have only worked for my own selfish interest. I have made sacrifices, because I hoped to reap a rich reward. And now, I am well punished; I deserve all this, I certainly do. I have done nothing for others. I have not been altruistic."

The woman stared at him. She knew almost as much about altruism as a dog does about the celestial sciences. After a few moments of silence she spoke: "You have been very good to us, you rescued a man from drowning once at great risk, you——"

"Ha, ha!" he laughed, "fine talk, to come and speak like that to me. I am going to die, and do you hear;" he added in an undertone, catching hold of Mrs. Merlin's arm and terrifying her; "I am afraid, oh, so afraid."

The old woman began to cry. "You must not talk like that," she said, "you really must not. Why don't you pray?"

"Pray! what is the use; no, not now. I am being punished for my sins. I must atone, I must atone."

He continued in this sad state for a few days, weighed down with this strange malady, which, alas, often preys upon our finest intellects.

[Pg 120]

Then, a reaction set in, and he began to improve gradually.

He felt quite well at times, then re-assumed his moody ways; rays of sunshine sometimes darted from behind the clouds. "I wish the sun would disperse the clouds," he sighed.

One evening, when his head was tolerably clear, he was seized with a desire to visit his parents' grave.

Without consulting anyone, he immediately proceeded towards the Foulon. When he came to the iron gate, it was closed. He was bitterly disappointed. By climbing over it, he would risk being impaled on the iron spikes, or otherwise injured.

Presently he thought of the wooden wicket situated a little lower down. He proceeded thither and climbed over it without difficulty. A stream confronted him. He crossed it on a plank thrown across the rill. It was very dark, but he did not think of it. He was alone in this graveyard, but he experienced no fear. He felt happier than he had done for a long time. "Had he not adopted the pessimistic view of life."

He walked straight to the grave where his father and mother lay buried and seated himself near it. Just then, a gentle breeze caused the stately trees surrounding the graveyard to waft their leafy tops to and fro. Nature was rocking itself to sleep.

Even as it slumbered, it now and then heaved a sigh, sympathizing with the lonely man who pondered near his parents' grave.

He soliloquized: "Around me, the dead; beneath that turf, the dead; above me, beyond those glimmering stars, somewhere in that infinity of space, in which man with his very limited understanding loses himself, the departed souls...."

[Pg 121]

Suddenly, he perceived a white form advancing towards him. If hair stands on end, Frank's did. His heart beat at a fearful rate. What could this be? It certainly must be a ghost. "I have laughed at apparitions, but I am now going to be punished for my incredulity," he said to himself.

The ghost moved and came nearer. Frank trembled from head to foot. When he had recovered sufficient courage to scrutinize this form, it suddenly disappeared.

The young man fixed his eyes on the place where the ghost had vanished, for ten minutes; then turned his gaze in another direction. He soon recovered his senses, and fell into a reverie.

Again he soliloquized: "We all travel towards the grave. We all shall one day be like these around me. Why work, why trouble oneself. Why have I taken so much pains about my education? I have been ambitious, I have worried myself, I have been anxious to acquire wealth and fame. Here, the rich and the poor, the famous, the unfamous, and the infamous, the ignorant and the educated, are resting in the same ground, surrounded by the same scenery. I have been foolish to worry myself thus.

"Do I not daily meet ignorant and uncivilised people who live a life of contentment and happiness? Not caring for the future, not aspiring after getting on in life, living from hand to mouth, they manage to show a radiant countenance.

"Is ignorance bliss? Perhaps, in one sense; still I would not be without education.

"What must I do to be happy? I will shut mine eyes to all ambition, I will live a quiet life. Alas! even as I pronounce these words, my heart belies them. I cannot annihilate the acute brain which tortures me. Since all my hopes of happiness seem to shun me, I will continue in my new religion—pessimism; and when the hour of death comes, I will smile."

[Pg 122]

He thought of the hopeful days he had once known. He rose from his seat, cast a farewell glance on his parents' grave and proceeded down the gravel walk. He then thought of the ghost which he had seen, and felt a vague sense of fear. "I am no coward," he muttered as he straightened himself and tried to assume an air of

indifference. But he felt nervous. He glanced anxiously behind him every other moment, and increased his pace.

He perceived, among the trees, near the gate over which he had to pass—a light.

It was as if a thunderbolt had passed through his body.

He looked more attentively. Yes, there was a light, a strange, fantastic light, dancing amongst the trees. His feverish brain caused him to lose all power of reasoning.

"What is this?" he said to himself. He felt his heart beating heavily against the walls of its prison as if trying to escape. His legs seemed to give way under him. A big lump stuck in his throat.

"It is only an *ignis fatuus*," he said to himself. "No, it cannot be, it does not burn with a bluish light. Why this terror, why this fear; it must be the *feu bellanger*."

The light changed. It was approaching.

A sense of horripilation stole over him. A cold perspiration bathed him.

[Pg 123]

The light changed again. It really receded this time, but to Frank's agitated mind, it was simply one of its tactics to induce him to come nearer.

He suddenly bethought himself of the stream. His terror reached its climax. "Ah! there it was, waiting for him to pass that way, and then with a shout of triumph, it would plunge him in."

He remembered old Pierre's words: "Wait till he gets caught." How he wished he had not mocked him so. Perhaps this *feu bellanger* was preparing to revenge itself.

Again, the light approached. It came nearer to him than it had yet come. The supreme moment had arrived. He already felt himself being dipped in the stream, with no one to rescue him. Ah! the horror of being killed by one of the devil's angels.

Here he remembered Pierre Merlin's advice: "Turn your coat sleeves inside out and put on your garment so." Without a moment's hesitation he divested himself of his coat. As he was turning the sleeves, the object of his dread disappeared. A sigh of relief escaped him.

In a minute, he had bounded over the stream and gate into the road. He put on his coat, and was proceeding towards his home, when he perceived the cause of his fears. It was simply a ray of light coming through the windows of the guardian's house. He could see it now. A woman was standing on a chair with a small lamp in her hand seeking for something on a shelf. As she moved the lamp, the reflection on the trees moved also.

He began to laugh. "The *feu bellanger*, forsooth. How old Pierre would have smiled if he had beheld him taking off his coat. But the ghost, *that* was what puzzled him."

[Pg 124]

The ghost came bounding over the wicket and passed by him.

It was a white dog.

This adventure had taught him a great lesson. What could he say now, he, the educated and civilized young man? No wonder if the people who had been accustomed to hear strange tales from their earliest infancy, believed in them.

He went home, determined to deal leniently with Pierre in the future.

"I must have been in a dreadful state of mind to have acted thus," he thought. "I have done more than I ever meant to do."

When he came home, he was quite cheerful. He did not say that he had seen a ghost, neither did he tell the spouses Merlin that he had nearly been attacked by the *feu bellanger*.

Pierre noticed his joyous look. He gave a wink to his wife as if to say: "He's taken a glass or two."

It was not so; the shock which he had received had completely dislodged the last trace of melancholy.

[Pg 125]

---

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SHADOW AND SUNSHINE.

---



hat was Adèle doing? She was not engaged. It was one of Jacques' inventions, or rather deductions, from what he saw.

She was being gradually drawn towards the abyss, where her soul would lose all that it possessed that was divine, and into which, to all

appearances, she was finally to plunge, pushed by an unseen hand, drawn thither by a magic power.

She shuddered. After all her dreams of happiness, Fate had condemned her to this. How often had she pictured herself, the possessor of true love, streams of happiness flowing into her heart. She had formed a high ideal of life; the present did not satisfy her. Hope had sustained her, and that hope, that idea of a pure, refined, elevated and noble life, chastened by love, was now dwindling away and she seemed destined to join the great multitude of ordinary beings.

Still, she hesitated. She dared not trust her future happiness to a man for whom she barely felt friendship.

One day, her father, being in a better mood than was his wont, told her that she ought to make up her mind about whom she wanted to marry.

"It is not my intention to marry young," she said; "I want you to leave me quiet for a whole year."

"Nonsense;" replied her father, "but if you promise me that in a year you will be Tom Soher's betrothed, I shall be satisfied."

[Pg 126]

"I cannot promise you that," she replied; "but I shall tell you what I intend to do; perhaps I shall never marry."

"Tom Soher is a sensible man," said her father, satisfying himself with her answer. "When he was younger, he did drink a little too much perhaps, but he is altogether reformed now. We must not blame people who try to lead a new life. I know he can still drink a few glasses of cider, but what do you want? Was not cider made to be drunk? For my part, I prefer a man like him to half-a-dozen of those white-faced teetotalers. They look as if they had just been dug up—like a fresh parsnip."

"I think Tom Soher would do much better to abstain from alcohol altogether, especially as he has been one of its slaves," remarked Adèle.

Pretending not to hear her, or thinking this remark unworthy of notice, the farmer went on with unusual fervour: "Marry him, Adèle; save our family and his from ruin and disgrace, and make your old dad happy. I will teach him to work and to be thrifty; we shall get along splendidly."

There was some more talk, and the father went about his work.

Adèle had now a year's liberty before her. She determined to make use of it. Recently, upon reflection, she had begun to entertain doubts as to her suspicions about Frank. "He might have been visiting some dear relative's grave;" she said to herself. She again began to hope, and her spirits rose.

Three months of the year's truce had elapsed; as yet, she had learnt nothing. She looked with terror at the abyss opened before her. She shuddered at the thought that there were only nine months left. How rapidly time seemed to be gliding.

[Pg 127]

About this time, Frank Mathers began to experience a dull sensation in the region of the heart. He did not attach any importance to it at first, but as time wore on, the fluttering increased. He grew anxious. For about a week, his health remained the same, when one day, after dinner, he was quite alarmed to feel his heart thumping vigorously against his chest. "What is this coming to?" he said to himself.

The heart resumed its normal state. Frank tried to satisfy himself that it was only a partial indisposition. A week passed. The disease had increased rapidly. He was very anxious now. Sometimes, he would stop his work and listen. He felt his heart distinctly beating against the walls of his chest. He placed his hand over the region of the heart. How this organ thumped and heaved. His nervousness was intense. He quickly unbuttoned his garments and looked at his chest. His heart seemed to be trying to burst through its prison walls.

He gazed on it for a time, then buttoned his clothes and walked to and fro trying to pacify the agitated organ. In the midst of his walk, he stopped; mechanically, his hand was placed over his heart, and he listened, anxious, agitated, and holding his breath.

That same evening, when he was falling asleep, he suddenly jumped up in bed. His heart had given a heavy abnormal beat, and was now quietly working, as if ignorant and innocent of everything.

[Pg 128]

After a while, he fell asleep. Next day, he was worse than ever.

"Am I going to die?" he said to himself. "Life is sweet, it is hard to die so young, when before me lies the future which I would fain penetrate. I should like to accomplish some task before I depart from this world."

Frank! where art thou come to? Didst not thou say, only a few weeks back: "I will smile when the hour of death comes," and now thou art craving for life, and thou art

shrinking from death.

Frank Mathers thought that his complaint was *Angina Pectoris*. He consulted a book on Pathology. He learnt that even with this terrible disease a person might, by careful living, attain a certain age.

This did not satisfy him. He consulted a doctor. When he was seated in the medical man's waiting-room, it seemed to him that the doctor was going to pronounce his doom. He fancied he could already hear him: "You may, by taking care of yourself, live another year or two."

The door of the room in which he was, opened. His heart gave a great leap. "I wish you to auscultate me," he said, addressing the doctor who entered the room.

Dr. Buisson looked at him with a scrutinizing glance as he replied: "Very well, sir; step in the next room."

Frank followed the doctor into the room adjoining.

The medical man proceeded to auscultate his patient. After he had completed his examination, Frank looked at him inquiringly. "*Angina Pectoris*?" he questioned anxiously.

"No."

[Pg 129]

A sigh of relief escaped him.

Quoth Dr. Buisson: "You have already sighed a great deal too much. You have overtaxed your strength. You must not live on passion, but you ought to take life more easily, young man. Rest and cheerfulness, with a few bottles of physic, will put you on your legs again. Stimulants would benefit you."

"I do not wish to drink any alcohol," interrupted Frank.

"Who talks about alcohol? Do without stimulants. You do not need them."

"I thought——" began Frank.

The grave voice of the doctor interrupted him. "Young man, you must be careful about your diet; eat slowly—masticate well. Pass into the dispensing room."

"What an odd man," thought Frank, as he wended towards his home.

He passed the next few weeks resting nearly all the time, taking very little exercise and a great deal of physic. He gradually grew better, his nervousness ceased, his heart resumed its normal condition, it palpitated no more.

He tried to be cheerful, but he still had great faith in pessimism.

[Pg 130]

---

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE EFFECTS OF A SERMON.

---



ne Sunday, contrary to his habit, Frank betook himself to one of the country churches. He had several reasons for doing so. He wanted to hear a French sermon; he wanted to be quiet, away from the world, etcetera.

As he went on his way, he dropped into a none too pleasant reverie.

"What a queer animal man is," he thought; "what a study. It is true that 'the proper study of mankind is man.'

"But, the more one meditates on humanity, the more one becomes disgusted with its artificialness and bad taste. People flock after trifles, they are devoid of refinement, a conjuror will have an immense number of admirers, a third-rate music-hall will fill, even to suffocation, while the man of genius, unless he be rich, often remains unnoticed. He who produces most exquisite poetry, soaring high above his fellow countrymen, carrying them out of life's dusty ways into a pure atmosphere, dies of starvation in a garret."

He arrived at the church of St. ——. He entered the sanctuary and seated himself in a place from which he would be able to see the minister.

"This is a very comfortable position," he said to himself.

He began to examine the people as they took their seats. Very different from one another were those who entered. The men took their seats with a deal of looking round and lifting of coat-tails. They finally settled down, drawing a deep breath as they did so, as if the act of sitting was a prodigious effort.

[Pg 131]

Frank was, with his accustomed curiosity, examining an old woman who trudged in, wrapped up in an enormous shawl, when a lady touched him lightly on the shoulder.

He turned round.

"Sir, this is my pew," she said, "you may go in any of those," pointing to the left.

"I beg your pardon," said Frank, and he hastily left his seat and went in one of the pews which the lady had pointed out to him. Then he remembered that in his haste, he had forgotten to take his hat with him. He proceeded to fetch it. The lady who was occupying the pew with her husband and daughter handed him his hat, smiling as she did so.

"She might have allowed me to remain where I was," thought the young man. He went on thinking: "Perhaps, they have some superstition about worshipping in their own pew."

He fancied everyone of the countryfolks was superstitious. He wondered if Adèle believed in these things. A sudden pang passed through him, as he thought of her. His brow clouded as he recollected Jacques' words: "The young Miss's engaged to a young fellow."

The minister entered the church. No one rose. No formalities of any kind. He took his place quietly. The service began.

When the sermon came, instead of the old minister who had read the prayers, Frank was astonished to see a young man, who, directly he stepped into the pulpit, impressed him most favourably. He had a very intelligent face and a cheerful countenance.

[Pg 132]

He took for his text the words of St. Paul: "Rejoice evermore."

He began: "There is a class of people, the followers of Schopenhauer, who declare that life is not worth living.

"They say this world is almost the worst possible place we could live in, and that, if it were a shade worse, it would be impossible to live in it, and people would willingly end their existence. This doctrine is called 'pessimism.'"

Frank felt very interested. Every word which the preacher said, seemed directly addressed to him.

The young minister continued: "There is another class of pessimists who have never thought of following this Schopenhauer, but who, nevertheless, find life a burden and this world almost an inferno."

---

"This class of people (the pessimists) pull long faces and go about their work sighing. They see everything turned upside down but it is they who are cross. 'Life is not worth living,' they say, 'this world is a miserable dwelling place;' but it is they who cause their lives to be not worth living, who make themselves miserable."

---

"Some of them who profess to be good, do a great deal of harm to Christianity; more than is perhaps generally imagined. People examine them and nod their heads. 'Christianity is a failure,' they say."

---

"Help to put down Schopenhauer's wretched doctrines. Look at the bright side of life."

[Pg 133]

"You will meet with difficulties, but do not despond; to every cloud, there is a silver lining."

He declared he was an optimist. He invited his hearers, one and all to adopt the optimistic view of life, and help to bring the kingdom of God upon earth. He pointed out the causes which should help to make us cheerful, beautiful nature, healthy mental and physical occupations and distractions....

He told them to remember that time would be followed by eternity; to hopefully prepare for the life to come, and to help others to do the same.

Once out of the church, Frank felt very much puzzled. Both the discourse and the manner in which it had been delivered, had impressed him. What would he do? It certainly was a matter for consideration. Was there a silver lining to the cloud that was floating around him? Would he hope? Would he, in spite of everything, try and be cheerful?

When he came home, he had formed a decision. He would try. He would answer the invitation of this young clergyman, who seemed so full of hope and joy.

The preacher had said: If you feel—as you will feel—that you are unable to fight unaided; pray. Frank prayed. It was not a request in which the lips took a very active part, but he poured forth his whole soul through his heart, to Him who could and would help those who were unable to help themselves.

When he had finished, he felt quite equipped for the fight. For he would have to battle.

"I must try to be cheerful, I must set aside all my gloomy thoughts," he said to himself. "I must endeavour to change my whole former view of the world. I feel strong. Welcome optimism. Three cheers for optimism."

[Pg 134]

Young man, thou art a new convert, and, like every new convert, thou art enthusiastic.

[Pg 135]

---

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### SUCCESS AFTER SUCCESS.

---



aving adopted the optimistic view of life, Frank found that it was not easy to eradicate his dismal turn of mind.

He fought bravely. It was not his first fight. He had been, when younger, passionate and a trifle ill-tempered, but he had, while still in his teens, successfully overcome these defects.

He often thought of Adèle. He dared not go near "Les Marches." He knew full well that the sight of the house in which he had first known love, would arouse in him sentiments of jealousy and grief; so he satisfied himself with continuing to work at the reformation of his character. Each victory which he achieved made him feel stronger and wiser, and every day added to his success.

Let us return to Adèle Rougeant. Six out of the twelve months' truce had now elapsed.

Tom's visits at Les Marches were few and far between.

Adèle had chanced to overhear a part of the conversation which took place between her father and cousin, after she had asked the former for a year's peaceful solitude.

Quoth Mr. Rougeant: "You will have to wait another year."

"Indeed!" said his nephew.

"Adèle says she wishes to think the matter over."

"Oh!" said Tom, biting his nails; with which operation he was very familiar—"a year will soon pass away."

[Pg 136]

"Yes," answered the uncle.

Adèle's business took her to another room, and she had too much good-breeding to stay and listen. Eavesdropping was not in her line. She laughed all to herself. Liberty was so sweet.

When she went out, she could listen with more than ordinary delight to the songs of the birds. Some were singing with everchanging variety, others were somewhat more laboriously endeavouring to imitate the whistle of the farmer-boys.

Adèle Rougeant sympathized with birds; she felt attracted towards them, for she too was a bird. She had been, for a time, caged; but now she was perfectly free, for six more months at least. She trusted to be out of the difficulty by then. Why; she did not know; something within her seemed to assure her that it would be so.

When, a week afterwards, Tom Soher was taken ill, she thought of that strange certainty which she had had. Was he going to die? Something within her said: "If he could, I then should be saved." Adèle grew angry with herself for wishing such an abominable thing. She dispersed the wicked thought which had formed into a wish, with all the energy which she was capable of displaying.

To think that she had had such a desire. She was ashamed of herself.

Next day, when she heard that Tom's condition was worse than ever, involuntarily her heart leapt with joy. How sinful is the heart of man!

Adèle's better nature rose against these feelings. Finally she overcame them. She tried to pity her cousin and partly succeeded in doing so. When she fancied herself freed from him, she felt relieved; when she pictured herself dying in his place, she immediately pitied him. And she put this question to herself: "Is sympathy a virtue?" No. Most often, when people sympathize with others they say: "Just imagine if we were in their place; they really think for themselves."

[Pg 137]

This was now her view of the matter. Perhaps it was not quite correct, but there was a great deal of truth in it.

Tom Soher was not to die this time. The crisis passed. He rallied almost as rapidly as



he had lost strength.

Mr. Rougeant visited him daily. His daughter listened to the news of Tom's recovery, with attention. The farmer was pleased. "She takes more interest in him than she cares to show;" he said to himself.

One fine afternoon, in summer, Adèle, whose spirits were as bright as the weather, was sitting in a chair—thinking. Her thoughts flew hither and thither. They were full of bright hope. She sat where she was for nearly one hour, her head full of vague thoughts, aspirations after perfect womanhood.

As her thoughts rambled, she recalled to mind a flower and fruit show that was to take place that afternoon in the Vegetable Markets.

"I think I shall go," she said to herself.

She spoke to her father about it. He answered her not unkindly: "I believe you would travel twenty miles to see a flower; if you wish to go, you may."

She dressed herself in a dainty costume, set out, and arrived in St. Peter-Port just as the clock of the Town Church struck five. Going to the market, she paid the entrance fee, and proceeded leisurely to examine the flowers.

[Pg 138]

While she was doing so, Frank Mathers entered the exhibition, utterly unconscious of her being there. He was walking about in the crowd, which, as evening approached, was getting thicker and thicker, when he perceived Adèle intently bent upon examining the cut flowers.

He was quite upset. When he had recovered sufficiently to think; "She is alone, why is not her lover with her," he mused. He could not unravel this mystery.

Hope sprang within him; he shook it off. "He will be back presently," he said to himself; "she is waiting for him while pretending to examine the flowers."

He gazed upon her with admiration, unheeding the throng that continually jostled him.

Suddenly, he was startled by a burst of laughter behind him. He turned round to ascertain its cause.

Two burly fellows who were watching him, were having a merry time of it at his expense.

He moved from his place and walked away, passing quite close to Adèle, who did not notice him. He stopped a few paces from her, watching her narrowly all the time.

She looked up, saw him, recognised him, and nodded. He raised his hat; then, a strange delicacy of feeling overcoming him, he walked away.

Adèle saw him go and felt stung. Why had he not spoken to her? he might have done so. She had been on the point of advancing towards him, and he seemed to have deliberately avoided her.

"I was not mistaken when I fancied he loved another one," she said to herself. In spite of that, she walked in a contrary direction to him, hoping to meet him, a thing which she could not fail to do if they both kept advancing in contrary directions. She did not stop to think that he would perhaps pass haughtily by her. Love is blind.

[Pg 139]

Like the two gentlemen who circumnavigated the globe, the two young people met. Frank inquired after Mr. Rougeant's health, and made a few remarks about the exhibition. He always expected to see her intended appear on the scene. Finally, he ventured to ask: "Are you quite alone?" "Yes, quite," she answered.

They walked together for fully one hour, examining the flowers and fruit. "Is not this a beautiful specimen of the Dahlia?" Adèle asked, pointing to a flower of that name.

"I am afraid I do not possess the necessary qualifications to form an opinion," he said; "I have not studied botany."

"I think you would find the study very captivating," she said; "our little island contains quite a number of beautiful specimens. There are a great many hard names to learn, but I feel certain that you would soon overcome that difficulty."

"You have a rather high opinion of my intellectual powers," he said; "I feel quite flattered. For the present, I will abide by your decisions. The flowers that you will praise, I shall call beautiful; those that you will condemn, I shall call ugly."

"I shall not condemn any," said she, "all flowers are beautiful to my eyes, only some are more perfect than others."

"You love flowers?" he questioned.

"Immensely, they are almost my constant companions; I should like to possess the

[Pg 140]

whole of this collection," said Adèle.

"All to yourself. Is it not a trifle selfish?" he said, looking at her with a pair of laughing blue eyes.

"Perhaps it is. Look at this beautiful collection of ferns." She began to name them. "This one on the left is *Adiantum Capillus Veneris*, or *Maiden Hair*, a rare European species; this one is *Adiantum Pedantum*, of American origin, and that one behind there, which is partly hidden, is *Adiantum Cuneatum*."

"I will not learn botany," he said; "you have quite frightened me with all those Latin names; when I wish to know the name of some plant, I shall come and ask you."

"I shall be delighted if I can be of any service to you," she said ingenuously. Frank thought these words were significant, but they were not.

Adèle was anxious to get home early. Frank saw "Les Marches" that evening with hopeful eyes.

Afterwards, they often met. One day, Tom Soher, who was now completely cured, came face to face with his cousin Adèle, who was accompanied by Frank. He stopped short, looked hard at his cousin, then resumed his walk.

When Tom was a little way off, Frank said to Adèle: "What a queer fellow, one would think he was insane." "He is a cousin of mine," she said.

"Ah! doubtless he was surprised at seeing you in such company."

"Why?" she questioned.

"Perhaps he is afraid of losing caste," said Frank, anxious to know the cause of Tom's sullen countenance.

Adèle laughed; "Losing caste!" she said, "the idea is preposterous."

[Pg 141]

"Miss Rougeant," said Frank, suddenly becoming grave, "do you want to oblige me?"

She looked up. "Of course I do," she replied.

"And will you answer my question?" he continued.

She looked down. "What can he mean?" she said inly. The twilight partly hid the deep blush that suffused her cheek.

He noticed her embarrassment and hastily spoke: "I was going to say this. Some time ago, I heard that you were engaged to a young man named Tom Soher. Would you be kind enough to explain me the riddle. But, you need not do so, if you do not feel inclined to."

Her manner suddenly changed. She had imagined that he had something of far greater importance to ask her. She replied: "I have never been engaged to him; you must have heard false news."

"Probably," he said, "it was Old Jacques who told me so."

"Ah, I see," said she, "he saw my cousin coming home to visit us rather often, and he invented that little piece of news. It was he—Tom Soher—whom we met just now, and who scrutinized us so." Then Adèle told him all about her father's intentions. She tried to look bright, but Frank saw what she endeavoured to conceal: a painful contraction of the forehead at times. When she had finished, she asked smilingly: "What do you think of my father's mode of procedure?"

Frank looked at her anxiously. "I hope it will never be," he said.

"Indeed!"

"Because," he continued, "I should be extremely grieved to see you forced into an union without love."

[Pg 142]

"How do you know that it would be such an one?" she asked.

"Because," responded he, "when you told me about your father's plans, I saw your face. If there is any truth in physiognomy, you recoil with horror at the prospect of one day marrying Tom Soher."

She changed the subject of the conversation and nothing more was said about it that evening.

Going home; Frank thought of the difficulties that were rising before him. He soliloquized: "It is always the same old story; a greedy, avaricious, grasping father, sacrificing his daughter's happiness for the sake of his pride. But it must not be. I can and will save her from such a terrible fate."

He was full of indignant wrath against her father. "To think that she shudders at the thought of it," he muttered.

Meanwhile, Tom Soher was pondering heavily. He was in a terrible passion. When he entered his father's house, he wore an angry look. He walked straight upstairs without even partaking of supper. His mother and sister who were downstairs laughed. The young man was not much of a favourite at home.

Tom sat for a long time on his bed, his face covered with perspiration, his limbs agitated. He was not yet very strong after his illness, and the shock which he had received had completely upset him.

He meditated a plan of revenge. A dozen ideas struck him, but none seemed good enough. Finally, he thought of one, which, if carried out, would completely crush his detestable rival.

[Pg 143]

---

## CHAPTER XIX.

### TOM'S INTERVIEW WITH MRS. VIDOUX.

---

**F**ive minutes' walk from the "Prenoms," there might once be seen a small, badly built, one-storeyed cottage, the walls of which were built of stone, with clay serving instead of mortar. In the walls, were three small windows, opening like French windows. They were of different sizes, contained numerous small rectangular panes of glass, and were situated irregularly; two in front of, and one behind the house.

Inside, the walls were white-washed, the floor was of clay, the ceiling was black with smoke. One of the two rooms served as a bedroom, while the other one was badly fitted up to resemble a kitchen.

A wretchedly thatched roof, surmounted by a single stone chimney, covered the whole.

Situated behind this hovel, was a small piece of land called a garden. In it grew cabbages, potatoes, fruits and weeds; the latter predominating.

In this cottage, there lived an old woman, whose age none seemed to know. The fact that she never attended divine service, coupled with the tales of her being in the habit of attending the witches' sabbath, was enough to make her pass amongst her superstitious neighbours as a being possessed of supernatural powers.

She was aware of this, and consequently avoided, as far as it was practicable, having anything to do with her species.

At first she had felt very angry at her countrymen's insinuations, and almost wished she did possess supernatural powers; but gradually she had cooled down, and now she was indifferent.

[Pg 144]

Mrs. Vidoux—such was the appellation of this woman—was not attractive. Her face was of a colour much resembling Vandyke Brown. It was a woman's face, yet it resembled a man's, not excepting the whiskers, which seemed to grow vigourously, as it fertilized by the dirt which her uncleanly habits allowed to accumulate on her face.

She had but two companions; they were cats. She very often ate limpets (*Patella Vulgata*). When she descended to the beach to collect the shell fish she took exactly one hundred.

A proof that she could reckon up to one hundred.

Arrived home, she cooked her limpets, gave twenty to each of her cats, and reserved sixty for herself.

A proof that she had gastronomic tendencies.

There was but one young man to whom she spoke freely.

One evening, this man tumbled near her doorstep. He was intoxicated. She took him inside, laid him on her own bed, and when he had slept and sobered, she gave him a cup of tea and escorted him to his home. Ever since, they had been friends.

This man's name was Tom Soher.

We have seen that an idea had struck him which he intended to carry out. He, too, believed in Mrs. Vidoux's power of bewitching.

So the day following his unpleasant discovery, Tom Soher directed his steps towards the old woman's cottage.

[Pg 145]

He knocked at the door. No one answered. "She must be in the garden," he said to himself. He accordingly went round the back of the house and espied her, laboriously occupied in trying to dig a few parsnips.

"Good morning, Mrs. Vidoux," he said; then perceiving her useless efforts, he took the spade from her bony hands, and dug up a few of the esculent roots.

"Thank you very much," said the old woman, leaning heavily on her walking-stick.

"I wonder, why she, who possesses such magic powers, does not make those parsnips fly out of the ground without even touching them," thought Tom.

Then a conversation followed between them.

"It's fine weather," said Tom, feeling embarrassed about the introduction of his subject.

"Beautiful."

"You have a great deal of trouble to work as you do, cultivating your own vegetables?"

"Yes, but I cannot afford to buy some."

"Don't you feel lonely at times?"

"No, I am accustomed to solitude."

"You did me a good turn once."

"I am glad of it."

"Yes, I shall always remember it."

"I am happy to see that you don't forget, you are the only sensible man in this parish."

"That's praising me rather too much, I'm sure I don't deserve it, but what I think I deserve less is the nasty fix in which I now am."

"You are in a fix?"

"You know my cousin, Adèle Rougeant?"

"Miss Rougeant, let me see—oh—yes, I knew her once, but I am afraid I should not recognise her now, she must be a fine lady by this time."

[Pg 146]

"Fine; she's simply charming."

"I should think so; I don't doubt you at all, Mr. Soher."

"There is a young man who is paying his attentions to her."

"He is very fortunate."

"That does not suit me. I intended to marry her."

"You! her cousin."

"Why not?"

"I don't know, only it seemed improbable."

"This fellow stands in my way."

"Of course, you shall have to try and supplant him."

"That's impossible, she's too fond of him."

"Well, I suppose you must give her up then."

"I don't mean to."

"What do you intend doing?"

"Can't you guess? Thrust him out of my way forcibly. Either he or I must sink."

"You look strong enough to fight a giant."

"I do not mean to fight him."

"Are you afraid of him? Is he stronger than you?"

"He looks rather too much of an athlete for me; I thought that perhaps you would help me."

"I! help you."

"Yes."

"How?"

Tom looked anxiously round, then said in a low tone: "I must get rid of him, I must."

"Yes."

"And you can help me a great deal."

"I will do anything for you."

"Well, will you settle him?"

"What do you mean?"

"Make him jump, of course."

"Make him jump!"

"Yes; you know, bewitch him."

Mrs. Vidoux suddenly became erect, her eyes were fixed on Tom with an expression that made him recoil, but before he had time to get out of her way, she had raised her walking-stick high above her head with both her hands and brought it to bear with all her strength on Tom's head.

The blow was by no means a slight one. Tom staggered and fell. Without even pretending to notice him the old woman walked towards her dwelling. He soon rallied, and in less time than it had probably ever been done before, he cleared the fence and vaulted in the road. He went home, swearing that he would avenge himself, not of Mrs. Vidoux, but of his cousin.

Next morning, he decided to tell his uncle all that he knew. He had not dared to do it before for fear of offending his cousin; but now, he acted in a blind fury.

He had a great deal of confidence in his uncle. He knew the enormous influence which he exercised over his daughter. Mr. Rougeant had once told him that with a single look he could make her tremble, and that she would as soon think of refusing him as of refusing to grow older.

Tom Soher smiled when he thought of his uncle's demeanour upon hearing the news which he had to impart.

How he was to incite him. He must make his wrath rise to the highest pitch. If he could go at "Les Marches" when his cousin was gone and set his uncle to watch for their return, what a scene, what a spectacle to laugh at; even as he thought of it now he could not help laughing.

[Pg 147]

---

## CHAPTER XX.

### TOM'S VISIT TO HIS UNCLE.

---



Tom Soher was now constantly on the watch to see if he might catch his uncle alone. He was soon satisfied on that account.

One evening, he saw Adèle come out of the farm-house. He hid himself and let her go by, then he went towards "Les Marches."

He walked straight in, and was not surprised to see his uncle busily engaged cleaning carrot seed.

Tom was in such a state of excitement and rage, that he hardly knew what he was saying.

"Good evening, uncle," he said, "busy?"

"Good evening, Tom," was the reply, with the addition: "Yes, you know the French proverb: 'Do not lose a single hour, since you are not certain of a minute.'"

"Quite right uncle; shall I help you?"

"No, thank you, now that you are here, we shall talk, and I'll do that job to-morrow."

The farmer fetched a mug of cider and placed it on the table between them. Tom was delighted.

"I am glad that you are here," quoth Mr. Rougeant. "It is not that I generally care for visitors, but you are always welcome. Besides, Adèle is gone and we shall pass the evening agreeably."

"That's what I thought, uncle."

Mr. Rougeant looked, at his nephew and wondered what ailed him.

"Did you know she was gone?" he asked, and added: "Perhaps you met her down the road."

"No; is she gone?" asked Tom.

[Pg 148]

[Pg 149]

Said the farmer inly: "Is the fellow mad?" aloud; "Yes; she is gone to a concert."

"Where?" questioned the nephew.

"I don't know, I did not ask her."

"You let her go all alone when it is dark!"

"Yes; she's not particularly timid. She is so fond of music, poor girl, I did not care to refuse her, and, as she has fallen in with my views, or very nearly so, I must allow her a little freedom."

"Perhaps she has a companion," said Tom.

"No; she says she prefers going alone; it will not be for long, however; in another month she will, I hope, be your betrothed."

Tom felt a pang of vexation run through him. He was ready to explode, but succeeded in showing a good exterior and said jokingly: "Suppose she came accompanied by some young fellow."

"She never would dare to do so."

"I would not say so if I were you, uncle; it's not a good sign when a young girl is always out like that. Haven't you noticed that she very often goes out in the evening lately?"

The old man's suspicions were beginning to be aroused. "I had not even thought of it," he said "but, indeed, it's as you say; she has been going out often lately."

"I hope there is no one supplanting me," said his nephew.

"You need not fear, Tom—pass me the mug."

They both drank out of the same coarse vessel, and Tom, who was warming up, continued: "I have strange presentiments, uncle; when I went to school, I remember having read in an English book about, 'Coming events casting their shadows before.' Now, just as I met Miss Rougeant this evening, I saw a cat cross the road. Now, you know as well as I do, that it means discord betwixt her and me."

[Pg 150]

"This sounds very strange," said the farmer, "but I thought you told me you had not seen her."

"Did I? really, I hardly knew what I was doing." And, desirous of finding an excuse for his singular behaviour, he added in the most dejected tone imaginable: "I have a rival."

"What do you mean?" fairly howled the farmer.

"I mean," replied Tom, in the most wretched tone he could assume; "I mean that my cousin loves another fellow, an Englishman, who has not a single penny which he can call his own, a wretched cur, a beggarly fortune-hunter. I fancy I can see him. He is one of those fellows who walk bearing all their fortunes on their backs. He was dressed in faultless evening dress; light kid gloves, patent leather boots, and a tall silk hat." (This was all false.) "If I am not mistaken, this fellow has not a particularly bright character."

The farmer was looking at Tom. His lips were apart, his teeth closed, his eyes shone with an ominous light. He did not say a word. Tom continued: "Ah! your fortune will soon be gone to the dogs, all the money that you have honestly earned, that you have had so much trouble to scrape together, will disappear in the twinkling of an eye, and your ruined daughter will have to end her days in the hospital at the Castel."

"Never, never;" shouted the farmer.

"And I, who meant to attend to your business," said Tom; "I, who was going to work your farm; I, who meant to save our family from ruin and you from the shame that will necessarily fall partly on you as a member of that family; I, who am her cousin and who would have done anything and everything for her, I am put aside as worthless stuff."

[Pg 151]

"Oh!" groaned the farmer; "Do you know him?" he asked.

"I have seen him but once, I do not know where he lives."

"Do you think he will accompany her this evening?"

"Certainly, that's why she has gone out."

"Oh! the dog—pass me the mug."

Tom gave him the mug. The farmer took a long pull and handed it to his nephew who drank so well that he completely emptied it, and afterwards said: "We ought to lie in wait for their arrival and attack the ninny."

"That's what I'll do, and—" clenching his fists—"he'll be lucky if he escapes."

"You ought to give him a lesson which he won't forget soon."

"I ought to, still, when one comes to think of it, he might have me flung in prison for assault."

"You wait till he is alone, then you can settle him."

"If I were sentenced to a term of imprisonment, my reputation would be ruined. However, I'm master of my daughter, I will give this young fellow a good shaking, and, as for her; I shall see."

"I shall be hiding behind the hedge; if you require any help, I will give it you."

"I think I can frighten him alone—my daughter marry one of those white-faced spendthrifts, why my throat dries up at the thought of it;—pass me the mug."

[Pg 152]

Tom did as he was requested, feeling very uneasy. The farmer was about to drink, but he exclaimed: "Why, its empty."

"Indeed," said Tom, "let me see; so it is, I was in such a state of mind that I did not know I had drunk all."

"Never mind," said his uncle, "I will fetch some more." And he proceeded towards the cellar.

Tom chuckled all to himself, "What a splendid piece of fun; I knew him, he's the man to act."

Mr. Rougeant came back with the mug brimming. The conversation continued to flow, so did the cider. The men were getting excited.

"It's time for us to go out and choose a hiding-place," said Tom.

"Yes, let us go," said his uncle.

They went out. The farmer hid himself behind a hedge, Tom went opposite him on the other side of the road also taking advantage of the cover which a hedge afforded him. They waited. Not a breath of wind disturbed the grass or brambles, not a word was exchanged between the men on the watch. The air was stiff, but they felt it not. The cider which they had drunk kept them warm.

Not one of them knew exactly how they were to operate. Tom counted on his uncle and Mr. Rougeant thought he would act according to circumstances.

"They will never come," said Tom to himself. He stretched himself at full length on the grass. In less than five minutes he was sleeping soundly.

[Pg 153]

---

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE ENCOUNTER.

---



he two young people were returning from the concert that had been given in St. Julian's Hall. They were walking. It was a beautiful evening. Not a breath of wind, not a cloud in the sky. Both nature and humanity slumbered. A deep silence prevailed along the lane in which the young couple were walking.

'Twas a charming spot, these lanes, bordered on either side by high hedges of stone and earth, on which grew furze and grass, while here and there, a solitary primrose— it was the month of March,—was bending its slender stalk, loaded as it was with dew.

Conversation is an art. So is silence. The latter is even less known than the former.

Both the young people were now silent as they proceeded towards "Les Marches," but it was a silence which spoke. They knew each other's thoughts, one heart spoke to the other; they were both impressed with the supreme beauty of nature and filled with love, for that same evening they had plighted their troth.

It was Frank who first broke the silence: "How beautifully serene the sky is, Adèle; almost as clear as your forehead."

"What an immense number of stars," she said, "astronomy must be a beautiful pursuit."

"It must be," he replied. "To soar far above this earth, to contemplate those worlds, to feel oneself lifted into space, to visit the moon with its mountains and rivers, plateaux and lakes; to accompany Venus and Mars and all the other planets in their course; to float, as it were, amongst these gigantic masterpieces of the Creator, to calculate their dimensions, to measure their course, to weigh those monsters; to

[Pg 154]

bring to light the treasures of metal which they contain, by the aid of Spectrum. Analysis, all this and a great deal more which is associated with the science must be indeed full of wonderful exhilaration."

"To hear you talk, one would imagine that you yearn to be amongst all those stars and planets," said Adèle.

"It is not the case," he answered, "because—I'll tell you why—I am content to have Venus so near to me."

"I am afraid you will have to be Mars," she said somewhat anxiously.

"Not a bit of it," he replied cheerfully, "Mars is generally represented with a long beard, and look, I have but a slight moustache; have you ever noticed," he continued, "that all these planets move in circles. I think the circle is the ideal figure of the Creator. Man cannot measure a circle or sphere."

"I thought the heavenly bodies moved in ellipses," she interrupted.

"Yes, but ellipses are but a form of circles."

"Of course, I had never thought about it before, one has so much to learn in life. Nature's wonders are numerous and full of instruction for the thoughtful student. It seems to me sometimes that my soul converses with nature. A cloud obscures the sky, and I feel that cloud passing over my heart; a ray of sunshine illumines the earth, and causes my flowers to open their petals and the dew-drops on the grass to shine like millions of diamonds, and I smile."

[Pg 155]

"You have the soul of a poetess," he said.

She laughed a rippling laugh. "I do not know, but I think the study of nature, the proper study of man."

"Others,—with a less poetic soul, doubtless—seem to differ from you. I think Pope did. But you love nature, and do not care for man."

Her pearly teeth saw the light.

When Adèle bade good-night to Frank that evening, a strange presentiment of coming evil overcame her.

She walked inside her father's house. When she entered the kitchen she was surprised at finding it empty. The lamp was on the table. It was lighted. Beside it was an empty mug. She lighted a candle, went into the parlour, and divested herself of her hat and jacket, thinking her father would soon return.

She did not feel at ease, however. Every other minute she turned round nervously, half afraid of finding someone in the room. Where could her father be? She grew anxious. Going at the foot of the stairs, she called out: "Father, father."

Not a sound, save that of her voice which sounded funereally.

She went to the door, opened it, and looked outside. Everything was still. All at once she heard something. It was not a shout, it was a scream, a shriek, an entreaty; it came again, much louder this time, she could distinctly hear the word: "Help."

She distinguished that voice; there was no mistaking it, she would have discerned its sound amongst ten thousand. This voice was Frank's. He had cried, he had implored, there was but one thing for her to do—to run to his aid.

[Pg 156]

Without even taking the trouble to fetch her hat, she hastily ran in the direction from whence the sound came.

Breathless, she arrived upon the scene. There, on the ground, lay the prostrate figure of a man, his head supported on the knee of another one.

The prostrate figure was her father's, the other man was Frank.

When he saw her with her hair dishevelled and her frantic look, Frank looked astonished. He then beckoned to her and said: "It is only a faint, and I hope only a slight bleeding of the nose. I think he will soon regain consciousness. Is there any water about here?"

"Not that I know of," she said, "but I will hasten home and bring some."

While she was gone, Mr. Rougeant opened his eyes. "Where am I?" he said, after in vain trying to recollect his thoughts.

"With a friend," answered Frank, bending over him.

The farmer closed his eyes, then opened them again and fixed them on Frank. He quickly shut them again, however. He had recognized the young man and a pang of remorse shot through his hard heart.



Adèle soon came with a small can full of water; and a basin. Her father kept his eyes closed. He had not the courage to open them. She poured the water in a basin and began to wash his face.

When she had finished, he opened his eyes resolutely and said: "Now that I am washed and the bleeding has ceased, I had better go home." Without having the courage to look at Frank he said: "I think I can do with my daughter."

[Pg 157]

He tried to rise, but uttered a cry of pain. "My foot hurts me fearfully," he said, "I cannot move without your aid."

Thereupon they both helped him to his feet, while he kept a frowning look and a silent tongue.

"Do you think you can walk leaning on my shoulder?" said Frank.

"Perhaps," he replied, and, placing his hand on the preferred shoulder, he began to hobble along; stopping often and speaking seldom.

When the farmer was comfortably installed near the fire, his leg carefully placed on a footstool, Frank, knowing he was not wanted, took his leave, expressing a hope that the injured limb would soon be all right again.

The farmer shook his head sadly, and gave a look at Frank that was very significant.

Then he shrank for some time into a state of complete silence, but his face was clouded and his bushy eyebrows were more prominently drawn over his eyes than they had been for a long time.

He hardly spoke a word to Adèle that evening, barely answering her questions.

How had the tables thus been turned? When Mr. Rougeant heard Frank pass by alone, he hastily vaulted over the hedge, intending to attack him, if not with his fists, at least with his tongue. But Providence directed otherwise. He miscalculated the height of the hedge on the side of the road,—for the field was higher than the road—and fell flat on his nose and face, one of his feet twisting under him and getting sprained.

The blow which he sustained in falling and the pain caused by his sprained ankle caused him to faint. Frank ran to his aid, lifted him carefully, and placed his head on his own knee.

[Pg 158]

It was in this position, as we have already seen, that Adèle discovered them.

When Frank saw the farmer's nose bleeding so profusely, and the deathly paleness on his face, he cried for help. It was this cry which the young lady heard. The same cry aroused Tom, who was sleeping soundly, doubtless dreaming of his fair cousin. He looked carefully over the hedge, and when he saw how matters stood and how his uncle lay, he took to his heels and fled. Cowardice lent him wings.

[Pg 159]

---

## CHAPTER XXII.

### FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

---



he morning after the accident, Mr. Rougeant, whose wrath was terrible, began to abuse his daughter.

"You are the cause of all this," he said, as he surveyed the injured limb.

"Very indirectly, I should think," she replied.

"What do you mean? How dare you disobey me as you have done lately; you have made me suffer; you have, under my very eyes, been making a fool of me—your father." He paused, as if unable to frame his next sentence.

"I beg your pardon, father," said the young lady respectfully; "but I have not been trying to 'make a fool' of you, as you say. I conscientiously think that I am right in encouraging the attentions of such an upright—"

"Stop your nonsense," he cried imperatively, his face assuming a terrible aspect, "you are an idiotic girl, you are trying to ruin me by listening to this pasteboard fellow, this scoundrel, this flippant rascal."

Adèle was stung with her father's bitter sarcasm against one whom she loved. She looked straight at her father; she knew he was unable to move from his place, and this made her bolder than she would otherwise have been. She answered with a firm and steady voice: "He saved your life once."

"Saved my life, how? Only for his presence yesterday, I should not now be lying idle."

[Pg 160]

"I am not talking about yesterday," she replied; "I mean, when he saved you from

drowning in the quarry at the risk of being himself dragged in."

"What has that to do with it?"

"It means that he is not a 'pasteboard fellow,' as you say; it means that you ought to acknowledge his kindness; it means that you should be thankful for the great service which he rendered you."

"If I owe him anything, let him say so and I will pay him," he replied. He had not the slightest intention of doing so.

"You owe him a debt of gratitude, and you should bless him; instead of that you curse him," she said, her lips quivering and the tears rushing to her eyes. The idea of her beloved being cursed.

"Yes, I hate him," said the farmer, "I cordially distaste that dirty rat; he is the worm that eats my bones; but, you never shall marry him; do you hear? never."

"I will never marry anyone else," she said, her face assuming a desperate calmness.

"Yes you will."

"Father," she said, her face almost as white as the cloth which she was spreading on the table, "it is useless to speak any more about it, it pains me to have to speak thus to you, but I will never marry Tom Soher."

She heard the grinding of her father's teeth.

"If I did so," she continued; "I feel that I should commit a great sin; I never could love him, therefore his life with me would be miserable; he would feel lonely, and, I am afraid, would soon return to his former habits of intemperance. Then I should be breaking my word, for I have promised——"

[Pg 161]

"You have!" howled the father.

She did not go on; her father's eyes were riveted on her with a terrible look. She feared he was going mad. She could not proceed, mesmerized as she seemed to be under that awful gaze.

At last she turned her attention to her work.

Not another word was spoken on the subject that day.

Neither of them ate much that evening. It was almost impossible for Adèle to swallow anything. What she attempted to eat, stuck in her throat. Her father, who was seated near the fire in his accustomed place, seemed also to have lost his appetite.

At last, he thrust his food away from him with a gesture of impatience, and began moodily to contemplate the embers that were glowing in the grate. When nine o'clock—his usual hour for retiring—struck, Adèle helped him into the parlour.

It was there on a sofa that he insisted on sleeping while his foot hurt him as it now did.

While the conversation was going on between father and daughter, Frank was crossing the fields near "Les Marches," and soon found himself beneath Adèle's window. It was open. He took out his pocket book, and hastily writing a few lines on a leaf, tore off the piece of paper, rolled it into a ball, and threw it straight through the window.

Then he cautiously glided away.

When Adèle retired for the night, she did not perceive the ball of paper that lay on the floor of her room. Her brain was so occupied with her thoughts that it failed to fulfil its functions towards the eyes.

[Pg 162]

She fixed her optics for a moment on the crumpled piece of paper, but she saw it not. She was undressing, but she knew it not; she did it mechanically, as if by instinct. Her thoughts were with her father and the unhappy home she was condemned to share with him. Home! alas! it was more like a hell. She shuddered at the thought. She was of a naturally quiet temperament, and she abhorred these awful scenes.

She earnestly hoped that the time would soon come when she would once more sail in smooth waters.

As she was moving about, her foot trod upon some object. "What is this?" she said to herself, as she stooped to pick it up. By whom that piece of paper had been placed there, she could not imagine.

By the light of the candle, she managed to read the missive. How her heart gladdened. She read it over and over again. It contained a message from Frank telling her that he hoped to hear from her at her earliest convenience. "So you will," she said half aloud as she carefully folded the small piece of paper.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### A SECRET CORRESPONDENCE.



n the following day she wrote to Frank and gave the letter to Jacques, asking him to carry it in the evening at the Rohais. The old man smiled at her, and carefully pocketing the piece of silver which she thrust into his hand, he remarked: "I s'pose you don't care for the gov'nor to know anything about this 'ere business."

"How dare you call my father so?" she said, pretending to be offended; "no; don't let him have any knowledge of this or any other message I may entrust you with in the future."

"He won't; look 'ere Miss, I'll do anything for you, you're a good 'un; and as for your father gettin' anything out of me; I'd as well have the last bone in my body pulled out afore I'd say anything against you or your young man. You're the very picture of your mother, that you are, she was a good woman—."

"Jacques, if you cannot express yourself in English, talk in Guernsey French, as you used to do," she said, for Jacques was showing forth his knowledge.

"What have I said?" he questioned in his native tongue, then he added: "I thought I was speaking well, I beg your pardon if I have offended you, Miss."

"You have not displeased me," she said. "I must go now, or my father will be fretting about my absence. I can trust you?"

[Pg 164]

"Yes, I will do anything for you. Good-night, Miss."

"Good-night, Maît Jacques."

And, with a light step and a cheerful countenance, she entered the room in which her father was. He was seated in an armchair before the fire-place, his attention centred on a halter which he was endeavouring to manufacture. He did not fail to notice the laughing eyes and the radiant expression of his daughter.

"What has she been about?" he mused, "has she been speaking to that smooth-tongued, stuck-up son of a ragamuffin."

His face assumed a sour expression as the suspicion crossed his mind. After a few moments of silence, he raised his small and constantly flickering eyes, and asked in a sour tone: "Where have you been all this time?"

"I have been speaking to Maît Jacques," she replied.

"The whole time."

"Yes, all the time."

"Only to him?"

"Yes, to him alone."

Mr. Rougeant was satisfied. The idea of disbelieving his daughter never entered his head. He knew she would never debase herself by uttering a falsehood, and he quietly resumed his work. Then, after a few minutes of silence, he turned again to her: "Is Jacques gone?" he enquired.

"I do not know," she replied.

"Well run and see, and, if he is not, tell him to come and speak to me."

An anxious look passed over Adèle's face. Fortunately, she was able to slip out of the room before her father noticed it.

[Pg 165]

"He wants to question him," she said to herself; "I shall have to warn him. My father is almost sure to find him out. Oh! I do hope that he is gone." She approached the stable, where Jacques usually spent his last half-hour. She went towards the door, opened it and called out: "Jacques."

No answer.

She joyously tripped towards the house. After a few steps she stopped. "I have not called out very loudly," she thought, "if Jacques were still here and my father were to see him, his suspicions would be aroused."

She retraced her steps, and in a half-frightened tone, wishing with all her heart that her cry might not be answered, she called out again in a louder voice: "Maît Jacques; are you about there?"

She listened eagerly. Her summons were not answered. She went towards the house and entered it, saying: "He's gone, I have not seen him."

"It does not matter much," said her father, "I will tell him what I have to say to-morrow."

Her anxiety recommenced. She looked at her father and tried to read his thoughts. In this she failed. He had one of those hard set faces the owners of which seem devoid of soul or sentiment.

When she awoke the following morning, Adèle's first thoughts were about her father and his workman. What was he going to question him about? Ah! he had perhaps seen her through the window, giving a letter to the old man and cautioning him.

When they had finished breakfasting, Adèle, who began to hope her father had completely forgotten all about his workman, was very much annoyed when Mr. Rougeant told her to tell Jacques to come and speak to him.

[Pg 166]

She searched out the old man, and, having found him, she said to him: "Did you see Mr. Mathers yesterday evening?"

"Yes, Miss," he answered, taking care to speak in his native tongue this time; "I saw him. He thanked me and asked a few questions about your health and Mr. Rougeant's foot."

"I am very much obliged to you," said Adèle, "and now, you must come and talk to my father. I think he means to question you, but you will be on your guard; will you not?"

"Oh, he is not the man to take me in. If he asks me if you gave me a letter yesterday, or anything else concerning you, I know what to answer him."

"You will speak the truth?"

"Speak the truth and be taken in, not I; there's no harm in fibbing when it's for doing good, Miss."

"If you are prepared to utter falsehoods, Jacques, for the sake of shielding me, you will lose my approbation. I shall be very angry with you if you do so. You understand; you must not swerve from the path of truth."

"Well, I never," said Jacques, "and it was all for your sake. We shall see. I'm not going to let your father learn anything from me. Jerusalem, I would rather pull the hair off my head."

"The plain truth," said Adèle, shaking her forefinger at him and looking very severe.

"I know my work, Miss," he replied as he followed her into the house.

The farmer was seated near the fire. He did not even turn round when Jacques entered. The latter went straight up to his employer and said: "You wanted me to come and speak to you."

[Pg 167]

Adèle tried to look composed, but her nerves were unsteady. She could not bear to leave the room, while the men were talking about her. No, she must hear her doom; at any rate, she must be there to try and defend herself.

"Yes," said the farmer after a while, "what was it about now? oh! this evening——."

"Yesterday evening;" thought Adèle, "he is making a mistake."

"This evening," the farmer went on, "you will carry my boots to the shoemaker's."

"All right, Sir," answered Jacques.

The young lady could not restrain a sigh of relief.

Jacques looked at her and winked—a most rude thing to do—but then Jacques did not know better.

Quoth Mr. Rougeant, his eyes fixed on the grate: "You will tell him to be as quick as he can about mending them; I mean to walk in a few days."

"All right, Sir."

"I don't want anything expensive; in fact, I want him to mend them as cheaply as he possibly can. But, you understand, I want him to repair them well."

"A good job costs money," Jacques ventured to interpose.

"I told you I don't want anything expensive," retorted the farmer angrily.

"Oh, that's all right, Sir; I'll tell him so, Sir," said the workman, frightened at Mr. Rougeant's sour tone.

"Well, you will fetch them this evening and be careful to tell him what I require; a

[Pg 168]

good and inexpensive job, or I won't pay him."

"All right, Sir," said Jacques, and he left the room muttering: "He's growing from bad to worse; he is a stingy old niggard."

What was Tom Soher doing all this time? He was drinking.

He had never loved Adèle Rougeant, and when he saw that there was not much chance of winning her, he took to drink. In reality, he preferred his bottle to his cousin. Of course, he put all the blame on the misfortunes which he had encountered.

Once, and only once, his father tried timidly to rebuke him. "No," he said, "there is nothing for me to do but to drown my sorrow. Welcome ruin."

"Why not turn a new leaf?" pleaded Mr. Soher.

"Bah!" he replied as he walked away, "what's the use!—no; good-bye to everything."

Spoilt child; he little knew the terrible death that awaited him.

[Pg 169]

---

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### MR. ROUGEANT GOES TO CHURCH.

---



he first Sunday after Mr. Rougeant's recovery, Adèle said she intended to go to church. The farmer's eyes flickered more than usual. "I think I shall accompany you," he said.

His daughter started. What could he mean? He had not been to church these last three years or more; besides, he had not a decent suit of clothes to put on. Oh! it was disgusting.

"He is afraid of my meeting Frank on the road," she said to herself; "he need not fear, I am green, but not quite so much as he seems to think." "You have not even a suit of clothes that is fit to wear," she said aloud.

"They will do well enough."

"Your coat is as green as grass, and your trousers quite yellow. If it was in the evening, I should perhaps go with you, but in the morning—no."

"If you don't come with me, I suppose I shall have to come with you."

"You shall not come with me this morning, Sir."

"How dare you——"

"I will not go."

"Do as you like."

"I shall go this evening," she said, "the lamps will be lighted. I hope that stock of bad oil which they have is not used up, because I do not want the church to be well-lighted."

"How is that?"

[Pg 170]

"How is that?" she said in a grieved tone. "People might take you for a rag picker."

Her father was not a bit angry at her for saying this. She knew it, hence her boldness.

He almost smiled, a very—very rare thing for him to do; he was proud to think that people would say to each other: "Look, there is Mr. Rougeant, he is not a proud man."

On the evening in question, the clergyman almost lost his speech and his senses when he saw Mr. Rougeant sitting beside his daughter.

The worshippers thought not of the prayers as they were being read, or the audience of the sermon, as it was being delivered; they thought of Mr. Rougeant.

And, when the people came out of the church, instead of the usual remarks about the weather, folks said to one another: "Have you seen Mr. Rougeant." "Yes," answered the more composed, "it is not often one sees him about here."

"Oh!" answered the others, "how shocking."

A party of elderly ladies were assembling just outside the churchyard gates.

"Have you seen Mr. Rougeant?" they asked unanimously, as they approached one another.

"Oh, yes," replied Mrs. Martin, "I was quite astounded when I saw him enter."

"Yes, but you see," remarked another, "he has been ill, and maybe he has felt the need of worshipping in the house of God."

"What a shabby coat," said a third. "His trousers were worn out and threadbare," put in Miss Le Grove, who was not able to approach very near the group on account of her immense corpulence.

"His daughter seemed rather ill at ease," said No. Three.

[Pg 171]

"I think there is some of her fault," said Mrs. Martin, "she encourages a young man of bad reputation."

The whole group held up their hands and assumed an horror-stricken attitude.

"Impossible!", exclaimed No. Two.

"Shocking!" declared Miss Le Grove.

"We must be very careful about what we advance" remarked No. Two, who generally passed for being a very Christian lady; then she added after a pause: "Miss Rougeant is, as everyone of us knows, good, well-bred and of refined taste."

"I only recited what I had heard, of course I don't believe it," said Mrs. Martin, a little disconcerted.

"If she marries and goes away from home, there will only be one thing for her father to do, and that will be to marry again," remarked Miss Le Grove, who found the state of forced celibacy unendurable.

The others looked at each other. Some could not force back the smile that rushed to their lips. Miss Le Grove noticed the suppressed mirth and blushed. Then losing her presence of mind, and wishing to explain the why and wherefore of her face being so red, she said, slightly retiring: "Isn't the weather warm."

There was a hoar-frost.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, an accident occurred, while Miss Le Grove was backing her voluminous self, which sufficed to disperse the assemblage.

A little boy was standing with his back to the obese woman. He was busily engaged, endeavouring to count the stars, when that most worthy spinster backed against him and sent him sprawling. She did not even feel the rencontre; it was like an iron-clad coming in collision with a fishing-smack.

[Pg 172]

The little parish school-boy was none the less irritated. He planted himself before Miss Le Grove, to make sure she would see him, made a frightful grimace and shouted: "You're an old half-a-ton." Then he decamped.

The other ladies giggled.

The company dispersed.

A group of youths who were standing near shouted "Well said, *gamin*."

Going home, the topic of the conversation was Miss Le Grove, garnished with a sprinkling of Mr. Rougeant.

As for the lady whom the little rogue had styled "half-a-ton" she walked alone muttering execrations against this "little wretch," and telling herself that there were no Christians, that these women laughed at her, because she chose to remain what Providence had directed she should be, and that Mr. Rougeant was perfectly right in keeping away from people, who had nothing to do when they came out of church but to backbite their neighbours.

In future, she too would shun these sophisticated people.

And—puffing and blowing; gesticulating and perspiring; soliloquizing and threatening, she retook possession of her home, sweet home.

[Pg 173]

---

## CHAPTER XXV.

### LOVE TRIUMPHS.

---



ood-morning, Mr. Rougeant," said Jacques on the Monday morning, as he perceived his employer walking about the farmyard.

"Good-morning, Jacques," responded the farmer.

"Your foot is better then?" said the workman, eager to commence the conversation, for Mr. Rougeant was already moving in a contrary direction.

"Yes, it's quite better now," replied the farmer, arresting his steps.

"Where's Miss Rougeant?" questioned Jacques.

"Rummaging the house; do you want to speak to her?"

"My wife told me that there was a long time she had not seen her. She says she is lonely and would very much like to see Miss Rougeant. She says your daughter is so kind and so much like her mother, that she would be very thankful if Miss Rougeant would condescend to visit her once or twice while she is laid up."

At the mention of his wife, Mr. Rougeant felt sorrow in his heart. He had loved once, but now, his nature was changed; he used to be happy and full of contentment then, although a struggling young farmer, for he had a bright, lovable and loving wife to cheer him up.

Now he was worth ten thousand pounds, and he felt the most miserable of men.

He stood still, the very picture of abject misery, not uttering a single word.

"Perhaps you will not mind telling her," said Jacques, breaking the silence.

[Pg 174]

The farmer looked up; "I shall tell her," he said, and walked away.

"Our little affair is coming off splendidly," said Adèle as she tripped into the garden to speak to Jacques. "Yes, Miss, you are so clever, you deserve to succeed."

"We must not rejoice too soon; did you see Frank last night?"

"Yes, Miss."

"And he told you that he would come?"

"Yes, Miss; he gave me a letter for you but I must not give it to you now, I fancy Mr. Rougeant is watching us."

"You are quite right, leave it in the stable when you go there and I will fetch it. Has my father asked any questions?"

"Not one; he looks very sad."

"He is. It surprises me that he never questions you; he has such confidence in you; he would never think of suspecting you."

"If he asks me any questions, I'll know how to answer them. But," added the workman, laughing, "I must go and see how the horse is getting on. You will find the letter under the old saddle."

"Thank you very much for all your trouble," said Adèle as she disappeared through the doorway.

After having read the letter which she had fetched from the stable, Adèle smiled. "He will meet me near Jacques' cottage at six o'clock this evening," she said to herself. "I must try and hide my joy as much as I can, for my father will grow suspicious if he reads my happiness."

She had to keep a continual vigilance to prevent herself from smiling during the day. When evening approached, she dressed herself and proceeded towards the cottage.

[Pg 175]

The sun was setting beautifully in the west. When she reached the top of the hill, she could see him, gently sinking, as it were, into the sea, illuminating the horizon and the ocean in a flood of splendour. As it disappeared, the Hanois Lighthouse displayed its beacon light.

The visit to Mrs. Dorant was of short duration.

At half-past six, a young couple might be seen wending their way slowly through the beautiful country lanes. They talked in soft accents. Now and then Adèle's low, silvery laugh sounded on the tranquil evening air.

They wandered thus for two hours. "I thought we had been out only about one hour," said Adèle as Frank returned his watch to his fob.

"Love takes no account of time," he said. "Now, let us talk business. I profess to be a business man you know."

They talked about the obstacles to be vanquished, of Mr. Rougeant's wrath, of Tom Soher's jealousy.

"Be of good cheer. *Amor vincit omnia*," were Frank's last words to her that evening.

When she opened the wicket gate, Adèle gave a horror-stricken start. She perceived the form of a man, stretched at full length before the front door. She could not restrain a cry of alarm. Frank, who had followed her, hastily advanced to see what was the matter. He had not gone far, before he saw the front-door open, and Mr.

Rougeant come out, holding a lighted candle in his hand.

He hastily retreated farther away and watched the trio. He could easily see them without being seen. The light that came from inside the house, and that from the candle, shone full on the group.

He saw Mr. Rougeant pick up the prostrate figure, set the man on his feet, and, after having shut the gate after him, return inside.

[Pg 176]

This man, who walked with such an unsteady gait, was Tom Soher. Frank took the trouble to follow him home. He feared for his safety, accidents are so common with people in his state. He set his conscience at ease by seeing the tottering figure enter the house of the "Prenoms."

He pitied this slave to intemperance. He shuddered at the immense per cent. of his countrymen who were like this man.

How had Tom Soher happened to be lying before the threshold of "Les Marches?" We shall see.

That same evening, he was with a few of his sort, drinking at the "Forest Arms." He was more than half-intoxicated, when, without a word, he left the bar-room.

"Where are you going?" shouted his comrades.

"Bring him back," said some.

"Let him go," said the others.

Tom did not heed their talk, but directed his steps towards uncle Rougeant's farmhouse.

He opened the door, walked straight in, and seated himself in a chair near the long bare table, without saying a word to his uncle.

The latter was in a dreadful state of mental excitement. He was walking up and down the room with his hands thrust deeply into his trousers' pockets, uttering execrations, blaming everyone and everything. He was so occupied with his ravings that he only cast a glance at his nephew, who stood, or rather sat, wondering what the dickens his uncle was about.

"Ah, this generation," said the farmer, "this generation is a mass of spoilt and pampered dolls"—he was thinking of his daughter—"they only think about running here and there; paying visits to friends, taking tea with cousins, or walks with dressed-up mashers.

[Pg 177]

"They do not care if they leave a poor old devil"—the appellation was appropriate enough—"all alone, with not even a dog to keep him company or a cat which he could kick; off they go, dressed in the garments for which you have paid out of your own pockets; ay, and for which you have toiled and perspired——"

"You're quite right, uncle," came from Tom.

The farmer gave a sudden start. He had altogether forgotten his nephew's presence. He went on:—"People are as proud as if they were all of blood royal. Even the poorest women, one sees pass in the afternoon with perambulators in which sleeps some little urchin who, mayhap, is brought up nearly all on the charity of saving people like me.

"It's a curse to have to pay taxes for this vermin. I say it's a downright injustice to make us, who attach ten times more value to a penny than they do, pay for the education of their brats.

"Ah! in my time, in the good old time, which is alas, gone for ever, we, the respectable people, were rolled about in clumsy little wooden carts, and the children of the labourers were carried in their mother's arms and placed between two bundles of ferns, while their mother went about her work. For, poor women went to work in those days. Ay! they had to do it or starve. But now, what do we see? These labourers' wives with servants."

He stamped, his foot impatiently. "And when they are destitute and homeless from sheer want of foresight, they are kept and fed out of the taxes which come out of our pockets. So-called civilisation and education are ruining the present generation."

[Pg 178]

"That's where you're right, uncle," interposed his nephew.

Mr. Rougeant went on: "Farmers' sons do not want to work now. Every one rails at manual labour. If this state of things goes on, the island will soon be a mass of ruined and dissipated human beings. The honourable people who have a pedigree they can boast of, are mixing with foreigners, whom no one knows whence they have sprung from. If you drink a glass of cider now a days, you are termed a drunkard by a lot of tea-drinkers, teetotalers and——."



"A glass of cider would do good, one is thirsty this weather," interrupted Tom, who, although half asleep, had caught the word cider.

Without even casting a glance at his nephew, so absorbed was he, the farmer continued: "One hears nothing but bicycle-bells. These bicycles are the greatest nuisance yet invented. I am surprised that people rack their brains in order to invent such worthless rubbish. Every one must have a bicycle. There may not be any bread in the house, the children may not be able to go to school or the wife to church for want of a decent pair of boots, but, 'I will have a bicycle.' And then, it is so very easy to have one, there's the hire system. Another curse of civilisation that is ruining the poor man. If our peasantry knew how to put by for a rainy day, like the French country-folk do, we should not have so many applications for relief, our hospitals would well nigh be empty."

"*Vere dia*, uncle."

[Pg 179]

"Poor people now are not half so polite as they used to be when I was young. They call each other Mess. instead of Maît., and they style their superiors Maît. when they ought to say Mess.

"The insolent rogues, they only have a smooth tongue when they come to beg. People may say what they like, foolish men may talk about the State establishing scholarships, for the talented poor; let them work. I have worked all my life, and hard too, and here I am, better than any of them."

"Educate them with the States' revenue. Indeed! Bring them up like gentlemen, for them to laugh at you later on, to look down upon you as if you were so much stubble."

"That's what they like. Give young people a few pence to rattle in their trousers' pockets, a collar, cuffs, a sixpenny signet ring on the little finger, a nickel-silver mounted cane and a pair of gloves, and there they go, not caring a fillip whether their parents have toiled and struggled to rise to their present position, ignoring the necessity of thrift, a happy-go-lucky generation. And then, at the end of it all, a deep chasm, into which they will all fall headlong; an immense pyre that will consume all their vanities and profligacies."

"They deserve to be burnt, indeed they do, uncle."

"Someone was even talking of establishing a public library here. Well let them complete the ruin. It is as well. I hope to be dead by that time though. Life, then, will be intolerable. I hope to sleep with those worthy champions of labour—my ancestors—in the churchyard yonder.

"Books!—what do they want books for? I never yet knew a man who read books that was worth a farthing.

[Pg 180]

"I knew one once who was versed in book-lore, but, worse luck to him, he could not bind a wheat-sheaf or weed a perch of parsnips, and the result—bankruptcy; failure. That's what it comes to.

"Books!—do they want to make schoolmasters of us all, or do they wish us to be always reading our eyes out instead of attending to our business?"

"Books!—they are only good for idle loafers; they offer an excuse for shunning one's duty. 'I want to read a bit,' they say when told to do something. 'Oh, let me just finish this page, it is so interesting,' they plead, when asked to quickly fetch some article. This is what Adèle used to do, but I nipped this slothful tendency in the bud. I would have none of it."

He stopped his discourse and his walk, gazed at his nephew who had fallen across the table and was now sleeping soundly; then recommenced his peregrinations.

"I am disgusted with the world; I don't know what it will all come to. Some of these modern farmers are even discarding the *grande charrue*. Oh! shades of our ancestors. The great plough—the only feast of the year that is worth anything, mutton and roast beef, ham and veal, cider by the gallon and a jovial company of good old sons of the soil.

"It is horrible thus to see our old routine trampled underfoot, our ancestors' customs sneered at."

Mr. Rougeant was extremely animated. Like nearly every other country Guernseyman, he was opposed to change.

He walked about with distorted features, his eyes shining with a strange light.

[Pg 181]

He thought of his family dwindling away; of his daughter disregarding his commands and disobeying him. In his innermost soul he felt convinced that she would never marry his nephew. He cast his eyes in the direction of the latter. What! he was sleeping while *he* was enduring all the agony of a king who is being dethroned; of a

general, whose army is in open mutiny against him; of a millionaire who sees his whole fortune disappear through some awful catastrophe! It was unendurable.

He again began to pace the room. Having finally arrived at a decision as to his future conduct, and thinking just then of his daughter's disregard for his tastes, he shouted in a voice of thunder, bringing down his fist upon the table with an awful crash.

"*Palfrancordi!* let her act according to her own stubborn will, but she'll not inherit a penny of mine, not one double."

He was now quite close to his nephew and the latter, aroused by the noise which his uncle had made, raised his head and yawningly drawled out: "You're quite right, uncle."

The farmer stood straight in front of Tom Soher, his arms folded, his penetrating eye fixed scrutinizingly on his nephew. He perceived the latter's state; his wrath increased. "What!" he ejaculated; "you are drunk!"

Tom was in such a plight that he understood not his uncle, neither did he perceive his anger. He muttered: "You're quite right, uncle."

"Then begone, you wretched inebriate. I'll not have intoxicated brutes about my house."

So saying, he seized bewildered Tom, dragged him through the vestibule and hurled him outside, slamming the door after his nephew without even waiting to see what became of him.

[Pg 182]

Then, wearied and tired out by his exertions, he sank into a chair and began to ponder about this new discovery. He mentally resolved that he would never have a drunkard for his son-in-law.

Then he gradually grew calmer. The reaction was setting in.

He was still engaged in his reflections when he heard a cry. 'Twas his daughter's. He lightened a candle and hastened to open the door, wondering what could have happened. The sight of his nephew lying there, chilled him with terror. Was he dead? Had he killed him? If so, it was the crowning point of all his woes.

How he raised him and sent him home we have already seen.

When Mr. Rougeant was again with his daughter, he kept a dogged silence. She gathered from his demeanour that he had had a frightful shock, but took great care not to question him. Hardly a word was exchanged between them that evening.

Adèle was glad of it, for she had her thoughts occupied with her wedding which was to come off in three weeks.

[Pg 183]

---

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### WEDDED.

---



fter all the commotion, the wedding was a very quiet one.

Adèle left the house early one bright summer morning.

The sun was rising, illuminating the sky with all its various colours; the lark was soaring towards heaven's gates; the mowers could already be heard sharpening their scythes in the hay fields, and Mary and Louisa, the tenant's daughters, were busily engaged milking their father's cows.

A carriage, drawn by two grey horses, carried the heiress of "Les Marches" to be married to Frank Mathers.

The beautifying properties of love shone on the bride's and bridegroom's countenances as they stepped out of the church of St. ----.

In both their souls was a paradise.

From time to time, Mrs. Mathers assumed a thoughtful expression.

"I cannot help thinking of my father," she said, as the carriage-wheels rattled over the road near "Les Gravées."

"Let not this mar your happiness," he answered joyfully, "perhaps he will relent when he sees that it is of no use grumbling."

Adèle smiled, for, in spite of everything, she would be happy. "I *am* joyful," she said, "but as for his pardoning me, well—you do not know him as well as I do."

The next day while Mr. and Mrs. Mathers were enjoying a snug little *tête-à-tête*, the postman brought them a letter. It was from Mr. Rougeant.

[Pg 184]

"I told you he would be glad to renew his acquaintance," said Frank, as soon as he saw the signature.

"What's this?" he said. "A cheque, Adèle; a cheque for one hundred pounds! It's our wedding present, I suppose; let me read the letter:"

"To my Daughter,—I have heard that you have been married. You think that I will bend. You are mistaken. Moreover, as I warned you before you took that rash step that I would take care you would not inherit a single penny of mine; I send you this cheque. It is the last money which you will ever receive from me.

"ALFRED ROUGEANT."

Frank's face was a blank. "Fancy to come and tell you that you took a rash step," he said.

"Did not I tell you that he was stubborn?" said his wife.

"He says that he will not bend," continued Frank, perusing the letter for a second time. "My father-in-law, you will probably break, then. Those one hundred pounds are welcome all the same."

"I was thinking of sending them back," said Mrs. Mathers, "but, perhaps, we had better keep them; father would only be too glad to have them back. I cannot conceive how he mustered sufficient resolution to part with his god. He must have made a supreme effort."

Said Frank: "To pocket both our pride and the cheque, is, I think, the best course which we can pursue. We must, however, acknowledge his kind remittance and thank him for it. What do you think of inviting him to tea some afternoon?"

[Pg 185]

"You are joking."

"As far as regards the invitation, yes; but as for acknowledging receipt of the cheque, no. I leave you to decide whether you shall do so. Of course, I am not supposed to have anything to do in the matter."

"Since you leave it to me, go and open the lights of your greenhouses, the sun is getting warm. While you are absent, I shall write an answer. I cannot do it while you are here; I want to be very serious."

Frank went out of the room. He came back after a few minutes' absence.

"Sit you down and listen," said his wife. The letter which she had written ran thus;—

"My Dear Father,—I have received the cheque which you were kind enough to send me. I thank you for it."

"Your letter, however, pained me. You seem to think that I have wantonly disobeyed you. I have not; I have only acted honourably and conscientiously."

"I cannot but feel sorry for you when I think of the useless and self-inflicted sufferings which you endure."

"As for your property, I am happy to state that we have enough, and to spare."

"Father; if ever you require our aid; if ever you feel that you would like to speak to us or to see us, do not hesitate; a daughter's and a son-in-law's love will you always find in us."

"Your affectionate daughter,

"ADÈLE."

Frank was smiling. "I think that will do very nicely," he said.

[Pg 186]

When Mr. Rougeant read his daughter's missive, he uttered a cry of contempt. "Require your aid,—well, I shall have to sink low. You love me."—He banished the thought from him, for his heart was already softening under the influence of those words.

Although he and his daughter had lived a life of mutual misunderstanding during the last years of her stay at "Les Marches," he felt her absence much more keenly than he had anticipated.

The days that followed were for him days of inexpressible ennui. He would saunter up and down the kitchen for half-an-hour at a time. He conversed with Jacques; he tried to take interest in something; he counted his money, his gold, his god.

Formerly, he found great pleasure in doing so; but now, the sound of the precious

metal awoke no feeling of satisfaction within his heart as it used to do, but rung in his ears with a funereal sound. He thought it foretold his doom.

He continued thus for weeks, a miserable, ill-humoured, irritated and troubled man.

The month of August came, warm almost to suffocation. Mr. Rougeant often felt cold. He would sit for hours before the fire, his feet stretched at full length, his hands buried in his pockets, and his drooping chin resting on his bosom. His eyes were closed.

As he sat thus one afternoon, a flood of anger roused him up; he rose, waxed warm, his tottering steps feverishly paced the room for a time, then sunk back into his chair, a passion-beaten, exhausted and perspiring man.

He had strange thoughts sometimes. Willingly would he "have shuffled off his mortal coil; but that the dread of something after death, that undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns, puzzled his will, and made him rather bear the ills he had, than fly to others that he knew not of."

[Pg 187]

One day, Mrs. Dorant, whom he had engaged to look after the house, found him meditatively examining a piece of rope, which he held in his hand. She was alarmed and beckoned to her husband, who was near.

He went up to his employer, who, directly he saw that he was being observed, threw the rope away from him excitedly.

"You look ill, Mr. Rougeant," said Jacques, as he scrutinized the pale face and haggard look of the farmer.

"So I am," was the answer.

"Shall I fetch a doctor, or——."

"Go about your work," angrily commanded Mr. Rougeant.

Jacques did as he was bid. He, however, watched the farmer. Every morning, he expected to find him hanging from a beam. But as time passed on, Mr. Rougeant seemed to improve.

He had, in fact, abandoned the horrible thought of putting an end to his existence.

He continued thus to live for more than four years; when his health once more gave way.

At the thought of death, he shuddered. To die alone, with no friend to close his eyelids, to die like a dog, ay worse, to leave behind him the reward of his labours and thrift to persons who had defied him, was intolerable.

For they had had the impudence to tell him at the solicitor's office that he could not make a will giving his property to others; he could not disinherit his daughter.

[Pg 188]

All this vexed him. He sank on the *jonquière* exclaiming "Alas!"

[Pg 189]

---

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### RECONCILIATION.



Mr. Rougeant's condition continued to aggravate. The thought of death struck his heart with terror. Behind him, he left a life of selfishness and bigotry. No good deed, no act of self-denial to soften the pangs of a stricken conscience.

Before him, everything seemed dark, mysterious, awe-inspiring, despairing; for aught he knew, a just chastisement awaited him.

He had toiled for gold; he had obtained it. What a man soweth that shall he also reap.

In spite of his avarice and the knowledge that a consultation to the doctor would cost him something, Mr. Rougeant's terror overcoming all these; he resolved to see a physician.

He did not send Jacques to fetch one, the visit of the medical man would have cost him too much; he drove thither in his phaeton.

The doctor who was consulted said the disease was of long standing.

He gave Mr. Rougeant a bottle of medicine for which the latter grudgingly paid three francs, and told the farmer to come and see him again in a few days.

As Mr. Rougeant was descending the Rohais, his old horse trotting slowly and joggedly, an unwelcome thought flashed across his mind. "I must be in the vicinity of their house," he said to himself, then he made a gesture with his right hand. "Bah!"

[Pg 190]

what have I to do with them."

He felt very lonely, his spirits were depressed, the doctor's remarks did not tend to enliven him.

He heard a cry. He thought he recognized the voice of his little Adèle.

Was he dreaming? He roused himself. His horse had stopped short. He looked to see what was the matter. In front of his horse, a child lay crying. What a flood of memories that childish wail had the effect of forcing upon him.

He jumped off his vehicle, picked up the child and asked: "Are you hurt?" He intended to have spoken softly, but his voice seemed to have completely lost that power or any approach to it. The child looked up half afraid, and did not answer. "Are you hurt, my little man?" he again asked, endeavouring to soften his voice. Vain attempt; he only succeeded in speaking low.

The "little man" who, by the by, was a girl, ceased crying, looked at his interlocutor and answered: "No."

The child had only been knocked down by the horse's knee whilst crossing the road; and thanks to the sagacity of the old mare, had escaped unhurt.

Mr. Rougeant again bent towards the child: "Where do you live?" he questioned.

"Vere," said the child with such a vague wave of the hand that any of the three corners of the island might have been implicated in her childish, "There."

"But where is it. Down that way"—pointing with his finger,— "or up that way."

The child made a little gesture with her mouth, "a *moue*" as the French call it, and pointed with her lips towards the bottom of the hill. The farmer mounted his carriage, holding the child in his arms, and drove away. Meanwhile, the child felt quite at home; she was examining this rough man attentively.

[Pg 191]

An indescribable something was passing within the farmer's soul.

That little child clinging confidently to him, her large blue eyes expressing thankfulness and contentment filled him with a queer, but by no means unpleasant sensation. He was catching a glimpse of the joy that is reaped through performing a good action.

There was something more than this, some power at work which he could not analyze. There was something in that childish voice and mien; that penetrated his soul and reminded him of former days.

He felt a tender sensation gradually overwhelming him. His heart of stone melted, a tear rolled down that hard featured and deep wrinkled visage.

"You cry," said the child, "are you hurt?"

He roused himself, brushed away the tell-tale tear with a quick movement of his right arm and whipped up his horse.

"Are you hurt?" repeated the little girl who was not to be put off so easily.

"No;" he answered, almost softly.

"Trot; I like to see a horse trot," said the child.

But Mr. Rougeant was looking round to see if he could discern someone searching for the child.

"What is your father's name?" asked the farmer.

"Papa."

"Humph! and your mother's?"

"Mamma."

[Pg 192]

He tried another expedient. "What do people say to your papa, Mr. What."

"Yes; I fink it's Mr. What."

The farmer looked puzzled. He saw a man approaching. "I will ask him if he knows where the child lives," he was saying to himself, when the little girl exclaimed: "Ah! there's 'ma; look, she's looking frough the window."

"Ma;" she cried, "I've had a ride."

Mr. Rougeant looked round. So this was where the child lived. He descended from the phaeton holding the little girl in his arms and stood confronting—his daughter.

They recognized each other. There was a moment of embarrassment.

Then the farmer, without a word, not a muscle of his face betraying his emotion, handed over the parcel, turned on his heels and mounting the conveyance was soon out of view.

He did not even cast a glance behind him. His daughter watched him disappear, then re-entered the house.

"Poor father," she sighed, "what a great change, what an emaciated figure; he has already the appearance of a ghost."

Then, seating herself upon a sofa, she meditated a long time. Finally, her face assumed a determined expression; "Come what may," she said to herself; "I will not leave him descend thus into the grave. I will make at least one real effort at reconciliation. If I do not succeed, I shall be free from remorse."

She talked the matter over with her husband when he came home.

"You look terribly in earnest," said he. "If only your father possessed a heart, I should hope. I think that with the zeal which you now show you would melt a heart of stone. However, the task is a noble one, and if you succeed, I shall only be too glad to welcome my father-in-law."

[Pg 193]

Next morning, Mrs. Mathers directed her steps towards "Les Marches." She had undertaken what seemed to be a stupendous task, and she resolved to pursue it energetically.

This was why she went to her father's house in person.

While she was nearing her birth-place her father was lying in his bed, ill. Mrs. Dorant watched near him as he tossed about his couch.

At times he was calmer than at others; one could discern the traces upon his face softening. For he was thinking of the time when a little girl used to nestle upon his knee, a little child exactly resembling the one with which he had talked on the previous day.

He could not help thinking: "I was happier then than I now am. I had a loving wife, a child whose innocence softened my heart; but now, I am abandoned by everyone."

He set his teeth, he again tossed about his couch and muttered: "It is all through my daughter's fault; she might be respectably married. Still, she looked happy and contented. I know these fellows, they eat and drink everything which is not spent in superfluities."

As Mrs. Mathers approached the front door of "Les Marches," she felt a tremor pass through her whole frame. The once familiar surroundings and the ennobling object of her visit inspired her with strangely tender feelings.

Her soul was deeply moved as she entered the house. There was the kitchen with its primitive and quaint furniture. It was deserted. She seated herself on a chair and began to ponder.

[Pg 194]

Soft was to be her voice, tender were to be her appeals to his conscience, earnest her entreaties, she was to plead with patience, and appeal to his most heart-melting sentiments.

She heard someone coming downstairs. "It is he," she said to herself, and she braced herself for the encounter.

"How you frighten me Miss—I beg your pardon—Madam."

It was Mrs. Dorant who uttered these words as she stood in the doorway seemingly afraid to enter, fearing the visitor might turn out to be a ghost.

"It is you, Mrs. Dorant," said Mrs. Mathers; "is my father upstairs?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Is he ill?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Dangerously?"

"Not very; he does not want us to fetch the doctor. But what have you come here for? If Mr. Rougeant saw you—oh—;" here she threw up both her hands and opened her mouth and eyes wide—"oh—" she continued, "master would swallow you."

"Do you think so; but I mean to go upstairs and to talk to him."

"Oh, don't go," she entreated, fixing her supplicating eyes upon Adèle, "he might kill you."

Mrs. Mathers laughed. "No," she said, "he is my father; he is ill and needs me. I am

going to discharge my duty towards him." And so saying she ascended the creaky staircase.

To this day, she cannot explain the sensation which she felt as she entered the room where her father lay.

[Pg 195]

She went straight up to her father's bedside, sank on her knees, took the hand that was lying on the bedclothes between both hers and began to weep.

Mr. Rougeant quickly withdrew his hand, he contracted his brow, his lips slightly curved, he looked on her with contempt.

"What do you want?" he said roughly. "You come to beg, you pauper, your angry creditors are clamouring for their money, you are on the verge of bankruptcy. I knew it;" he added triumphantly.

"Father, it is true, I come to beg, but not for money. I am not poor."

He looked at her suspiciously.

She turned upon him her tearful eyes and softly said: "Father, you are miserable, I want to render you happy once more."

To her great surprise, he did not answer, but his countenance fell. "Who has told her that I am miserable and that I wish to be happy once more?" he mused.

His daughter seized this opportunity. She took the tide at the flood. She pleaded earnestly and tenderly.

Then, as he balanced between pride and prejudice on one side, and a life of peace and contentment on the other, her persuasive voice made the tendrils of his heart move uneasily.

This stone-hearted man wept.

So did his daughter. And amidst this flood of tears, father and daughter were reconciled once more.

Mr. Rougeant grew rapidly better. He had something to live for now. He, however, would not quit his farm.

[Pg 196]

"Why don't you come and live here?" he said to Frank one evening as they sat near a blazing fire in the parlour of "Les Marches."

The idea struck Frank as being quite practicable. He was already prevented, from want of room, to extend his business at the Rohais.

"You would not like to see greenhouses in your fields yonder;" he said.

"Yes, I would; besides, I have a lot of capital which might be profitably used up. We might form a partnership."

"I must think it over," said Frank. He cast a look towards Adèle, and as he met her beseeching eyes, he added smilingly: "I think we may as well consider the matter as settled."

Frank's property at the Rohais was let. The farm at "Les Marches" underwent a complete transformation.

For fully three months, there was such a rubbing and scrubbing, painting and papering, that everything was turned completely topsy-turvy.

Order was at last evoked, the furniture from the Rohais was brought in and the farmhouse was made a model of snugness and comfort within.

Without, during those three months, nothing was heard but the noise of the carpenter's hammers and the click of the glazier's tools.

Mr. Rougeant was as completely transformed as his farm. He looked upon the whole with such an air of complacency that the neighbours remarked: "He is in his second infancy."

[Pg 197]

---

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### A SAD END OF A MISSENT LIFE.

---



In one of the numerous public-houses in the town of St. Peter-Port, surrounded by a gang of "roughs," a man, still young, sat on a stool.

His face was terribly emaciated, and on it, one could discern all the traces of that demon, *alcohol*.

In one of his agitated hands, he held a half-filled glass, in the other, a short, blackened clay-pipe.

His glassy eyes had a strange look.

He made an effort to carry the tumbler which he was holding to his lips, but his nerves and muscles refused to act.

Here, we may as well say that this man's name was Tom Soher.

"What's the matter, Tom?" said one of the men.

"Nothing," responded he, making use of a very old form of lie.

At this reassuring statement, the company resumed their conversation, and their drink.

But Tom, after placing his glass on the counter, retired to one corner of the room, sat himself on an empty barrel and was soon fast asleep.

It was a profound sleep, and, from time to time, the young man trembled convulsively. He opened a gaping mouth, he muttered some unintelligible words, but his "pals" noticed it not.

They were accustomed to such scenes,—the sight of man, who is no more man; an animal, lower in many respects than the brute.

[Pg 198]

The sleeper was dreaming. He dreamt that he saw the same public-house in which he now was. But, instead of being built of granite,—as it really was,—its walls were one mass of human beings, piled one on top of the other.

He could recognize some former companions who now were deceased.

Their bodies served instead of stones, and their souls he discerned, placed in lieu of windows.

Amidst the horrible mass of human flesh, he saw his father's body, crushed and terribly mangled; his face wore an expression of suffering, his whole body seemed borne down by a heavy and oppressive weight.

Tom Soher looked at his father. The latter cast a sad and troubled look at his son.

All at once, the drunken man saw himself seated upon his father's back. So this was the load that crushed him. He gazed upon his resemblance; a mere shadow of his former self.

As he contemplated this sad picture, he saw, issuing out of his mouth—his soul.

An inexpressible fear and a sense of suffocation seized him.

He tried to explain to himself this curious vision. "Bah! 'tis but a dream," he muttered; "ah! someone is grasping my throat. I am dying." He lifted his eyes towards heaven. They encountered the ceiling.

As he sought in vain to rouse himself from that awful state of lethargy, something within him whispered: "This house is built with the price of bodies and of souls."

He listened eagerly. The voice was silent.

Then the awful interpretation of this strange vision dawned upon his troubled mind. "Is it possible that I have given both my body and my soul in exchange for drink. My soul! Alas!"

[Pg 199]

He struggled to shake himself free. Another fit of suffocation seized him in its deathly embrace. He tried to shout or to entreat mercy, but his tongue refused to utter a sound and his heart was as hard and as cold as the stones over which the vehicle in which he was lying rolled.

For Tom Soher was in a closed carriage. When closing time came, the owner of the public-house had him placed in a conveyance and sent home.

He realised this, as a dull, but deep-seated pain, caused him to open his eyes. He looked wildly round.

The carriage rattled over the newly macadamized road, and he was dying, unable to cry for help, incapable of articulating a single sound.

He struck his fist frantically out, intending to smash the window, but his blow fell an inch short of its intended mark.

Then all his past life seemed to roll before his eyes, a mispent, futile, licentious life, in which the bad passions had predominated, and finally hustled him to his doom. A dreadful sense of fear seized him. He raised himself upon one of his elbows, his eyes were wide open, and in them, there was not the expression that is seen in those of a dying beast, which seems to say "It is finished;" his eyes expressed a conviction of



something yonder, coupled with a look of blank despair.

The elbow upon which he was supporting himself gave way, and he fell back—dead.

As the driver approached the "Prenoms," he whistled gaily. He little dreamt of the surprise which awaited him. He drove straight through the open gate into the farmyard.

[Pg 200]

When Mrs. Soher heard the sound of the carriage wheels, she went to the door of the house, opened it and said: "Here he comes again, the poor inebriate."

"Now, ma'am, here's your son; he's had a glass too much, but he'll be right enough after a bit o' sleep;" and so saying, the driver opened the carriage door while Mrs. Soher approached, lantern in hand. Her daughter followed her.

They came close to the driver, who stood stock-still, his mouth half open, his whole body trembling like an aspen leaf. At last, he recovered himself sufficiently to speak. "Jerusalem—he's dead," he muttered in a hoarse and frightened tone.

The dead man's mother let fall the lantern which she was holding, her legs gave way under her, and she fell down and fainted.

Her daughter was also greatly moved. She began to sob.

"What must we do?" questioned the man.

"Oh, I don't know," she answered, crying; then, after a few moments' pause, she said: "Call the neighbours."

The man gave a shout. Two men from the house on the other side of the road appeared at the door.

"This way, please, be quick;" shouted the driver.

The men precipitated themselves towards the spot. Mrs. Soher was carried to her room upstairs and left to the care of her daughter who applied restoratives.

The corpse was carried into another room and laid upon a bed. The eyes remained wide open.

The neighbours sent away the carriage and its owner; one of them remained in the house while the other went for a doctor.

[Pg 201]

Mrs. Soher regained consciousness, and as her senses returned to her, she cried bitterly: "My poor son, my dear son."

At this stage, Mr. Soher came home. He was surprised to find his neighbour seated near the fire in the kitchen. His surprise was changed into anguish, when the neighbour, in a few words, informed him of Tom's sad fate.

Mr. Soher was horrified. With a blanched face and tottering steps he ascended the stairs and entered the room in which lay his wife. Upon seeing him, his wife uttered heart-rending cries: "Oh, Thomas, what are we going to do; our only son." Her sobs choked her.

Her husband did not say a word. He turned on his heels, closed the door after him, and entered the room in which lay his son's corpse.

As he glanced at those dilated eyes, a chill ran through his frame. "Great God; is it possible?" he exclaimed, raising his eyes to heaven; "my son, my son."

He paced up and down the room with feverish steps, a prey to the most poignant grief. His conscience upbraided him loudly. It said:

"Behold your son whose education you have overlooked; behold him whom you have left to grow in vice, without an effort worth the name to save him from the ruinous bent of his bad passions."

"I know it; 'tis all my fault," exclaimed the grief and conscience-stricken man. "I have not done half of what I might have done for him."

"Animated by a false pride, I desired to shine among my fellow-worshippers, and have been continually away from home, neglecting my duty there, to satisfy my ambition. Miserable man that I am."

[Pg 202]

He cast his eyes towards the lifeless body of which the eyes met his and seemed to reproach him for having shirked his duty.

"Oh, God! wilt thou ever forgive me?" he cried in wild despair; "what can I do to atone? If one half, if a tenth part of the energy which I have displayed elsewhere had been employed in bringing up my son as I ought to have done, this would not be."

He continued thus to soliloquize, now and then stopping abruptly in his nervous walk to gaze upon those reproachful eyes, then resuming his wanderings, blaming himself

continually.

He was in the midst of his peregrinations when his daughter entered the room.

"Father," she said, "a woman who is downstairs wishes to speak with you."

The troubled man did not answer. What was this to him; what was all the world to him compared with his grief?

"She says her daughter, who is dying, wishes to see you," continued the young woman.

"Tell her I am coming," said Mr. Soher.

A dying woman wishing to see him. How could he refuse that? Perhaps he would be the means of doing some good to this person. If he could thus begin to atone for his want of dutifulness towards his son.

He went downstairs.

"My daughter wishes to see you now," said his visitor. "You will come, Sir; you will not refuse a dying woman's request?"

"Refuse; certainly not," he said, and he immediately accompanied his visitor.

[Pg 203]

They walked the whole distance which separated the two houses without a word being exchanged between them.

Mr. Soher's thoughts were with the dead; his companion was already grieving for the daughter which she felt sure she was about to lose.

Mr. Soher was ushered near the dying woman's bed. The latter was raving, but directly she perceived him she fixed her gaze upon him, her wild, rambling talk ceased, her mind seemed to regain its lucidity. She exclaimed: "I have not found it, therefore I am lost for ever."

"What have you not found?" he said kindly.

"Listen," said she. "Some time ago, I entered a small place of worship in which a man was delivering an address, or, as he called it, a testimonial.

"He said that when he had been converted, he had felt a heavenly ray of light flooding his very soul. He said he felt as if an electric battery had come in contact with his entrails. At the same time, he heard a voice clearly saying: 'My son, thy sins are forgiven thee.'

"This man, who was no other than you, Sir, said that if his hearers had not clearly heard this divine voice and experienced this shock, they were doomed. He exhorted the congregation to seek for these blessings.

"I went home impressed. I decided to seek for these things of which you spoke. I prayed, I hoped, I waited, but I have never felt half of what you promised your audience they would find.

"Now, I am then to understand that I am rejected.

"Rejected! oh Heaven."

The poor woman burst into tears and uttered a wail of despair.

[Pg 204]

Mr. Soher tried to soothe her.

"No," she said, "you are trying to deceive me, you are not speaking the truth."

He protested. "It was then, that I did not speak the truth," he said. "I was exalted, I went too far."

"Is it true?" said the dying woman.

"Oh yes, do believe me."

"I believe you," she said sneeringly.

The fever was again coming upon her. She began to wander in her speech.

Mr. Soher, at a sign from the mother, who had followed him into the room, withdrew.

His brain was on fire. His heart was full of the deepest and keenest anguish.

"What have I done?" he muttered. "I wanted to be thought a saint. Not being one, I acted the hypocrite. Now, here I am, maimed, afflicted, weighed down with grief."

He reached his home—a wreck.

A few days afterwards, poor Tom's body was buried in the churchyard.

From that day, life at the "Prenoms" was completely changed.

Mr. Soher examined himself and his surroundings.

He saw that he was drifting towards bankruptcy. He resolved—he did more—he went to work, to try and avert the catastrophe. He succeeded in all that he undertook, for he worked with a will.

His lost son was not brought back to life, neither was the land which he had sold redeemed, but he managed to supply his wants and those of his family, besides putting something by for a rainy day.

[Pg 205]

---

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.

---



They had had a hard day's work at "Les Marches," packing tomatoes for the English markets.

It was the month of September. The days were growing short and the nights long.

After the day's occupations were over, the family assembled in the neatly furnished parlour. Frank wrote his letters of advice to his fruit merchants. Then he took a German book, "Hauff's stories," and proceeded to read the diverting history of "Little Mudj," making frequent use of the vocabulary.

Afterwards, to relax his mind, he took a French book. It was one of the works of Blaise Pascal, his "Lettres Provinciales." He admired their originality, the trenchant satire, and the galling blows of this man whom Châteaubriand called a "frightful genius."

As he read the beautiful passages which had issued from this great man's mind, he became imbued with some of the flame that had inspired the author of the book.

He placed the volume on the table, rested his head upon his hand and began to think of his past life.

He thought of his ambition to acquire riches, and of how he had been deceived. Providence had ordered otherwise and baffled him.

He was very well off now, but how differently from what he had anticipated, he had acquired his present position.

[Pg 206]

He thought of his mental sufferings, the acute brain, the deep-seated ambition torturing him.

He no longer asked himself why he had endured pain. Had he never suffered, he would never have attained the moral position in which he now was. It was when he was disgusted with the world, when he experienced an aversion for earthly things, that his firmest resolves had been formed and his determination to do good solidified. It was then that he attempted to rise above the dusty, monotonous and weary walks of ordinary life; it was then that his virtuous sensibility had been awakened, and that his lofty conceptions had been framed. And now, having aimed at something noble, he was leading a useful, happy, and dignified life.

He was cheerful, and possessed of some of that supreme happiness which brightens the soul, and accompanies it through immortality.

He had said: "Why endure pain?" But it was with the same senses that he now enjoyed pleasure.

He had said: "Why suffer physically?" "Why," he thought, "if that little child did not feel, and had not experienced the pangs of hunger, it would now be dead; so would I, if, when I was wrapped in thick smoke, the foul gases had not irritated my bronchial tubes and my eyes.

"As for the remainder, I am satisfied to leave it to Him who has cared for and protected me so far through life. Perhaps the day will come when I shall also know the why and wherefore of things which I almost dared to accuse an all-wise Providence of having sent into the world."

While her husband was soliloquizing thus, Mrs. Mathers was busily engaged in stitching a smart little pinafore of diaper.

[Pg 207]

Grandpapa was resting upon the sofa with little Adèle seated on his knee.

He held both the child's hands in his, the left one he held in his left hand, and the right one he held in his right hand. Taking Adèle's right-hand forefinger and placing it in her left hand, he began to tell her a little story about a lark, which he remembered his mother used to recite to him when he was a little boy.

"A little lark built its nest there," he began.

"Here, in my hand?" said the child.

"We shall suppose the little bird did so," answered Mr. Rougeant. "It passed this way, and the thumb caught it."

"Ah-ha," laughed little Adèle.

"This finger plucked its feathers, this one cooked it, and—this one ate it."

Frank made some remark.

Mr. Rougeant looked up.

"And the little one," said Adèle, pulling impatiently on her grandfather's sleeve, "you have not told me what the little one did."

"Indeed! well, the little one was left without a single crumb."

"Poor little one," said the child.

END.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE SILVER LINING: A  
GUERNSEY STORY \*\*\*

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE  
THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE  
PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase "Project Gutenberg"), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at [www.gutenberg.org/license](http://www.gutenberg.org/license).

**Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. "Project Gutenberg" is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™

electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website ([www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as

specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain "Defects," such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

## **Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™**

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

## **Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at [www.gutenberg.org/contact](http://www.gutenberg.org/contact)

## **Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate).

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting

unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate)

## **Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.