The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Ink-Stain (Tache d'encre) — Volume 1, by René Bazin

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. 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 Ink-Stain (Tache d'encre) — Volume 1

Author: René Bazin

Release date: April 1, 2003 [EBook #3972]
Most recently updated: January 9, 2021

Language: English

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE INK-STAIN (TACHE D'ENCRE) — VOLUME 1 ***

The Project Gutenberg Etext of The Ink-Stain by Rene Bazin, v1 #59 in our series French Immortals Crowned by the French Academy #1 in our series by Rene Bazin

Copyright laws are changing all over the world, be sure to check the laws for your country before redistributing these files!!!!!

Please take a look at the important information in this header. We encourage you to keep this file on your own disk, keeping an electronic path open for the next readers.

Please do not remove this.

This should be the first thing seen when anyone opens the book. Do not change or edit it without written permission. The words are carefully chosen to provide users with the information they need about what they can legally do with the texts.

Welcome To The World of Free Plain Vanilla Electronic Texts

Etexts Readable By Both Humans and By Computers, Since 1971

*****These Etexts Are Prepared By Thousands of Volunteers!*****

Information on contacting Project Gutenberg to get Etexts, and further information is included below, including for donations.

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization with EIN [Employee Identification Number] 64-6221541

Title: The Ink-Stain, v1

Author: Rene Bazin

Release Date: April, 2003 [Etext #3972]
[Yes, we are about one year ahead of schedule]
[The actual date this file first posted = 09/20/01]

Edition: 10

Language: English

The Project Gutenberg Etext of The Ink-Stain by Rene Bazin, v1
*****This file should be named 3972.txt or 3972.zip*****

This etext was produced by David Widger <widger@cecomet.net>

Project Gutenberg Etexts are usually created from multiple editions, all of which are in the Public Domain in the United States, unless a copyright notice is included. Therefore, we usually do NOT keep any of these books in compliance with any particular paper edition.

We are now trying to release all our books one year in advance of the official release dates, leaving time for better editing. Please be encouraged to send us error messages even years after the official publication date.

Please note neither this listing nor its contents are final til midnight of the last day of the month of any such announcement. The official release date of all Project Gutenberg Etexts is at Midnight, Central Time, of the last day of the stated month. A preliminary version may often be posted for suggestion, comment and editing by those who wish to do so.

Most people start at our sites at: https://gutenberg.org http://promo.net/pg

Those of you who want to download any Etext before announcement can surf to them as follows, and just download by date; this is also a good way to get them instantly upon announcement, as the indexes our cataloguers produce obviously take a while after an announcement goes out in the Project Gutenberg Newsletter.

http://www.ibiblio.org/gutenberg/etext03
or
ftp://ftp.ibiblio.org/pub/docs/books/gutenberg/etext03

Or /etext02, 01, 00, 99, 98, 97, 96, 95, 94, 93, 92, 92, 91 or 90

Just search by the first five letters of the filename you want, as it appears in our Newsletters.

Information about Project Gutenberg (one page)

We produce about two million dollars for each hour we work. The time it takes us, a rather conservative estimate, is fifty hours to get any etext selected, entered, proofread, edited, copyright searched and analyzed, the copyright letters written, etc. This projected audience is one hundred million readers. If our value per text is nominally estimated at one dollar then we produce $2 million dollars per hour this year as we release fifty new Etext files per month, or 500 more Etexts in 2000 for a total of 3000+ If they reach just 1-2% of the world's population then the total should reach over 300 billion Etexts given away by year's end.

The Goal of Project Gutenberg is to Give Away One Trillion Etext Files by December 31, 2001. [10,000 x 100,000,000 = 1 Trillion] This is ten thousand titles each to one hundred million readers, which is only about 4% of the present number of computer users.

At our revised rates of production, we will reach only one-third of that goal by the end of 2001, or about 4,000 Etexts unless we manage to get some real funding.

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation has been created to secure a future for Project Gutenberg into the next millennium.

We need your donations more than ever!

As of July 12, 2001 contributions are only being solicited from people in:
Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho,
Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota,
Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North
Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota,
Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia,
Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

We have filed in about 45 states now, but these are the only ones that have responded.

As the requirements for other states are met, additions to this list will be made and fund raising will begin in the additional states. Please feel free to ask to check the status of your state.

In answer to various questions we have received on this:

We are constantly working on finishing the paperwork to legally request donations in all 50 states. If your state is not listed and you would like to know if we have added it since the list you have, just ask.

While we cannot solicit donations from people in states where we are not yet registered, we know of no prohibition against accepting donations from donors in these states who approach us with an offer to donate.

International donations are accepted, but we don't know ANYTHING about how to make them tax-deductible, or even if they CAN be made deductible, and don't have the staff to handle it even if there are ways.

All donations should be made to:

Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation
PMB 113
1739 University Ave.
Oxford, MS 38655-4109

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization with EIN [Employee Identification Number] 64-6221541, and has been approved as a 501(c)(3) organization by the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Donations are tax-deductible to the maximum extent permitted by law. As the requirements for other states are met, additions to this list will be made and fund raising will begin in the additional states.

We need your donations more than ever!

You can get up to date donation information at:

https://www.gutenberg.org/donation.html

***

If you can't reach Project Gutenberg, you can always email directly to:

Michael S. Hart <hart@pobox.com>

hart@pobox.com forwards to hart@prairienet.org and archive.org if your mail bounces from archive.org, I will still see it, if it bounces from prairienet.org, better resend later on. . . .

Prof. Hart will answer or forward your message.

We would prefer to send you information by email.

***

Example command-line FTP session:

ftp ftp.ibiblio.org login: anonymous password: your@login cd pub/docs/books/gutenberg cd etext90 through etext99 or etext00 through etext02, etc. dir [to see files] get or mget [to get files. . .set bin for zip files] GET GUTINDEX.?? [to get a year's listing of books, e.g., GUTINDEX.99] GET GUTINDEX.ALL [to get a listing of ALL books]

The Legal Small Print

(Three Pages)

START**THE SMALL PRINT!**FOR PUBLIC DOMAIN ETEXTS**START Why is this "Small Print!" statement here? You know: lawyers. They tell us you might sue us if there is something wrong with your copy of this etext, even if you got it for free from someone other than us, and even if what's wrong is not our fault. So, among other things, this "Small Print!" statement disclaims most of our liability to you. It also tells you how you may distribute copies of this etext if you want to.

BEFORE! YOU USE OR READ THIS ETEXT By using or reading any part of this PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm etext, you indicate that you understand, agree to and accept this "Small Print!" statement. If you do not, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for this etext by sending a request within 30 days of receiving it to the person you got it from. If you received this etext on a physical medium (such as a disk), you must return it with your request.

ABOUT PROJECT GUTENBERG-TM ETEXTS This PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm etext, like most PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm etexts, is a "public domain" work distributed by Professor Michael S. Hart through the Project Gutenberg Association (the "Project"). Among other things, this means that no one owns a United States copyright on or for this work, so the Project (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth below, apply if you wish to copy and distribute this etext under the "PROJECT GUTENBERG" trademark.

Please do not use the "PROJECT GUTENBERG" trademark to market any commercial products without permission.

To create these etexts, the Project expends considerable efforts to identify, transcribe and proofread public domain works. Despite these efforts, the Project's etexts and any medium they may be on may contain "Defects". Among other things, Defects may take the form of incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other etext medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

LIMITED WARRANTY; DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES But for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described below, [1] Michael Hart and the Foundation (and any other party you may receive this etext from as a PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm etext) disclaims all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees, and [2] YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE OR UNDER STRICT LIABILITY, OR FOR BREACH OF WARRANTY OR CONTRACT, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES, EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES.

If you discover a Defect in this etext within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending an explanatory note within that time to the person you received it from. If you received it on a physical medium, you must return it with your note, and such person may choose to alternatively give you a replacement copy. If you received it electronically, such person may choose to alternatively give you a second opportunity to receive it electronically.

THIS ETEXT IS OTHERWISE PROVIDED TO YOU "AS-IS". NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, ARE MADE TO YOU AS TO THE ETEXT OR ANY MEDIUM IT MAY BE ON, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE.

Some states do not allow disclaimers of implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of consequential damages, so the above disclaimers and exclusions may not apply to you, and you may have other legal rights.

INDEMNITY You will indemnify and hold Michael Hart, the Foundation, and its trustees and agents, and any volunteers associated with the production and distribution of Project Gutenberg-tm texts harmless, from all liability, cost and expense, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following that you do or cause: [1] distribution of this etext, [2] alteration, modification, or addition to the etext, or [3] any Defect.

DISTRIBUTION UNDER "PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm" You may distribute copies of this etext electronically, or by disk, book or any other medium if you either delete this "Small Print!" and all other references to Project Gutenberg, or:

[1] Only give exact copies of it. Among other things, this requires that you do not remove, alter or modify the etext or this "small print!" statement. You may however, if you wish, distribute this etext in machine readable binary, compressed, mark-up, or proprietary form, including any form resulting from conversion by word processing or hypertext software, but only so long as *EITHER*:

> [*] The etext, when displayed, is clearly readable, and does *not* contain characters other than those intended by the author of the work, although tilde (~), asterisk (*) and underline (_) characters may be used to convey punctuation intended by the author, and additional characters may be used to indicate hypertext links; OR
>
> [*] The etext may be readily converted by the reader at no expense into plain ASCII, EBCDIC or equivalent form by the program that displays the etext (as is the case, for instance, with most word processors); OR
>
> [*] You provide, or agree to also provide on request at no additional cost, fee or expense, a copy of the etext in its original plain ASCII form (or in EBCDIC or other equivalent proprietary form).

[2] Honor the etext refund and replacement provisions of this "Small Print!" statement.

[3] Pay a trademark license fee to the Foundation of 20% of the gross profits you derive calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. If you don't derive profits, no royalty is due. Royalties are payable to "Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation" the 60 days following each date you prepare (or were legally required to prepare) your annual (or equivalent periodic) tax return. Please contact us beforehand to let us know your plans and to work out the details.

WHAT IF YOU *WANT* TO SEND MONEY EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE TO? Project Gutenberg is dedicated to increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine readable form.

The Project gratefully accepts contributions of money, time,
public domain materials, or royalty free copyright licenses.
Money should be paid to the:
"Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."

If you are interested in contributing scanning equipment or software or other items, please contact Michael Hart at: hart@pobox.com

[Portions of this header are copyright (C) 2001 by Michael S. Hart and may be reprinted only when these Etexts are free of all fees.] [Project Gutenberg is a TradeMark and may not be used in any sales of Project Gutenberg Etexts or other materials be they hardware or software or any other related product without express permission.]

*END THE SMALL PRINT! FOR PUBLIC DOMAIN ETEXTS*Ver.07/27/01*END*

This etext was produced by David Widger <widger@cecomet.net>

[NOTE: There is a short list of bookmarks, or pointers, at the end of the file for those who may wish to sample the author's ideas before making an entire meal of them. D.W.]

THE INK STAIN BY RENE BAZIN
(Tache d'Encre)

By RENE BAZIN

Preface by E. LAVISSE

BOOK 1.

RENE BAZIN

RENE-NICHOLAS-MARIE BAZIN was born at Angers, December 26, 1853. He studied for the bar, became a lawyer and professor of jurisprudence at the Catholic University in his native city, and early contributed to 'Le Correspondant, L'Illustration, Journal des Debats, Revue du Deux Mondes,' etc. Although quietly writing fiction for the last fifteen years or so, he was not well known until the dawn of the twentieth century, when his moral studies of provincial life under the form of novels and romances became appreciated. He is a profound psychologist, a force in literature, and his style is very pure and attractive. He advocates resignation and the domestic virtues, yet his books are neither dull, nor tiresome, nor priggish; and as he has advanced in years and experience M. Bazin has shown an increasing ambition to deal with larger problems than are involved for instance, in the innocent love-affairs of 'Ma Tante Giron' (1886), a book which enraptured Ludovic Halevy. His novel, 'Une Tache d'Encre' (1888), a romance of scholarly life, was crowned by the French Academy, to which he was elected in 1903.

It is safe to say that Bazin will never develop into an author dangerous to morals. His works may be

put into the hands of cloistered virgins, and there are not, to my knowledge, many other contemporary French imaginative writers who could endure this stringent test. Some critics, indeed, while praising him, scoff at his chaste and surprising optimism; but it is refreshing to recommend to English readers, in these days of Realism and Naturalism, the works of a recent French writer which do not require maturity of years in the reader. 'Une Tache d'Encre', as I have said, was crowned by the French Academy; and Bazin received from the same exalted body the "Prix Vitet" for the ensemble of his writings in 1896, being finally admitted a member of the Academy in June, 1903. He occupies the chair of Ernest Legouve.

Bazin's first romance, 'Stephanette', was published under the pseudonym "Bernard Seigny," in 1884; then followed 'Victor Pavie (1887); Noellet (1890); A l'Aventure (1891) and Sicile (1892)', two books on Italy, of which the last mentioned was likewise crowned by the French Academy; 'La Legende de Sainte-Bega (1892); La Sarcelle Bleue (1892); Madame Corentine (1893); Les Italiens d'aujousd'hui (1894); Humble Amour (1894); En Province (1896); De toute son Ame (1897)', a realistic but moderate romance of a workingman's life; 'Les Contes de Perrette (1898); La Terre qui Meurt (1899); Le Guide de l'Empereur (1901); Les Oberle (1902), a tale from Alsace of to-day, sketching the political situation, approximately correct, and lately adapted for the stage; 'Donatienne' (1903).

With Bazin literary life does not become a mirage obscuring the vision of real life. Before being an author Rene Bazin is a man, with a family attached to the country, rooted in the soil; a guaranty of the dignity of his work as well as of the writer, and a safeguard against many extravagances. He has remained faithful to his province. He lives in the attractive city of Angers. When he leaves it, it is for a little tour through France, or a rare journey-once to Sicily and once to Spain. He is seldom to be met on the Parisian boulevards. Not that he has any prejudice against Paris, or fails to appreciate the tone of its society, or the quality of its diversions; but he is conscious that he has nothing to gain from a residence in the capital, but, on the contrary, would run a risk of losing his intense originality and the freshness of his genius.

E.
LAVISSE
de
l'Academie
Francaise.

THE INK-STAIN

CHAPTER I

THE ACCIDENT

All I have to record of the first twenty-three years of my life is the enumeration of them. A simple bead-roll is enough; it represents their family likeness and family monotony.

I lost my parents when I was very young. I can hardly recall their faces; and I should keep no memories of La Chatre, our home, had I not been brought up quite close to it. It was sold, however, and lost to me, like all the rest. Yes, fate is hard, sometimes. I was born at La Chatre; the college of La Chatre absorbed eighteen years of my life. Our head master used to remark that college is a second home; whereby I have always fancied he did some injustice to the first.

My school-days were hardly over when my uncle and guardian, M. Brutus Mouillard, solicitor, of Bourges, packed me off to Paris to go through my law course. I took three years over it: At the end of that time, just eighteen months ago, I became a licentiate, and "in the said capacity"—as my uncle would say took an oath that transformed me into a probationary barrister. Every Monday, regularly, I go to sign my name among many others on an attendance list, and thereby, it appears, I am establishing a claim upon the confidence of the widow and the orphan.

In the intervals of my legal studies I have succeeded in taking my Arts Degree. At present I am seeking that of Doctor of Law. My examinations have been passed meritoriously, but without brilliance; my tastes run too much after letters. My professor, M. Flamaran, once told me the truth of the matter:

"Law, young man, is a jealous mistress; she allows no divided affection." Are my affections divided? I think not, and I certainly do not confess any such thing to M. Mouillard, who has not yet forgotten what he calls "that freak" of a Degree in Arts. He builds some hopes upon me, and, in return, it is natural that I should build a few upon him.

Really, that sums up all my past: two certificates! A third diploma in prospect and an uncle to leave me his money—that is my future. Can anything more commonplace be imagined?

I may add that I never felt any temptation at all to put these things on record until to-day, the tenth of December, 1884. Nothing had ever happened to me; my history was a blank. I might have died thus. But who can foresee life's sudden transformations? Who can foretell that the skein, hitherto so tranquilly unwound, will not suddenly become tangled? This afternoon a serious adventure befell me. It agitated me at the time, and it agitates me still more upon reflection. A voice within me whispers that this cause will have a series of effects, that I am on the threshold of an epoch, or, as the novelists say, a crisis in my existence. It has struck me that I owe it to myself to write my Memoirs, and that is the reason why I have just purchased this brown memorandum- book in the Odeon Arcade. I intend to make a detailed and particular entry of the event, and, as time goes on, of its consequences, if any should happen to flow from it.

"Flow from it" is just the phrase; for it has to do with a blot of ink.

My blot of ink is hardly dry. It is a large one, too; of abnormal shape, and altogether monstrous, whether one considers it from the physical side or studies it in its moral bearings. It is very much more than an accident; it has something of the nature of an outrage. It was at the National Library that I perpetrated it, and upon— But I must not anticipate.

I often work in the National Library; not in the main hall, but in that reserved for literary men who have a claim, and are provided with a ticket, to use it. I never enter it without a gentle thrill, in which respect is mingled with satisfied vanity. For not every one who chooses may walk in. I must pass before the office of the porter, who retains my umbrella, before I make my way to the solemn beadle who sits just inside the doorway—a double precaution, attesting to the majesty of the place. The beadle knows me. He no longer demands my ticket. To be sure, I am not yet one of those old acquaintances on whom he smiles; but I am no longer reckoned among those novices whose passport he exacts. An inclination of his head makes me free of the temple, and says, as plainly as words, "You are one of us, albeit a trifle young. Walk in, sir."

And in I walk, and admire on each occasion the vast proportions of the interior, the severe decoration of the walls, traced with broad foliated pattern and wainscoted with books of reference as high as hand can reach; the dread tribunal of librarians and keepers in session down yonder, on a kind of judgment-seat, at the end of the avenue whose carpet deadens all footsteps; and behind again, that holy of holies where work the doubly privileged—the men, I imagine, who are members of two or three academies. To right and left of this avenue are rows of tables and armchairs, where scatters, as caprice has chosen and habit consecrated, the learned population of the library. Men form the large majority. Viewed from the rear, as they bend over their work, they suggest reflections on the ravages wrought by study upon hair-clad cuticles. For every hirsute Southerner whose locks turn gray without dropping off, heavens, what a regiment of bald heads! Visitors who look in through the glass doors see only this aspect of devastation. It gives a wrong impression. Here and there, at haphazard, you may find a few women among these men. George Sand used to come here. I don't know the names of these successors of hers, nor their business; I have merely observed that they dress in sober colors, and that each carries a number of shawls and a thick veil. You feel that love is far from their thoughts. They have left it outside, perhaps—with the porter.

Several of these learned folk lift their heads as I pass, and follow me with the dulled eye of the student, an eye still occupied with the written thought and inattentive to what it looks on. Then, suddenly, remorse seizes them for their distraction, they are annoyed with me, a gloomy impatience kindles in their look, and each plunges anew into his open volume. But I have had time to guess their secret ejaculations: "I am studying the Origin of Trade Guilds!" "I, the Reign of Louis the Twelfth!" "I, the Latin Dialects!" "I, the Civil Status of Women under Tiberius!" "I am elaborating a new translation of Horace!" "I am fulminating a seventh article, for the Gazette of Atheism and Anarchy, on the Russian Serfs!" And each one seems to add, "But what is thy business here, stripling? What canst thou write at thy age? Why troublest thou the peace of these hallowed precincts?" My business, sirs? Alas! it is the thesis for my doctor's degree. My uncle and venerated guardian, M. Brutus Mouillard, solicitor, of Bourges, is urging me to finish it, demands my return to the country, grows impatient over the slow toil of composition. "Have done with theories," he writes, "and get to business! If you must strive for this degree, well and good; but what possessed you to choose such a subject?"

I must own that the subject of my thesis in Roman law has been artistically chosen with a view to

prolonging my stay in Paris: "On the 'Latini Juniani.'" Yes, gentle reader, a new subject, almost incapable of elucidation, having no connection—not the remotest—with the exercise of any profession whatsoever, entirely devoid of practical utility. The trouble it gives me is beyond conception.

It is true that I intersperse my researches with some more attractive studies, and one or two visits to the picture-galleries, and more than an occasional evening at the theatre. My uncle knows nothing of this. To keep him soothed I am careful to get my reader's ticket renewed every month, and every month to send him the ticket just out of date, signed by M. Leopold Delisle. He has a box full of them; and in the simplicity of his heart Monsieur Mouillard has a lurking respect for this nephew, this modern young anchorite, who spends his days at the National Library, his nights with Gaius, wholly absorbed in the Junian Latins, and indifferent to whatsoever does not concern the Junian Latins in this Paris which my uncle still calls the Modern Babylon.

I came down this morning in the most industrious mood, when the misfortune befell. Close by the sanctum where the librarians sit are two desks where you write down the list of the books you want. I was doing so at the right-hand desk, on which abuts the first row of tables. Hence all the mischief. Had I written at the left-hand desk, nothing would have happened. But no; I had just set down as legibly as possible the title, author, and size of a certain work on Roman Antiquities, when, in replacing the penholder, which is attached there by a small brass chain, some inattentiveness, some want of care, my ill-luck, in short, led me to set it down in unstable equilibrium on the edge of the desk. It tumbled- I heard the little chain rattle-it tumbled farther-then stopped short. The mischief was done. The sudden jerk, as it pulled up, had detached an enormous drop of ink from the point of the pen, and that drop—Ah! I can see him yet, as he rose from the shadow of the desk, that small, white- haired man, so thin and so very angry!

"Clumsy idiot! To blot an Early Text!"

I leaned over and looked. Upon the page of folio, close to an illuminated capital, the black drop had flattened itself. Around the original sphere had been shed splashes of all conceivable shapes-rays, rockets, dotted lines, arrowheads, all the freakish impromptu of chaos. Next, the slope lending its aid, the channels had drained into one, and by this time a black rivulet was crawling downward to the margin. One or two readers near had risen, and now eyed me like examining magistrates. I waited for an outbreak, motionless, dazed, muttering words that did not mend the case at all. "What a pity! Oh, I'm so sorry! If I had only known—" The student of the Early Text stood motionless as I. Together we watched the ink trickle. Suddenly, summoning his wits together, he burrowed with feverish haste in his morocco writing-case, pulled out a sheet of blotting-paper, and began to soak up the ink with the carefulness of a Sister of Mercy stanching a wound. I seized the opportunity to withdraw discreetly to the third row of tables, where the attendant had just deposited my books. Fear is so unreasoning. Very likely by saying no more about it, by making off and hiding my head in my hands, like a man crushed by the weight of his remorse, I might disarm this wrath. I tried to think so. But I knew well enough that there was more to come. I had hardly taken my seat when, looking up, I could see between my fingers the little man standing up and gesticulating beside one of the keepers. At one moment he rapped the damning page with his forefinger; the next, he turned sidewise and flung out a hand toward me; and I divined, without hearing a word, all the bitterness of his invective. The keeper appeared to take it seriously. I felt myself blushing. "There must be," thought I, "some law against ink-stains, some decree, some regulation, something drawn up for the protection of Early Texts. And the penalty is bound to be terrible, since it has been enacted by the learned; expulsion, no doubt, besides a fine—an enormous fine. They are getting ready over there to fleece me. That book of reference they are consulting is of course the catalogue of the sale where this treasure was purchased. I shall have to replace the Early Text! O Uncle Mouillard!"

I sat there, abandoned to my sad reflections, when one of the attendants, whom I had not seen approaching, touched me on the shoulder.

"The keeper wishes to speak to you."

I rose up and went. The terrible reader had gone back to his seat.

"It was you, sir, I believe, who blotted the folio just now?"

"It was, sir."

"You did not do so on purpose?"

"Most certainly not, sir! I am indeed sorry for he accident."

"You ought to be. The volume is almost unique; and the blot, too, for that matter. I never saw such a blot! Will you, please, leave me your Christian name, surname, profession, and address?"

I wrote down, "Fabien Jean Jacques Mouillard, barrister, 91 Rue de Rennes."

"Is that all?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, that is all for the present. But I warn you that Monsieur Charnot is exceedingly annoyed. It might be as well to offer him some apology."

"Monsieur Charnot?"

"Yes. It is Monsieur Charnot, of the Institute, who was reading the Early Text."

"Merciful Heavens!" I ejaculated, as I went back to my seat; "this must be the man of whom my tutor spoke, the other day! Monsieur Flamaran belongs to the Academy of Moral and Political Science, the other to the Institute of Inscriptions and the Belles-Lettres. Charnot? Yes, I have those two syllables in my ear. The very last time I saw Monsieur Flamaran he let fall 'my very good friend Charnot, of the 'Inscriptions.' They are friends. And I am in a pretty situation; threatened with I don't know what by the Library—for the keeper told me positively that this was all 'for the present'—but not for the future; threatened to be disgraced in my tutor's eyes; and all because this learned man's temper is upset.

"I must apologize. Let me see, what could I say to Monsieur Charnot? As a matter of fact, it's to the Early Text that I ought to apologize. I have spilled no ink over Monsieur Charnot. He is spotless, collar and cuffs; the blot, the splashes, all fell on the Text. I will say to him, 'Sir, I am exceedingly sorry to have interrupted you so unfortunately in your learned studies.! 'Learned studies' will tickle his vanity, and should go far to appease him."

I was on the point of rising. M. Charnot anticipated me.

Grief is not always keenest when most recent. As he approached I saw he was more irritated and upset than at the moment of the accident. Above his pinched, cleanshaven chin his lips shot out with an angry twitch. The portfolio shook under his arm. He flung me a look full of tragedy and went on his way.

Well, well; go your way, M. Charnot! One doesn't offer apologies to a man in his wrath. You shall have them by-and-bye, when we meet again.

CHAPTER II

THE JUNIAN LATINS

December 28, 1884.

This afternoon I paid M. Flamaran a visit. I had been thinking about it for the last week, as I wanted him to help my Junian Latins out of a mess. I am acquiring a passion for that interesting class of freedmen. And really it is only natural. These Junian Latins were poor slaves, whose liberation was not recognized by the strict and ancient laws of Rome, because their masters chose to liberate them otherwise than by 'vindicta, census, or testamentum'. On this account they lost their privileges, poor victims of the legislative intolerance of the haughty city. You see, it begins to be touching, already. Then came on the scene Junius Norbanus, consul by rank, and a true democrat, who brought in a law, carried it, and gave them their freedom. In exchange, they gave him immortality. Henceforward, did a slave obtain a few kind words from his master over his wine? he was a Junian Latin. Was he described as 'filius meus' in a public document? Junian Latin. Did he wear the cap of liberty, the pileus, at his master's funeral? Junian Latin. Did he disembowel his master's corpse? Junian Latin, once more, for his trouble.

What a fine fellow this Norbanus must have been! What an eye for everything, down to the details of a funeral procession, in which he could find an excuse for emancipation! And that, too, in the midst of the wars of Marius and Sylla in which he took part. I can picture him seated before his tent, the evening after the battle. Pensive, he reclines upon his shield as he watches the slave who is grinding notches out of his sword. His eyes fill with tears, and he murmurs, "When peace is made, my faithful Stychus, I shall have a pleasant surprise for you. You shall hear talk of the Lex Junia Norband, I promise you!"

Is not this a worthy subject for picture or statue in a competition for the Prix de Rome?

A man so careful of details must have assigned a special dress to these special freedmen of his creation; for at Rome even freedom had its livery. What was this dress? Was there one at all? No authority that I know of throws any light on the subject. Still one hope remains: M. Flamaran. He knows so many things, he might even know this.

M. Flamaran comes from the south-Marseilles, I think. He is not a specialist in Roman law; but he is encyclopedic, which comes to the same thing. He became known while still young, and deservedly; few lawyers are so clear, so safe, so lucid. He is an excellent lecturer, and his opinions are in demand. Yet he owes much of his fame to the works which he has not written. Our fathers, in their day, used to whisper to one another in the passages of the Law School, "Have you heard the news? Flamaran is going to bring out the second volume of his great work. He means to publish his lectures. He has in the press a treatise which will revolutionize the law of mortgages; he has been working twenty years at it; a masterpiece, I assure you." Day follows day; no book appears, no treatise is published, and all the while M. Flamaran grows in reputation. Strange phenomenon! like the aloe in the Botanical Gardens. The blossoming of the aloe is an event. "Only think!" says the gaping public, "a flower which has taken twenty springs, twenty summers, twenty autumns, and twenty winters to make up its mind to open!" And meanwhile the roses bloom unnoticed by the town. But M. Flamaran's case is still more strange. Every year it is whispered that he is about to bloom afresh; he never does bloom; and his reputation flourishes none the less. People make lists of the books he might have written. Lucky author!

M. Flamaran is a professor of the old school, stern, and at examination a terror to the candidates. Clad in cap and gown, he would reject his own son. Nothing will serve. Recommendations defeat their object. An unquestioned Roumanian ancestry, an extraction indisputably Japanese, find no more favor in his eyes than an assumed stammer, a sham deafness, or a convalescent pallor put on for the occasion. East and west are alike in his sight. The retired registrar, the pensioned usher aspiring late in life to some petty magistrature, are powerless to touch his heart. For him in vain does the youthful volunteer allow his uniform to peep out beneath his student's gown: he will not profit by the patriotic indulgence he counted on inspiring. His sayings in the examination-room are famous, and among them are some ghastly pleasantries. Here is one, addressed to a victim: "And you, sir, are a law student, while our farmers are in want of hands!"

For my own part I won his favor under circumstances that I never shall forget. I was in for my first examination. We were discussing, or rather I was allowing him to lecture on, the law of wardship, and nodding my assent to his learned elucidations. Suddenly he broke off and asked, "How many opinions have been formulated upon this subject?"

"Two, sir."

"One is absurd. Which? Beware how you give the wrong answer!"

I considered for three agonizing seconds, and hazarded a guess. "The first, sir." I had guessed right. We were friends. At bottom the professor is a capital fellow; kindly, so long as the dignity of the Code is not in question, or the extent of one's legal knowledge; proverbially upright and honorable in his private life.

At home he may be seen at his window tending his canaries, which, he says, is no change of occupation. To get to his house I have only to go by my favorite road through the Luxembourg. I am soon at his door.

"Is Monsieur Flamaran at home?"

The old servant who opened the door eyed me solemnly. So many young freshmen come and pester her master under the pretext of paying their respects. Their respects, indeed! They would bore him to death if he had to see them all. The old woman inferred, probably from my moustache, that I had taken at least my bachelor's degree.

"I think he is."

He was very much at home in his overheated study, where he sat wrapped up in a dressing-gown and keeping one eye shut to strengthen the other.

After a moment's hesitation he recognized me, and held out his hand.

"Ah! my Junian Latin. How are you getting on?"

"I am all right, sir; it's my Junian Latins who are not getting on."

"You don't say so. We must look into that. But before we begin—
I forget where you come from. I like to know where people come from."

"From La Chatre. But I spend my vacations at Bourges with my Uncle
Mouillard."

"Yes, yes, Mouillart with a t, isn't it?"

"No, with a d."

"I asked, you know, because I once knew a General Mouillart who had been through the Crimea, a charming man. But he can not have been a relative, for his name ended with a t."

My good tutor spoke with a delightful simplicity, evidently wishing to be pleasant and to show some interest in me.

"Are you married, young man?"

"No, sir; but I have no conscientious objections."

"Marry young. Marriage is the salvation of young men. There must be plenty of pretty heiresses in Bourges."

"Heiresses, yes. As to their looks, at this distance—"

"Yes, I understand, at this distance of course you can't tell. You should do as I did; make inquiries, go and see. I went all the way to Forez myself to look for my wife."

"Madame Flamaran comes from Forez?"

"Just so; I stayed there a fortnight, fourteen days exactly, in the middle of term-time, and brought back Sidonie. Bourges is a nice town."

"Yes, in summer."

"Plenty of trees. I remember a grand action I won there. One of my learned colleagues was against me. We had both written opinions, diametrically opposed, of course. But I beat him—my word, yes!"

"I dare say."

"My boy, there was nothing left of him. Do you know the case?"

"No."

"A magnificent case! My notes must be somewhere about; I will get them out for you."

The good man beamed. Evidently he had not had a talk all day, and felt he must expand and let himself out to somebody. I appeared in the nick of time, and came in for all his honey. He rose, went to a bookcase, ran his eye along a shelf, took down a volume, and began, in a low tone: "'Cooperation is the mighty lever upon which an effete society relies to extricate itself from its swaddling-clothes and take a loftier flight.' Tut, tut! What stuff is this? I beg your pardon. I was reading from a work on moral philosophy. Where the deuce is my opinion?"

He found it and, text in hand, began a long account of the action, with names, dates, moments of excitement, and many quotations in extenso.

"Yes, my young friend, two hundred and eighteen thousand francs did I win in that action for Monsieur Prebois, of Bourges; you know Prebois, the manufacturer?"

"By name."

At last he put the note-book back on its shelf, and deigned to remember that I had come about the Junian Latins.

"In which of the authorities do you find a difficulty?"

"My difficulty lies in the want of authorities, sir, I wish to find out whether the Junian Latins had not a special dress."

"To be sure." He scratched his head. "Gaius says nothing on the point?"

"No."

"Papinian?"

"No."

"Justinian?"

"No."

"Then I see only one resource."

"What is that?"

"Go to see Charnot."

I felt myself growing pale, and stammered, with a piteous look:

"Monsieur Charnot, of the Acad—"

"The Academy of Inscriptions; an intimate friend of mine, who will welcome you like a son, for he has none himself, poor man!"

"But perhaps the question is hardly important enough for me to trouble him like this—"

"Hey? Not important enough? All new questions are important. Charnot specializes on coins. Coins and costumes are all one. I will write to tell him you are coming."

"I beg, sir—"

"Nonsense; Nonsense; I'll write him this very evening. He will be delighted to see you. I know him well, you understand. He is like me; he likes industrious young men."

M. Flamaran held out his hand.

"Good-by, young man. Marry as soon as you have taken your degree."

I did not recover from the shock till I was halfway across the Luxembourg Gardens, near the Tennis Court, when I sat down, overcome. See what comes of enthusiasm and going to call on your tutor! Ah, young three- and-twenty, when will you learn wisdom?

CHAPTER III

AN APOLOGY

9 P.M.

I have made up my mind. I shall go to see M. Charnot. But before that I shall go to his publisher's and find out something about this famous man's works, of which I know nothing whatever.

December 31st

He lives in the Rue de l'Universite.

I have called. I have seen him. I owe this to an accident, to the servant's forgetting her orders.

As I entered, on the stroke of five, he was spinning a spiral twist of paper beneath the lamplight to amuse his daughter—he a member of the Institute, she a girl of eighteen. So that is how these big-wigs employ their leisure moments!

The library where I found them was full of book cases-open bookcases, bookcases with glass doors, tall bookcases, dwarf bookcases, bookcases standing on legs, bookcases standing on the floor—of statuettes yellow with smoke, of desks crowded with paper-weights, paper-knives, pens, and inkstands of "artistic" pat terns. He was seated at the table, with his back to the fire, his arm lifted, and a hairpin between his finger and thumb—the pivot round which his paper twist was spinning briskly. Across the table stood his daughter, leaning forward with her chin on her hands and her white teeth showing as she laughed for laughing's sake, to give play to her young spirits and gladden her old father's heart as

he gazed on her, delighted.

I must confess it made a pretty picture; and M. Charnot at that moment was extremely unlike the M. Charnot who had confronted me from behind the desk.

I was not left long to contemplate.

The moment I lifted the 'portiere' the girl jumped up briskly and regarded me with a touch of haughtiness, meant, I think, to hide a slight confusion. To compare small things with great, Diana must have worn something of that look at sight of Actaeon. M. Charnot did not rise, but hearing somebody enter, turned half-round in his armchair, while his eyes, still dazzled with the lamplight, sought the intruder in the partial shadow of the room.

I felt myself doubly uneasy in the presence of this reader of the Early
Text and of this laughing girl.

"Sir," I began, "I owe you an apology—"

He recognized me. The girl moved a step.

"Stay, Jeanne, stay. We shall not take long. This gentleman has come to offer an apology."

This was a cruel beginning.

She thought so, too, perhaps, and withdrew discreetly into a dim corner, near the bookcase at the end of the room.

"I have felt deep regret, sir, for that accident the other day—I set down the penholder clumsily, in equilibrium—unstable equilibrium— besides, I had no notion there was a reader behind the desk. Of course, if I had been aware, I should—I should have acted differently."

M. Charnot allowed me to flounder on with the contemplative satisfaction of an angler who has got a fish at the end of his line. He seemed to find me so very stupid, that as a matter of fact I became stupid. And then, there was no answer—not a word. Silence, alas! is not the reproof of kings alone. It does pretty well for everybody. I stumbled on two or three more phrases quite as flatly infelicitous, and he received them with the same faint smile and the same silence.

To escape from my embarrassment:

"Sir," I said, "I came also to ask for a piece of information."

"I am at your service, sir."

"Monsieur Flamaran has probably written to you on the matter?"

"Flamaran?"

"Yes, three days ago."

"I have received no letter; have I, Jeanne?"

"No, father."

"This is not the first time that my excellent colleague has promised to write a letter and has not written it. Never mind, sir; your own introduction is sufficient."

"Sir, I am about to take my doctor's degree."

"In arts?"

"No, in law; but I have a bachelor's degree in arts."

"You will follow it up with a degree in medicine, no doubt?"

"Really, sir—"

"Why—Why not, since you are collecting these things? You have, then, a bent toward literature?"

"So I have been told."

"A pronounced inclination—hey? to scribble verse."

"Ah, yes!"

"The old story; the family driving a lad into law; his heart leaning toward letters; the Digest open on the table, and the drawers stuffed with verses! Isn't that so?"

I bowed. He glanced toward his daughter.

"Well, sir, I confess to you that I don't understand—don't understand at all—this behavior of yours. Why not follow your natural bent? You youngsters nowadays—I mean no offence—you youngsters have no longer any mind of your own. Take my case; I was seventeen when I began to take an interest in numismatics. My family destined me for the Stamp Office; yes, sir, the Stamp Office. I had against me two grandfathers, two grandmothers, my father, my mother, and six uncles—all furious. I held out, and that has led me to the Institute. Hey, Jeanne?"

Mademoiselle Jeanne had returned to the table, where she was standing when I entered, and seemed, after a moment, to busy herself in arranging the books scattered in disarray on the green cloth. But she had a secret object—to regain possession of the paper spiral that lay there neglected, its pin sticking up beside the lamp-stand. Her light hand, hovering hither and thither, had by a series of cunning manoeuvres got the offending object behind a pile of duodecimos, and was now withdrawing it stealthily among the inkstands and paperweights.

M. Charnot interrupted this little stratagem.

She answered very prettily, with a slight toss of the head:

"But, father, not everybody can be in the Institute."

"Far from it, Jeanne. This gentleman, for instance, devotes himself to one method of inking parchment that never will make him my colleague. Doctor of Laws and Master of Arts,—I presume, sir, you are going to be a notary?"

"Excuse me, an advocate."

"I was sure of it. Jeanne, my dear, in country families it is a standing dilemma; if not a notary, then an advocate; if not an advocate, then a notary."

M. Charnot spoke with an exasperating half-smile.

I ought to have laughed, to be sure; I ought to have shown sense enough at any rate to hold my tongue and not to answer the gibes of this vindictive man of learning. Instead, I was stupid enough to be nettled and to lose my head.

"Well," I retorted, "I must have a paying profession. That one or another—what does it matter? Not everybody can belong to the Institute, as your daughter remarked; not everybody can afford himself the luxury of publishing, at his own expense, works that sell twenty-seven copies or so."

I expected a thunderbolt, an explosion. Not a bit of it. M. Charnot smiled outright with an air of extreme geniality.

"I perceive, sir, that you are given to gossiping with the booksellers."

"Why, yes, sir, now and then."

"It's a very pretty trait, at your age, to be already so strong in bibliography. You will permit me, nevertheless, to add something to your present stock of notions. A large sale is one thing to look at, but not the right thing. Twenty-seven copies of a book, when read by twenty- seven men of intelligence, outweigh a popular success. Would you believe that one of my friends had no more than eight copies printed of a mathematical treatise? Three of these he has given away. The other five are still unsold. And that man, sir, is the first mathematician in France!"

Mademoiselle Jeanne had taken it differently. With lifted chin and reddened cheek she shot this sentence at me from the edge of a lip disdainfully puckered:

"There are such things as 'successes of esteem,' sir!"

Alas! I knew that well, and I had no need of this additional lesson to teach me the rudeness of my remark, to make me feel that I was a brute, an idiot, hopelessly lost in the opinion of M. Charnot and his daughter. It was cruel, all the same. Nothing was left for me but to hurry my departure. I got up to go.

"But," said M. Charnot in the smoothest of tones, "I do not think we have yet discussed the question that brought you here."

"I should hesitate, sir, to trespass further on your time."

"Never mind that. Your question concerns?"

"The costume of the Latini Juniani."

"Difficult to answer, like most questions of dress. Have you read the work, in seventeen volumes, by the German, Friedchenhausen?"

"No."

"You must have read, at any rate, Smith, the Englishman, on ancient costume?"

"Nor that either. I only know Italian."

"Well, then, look through two or three treatises on numismatics, the 'Thesaurus Morellianus', or the 'Praestantiora Numismata', of Valliant, or Banduri, or Pembrock, or Pellerin. You may chance upon a scent."

"Thank you, thank you, sir!"

He saw me to the door.

As I turned to go I noticed that his daughter was standing motionless still, with the face of an angry Diana. She held between her fingers the recovered spiral.

I found myself in the street.

I could not have been more clumsy, more ill-bred, or more unfortunate. I had come to make an apology and had given further offence. Just like my luck! And the daughter, too—I had hurt her feelings. Still, she had stood up for me; she had said to her father, "Not every one can be in the Institute," evidently meaning, "Why are you torturing this poor young man? He is bashful and ill at ease. I feel sorry for him." Sorry—yes; no doubt she felt sorry for me at first. But then I came out with that impertinence about the twenty-seven copies, and by this time she hates me beyond a doubt. Yes, she hates me. It is too painful to think of.

Mademoiselle Charnot will probably remain but a stranger to me, a fugitive apparition in my path of life; yet her anger lies heavy upon me, and the thought of those disdainful lips pursues me.

I had rarely been more thoroughly disgusted with myself, and with all about me. I needed something to divert me, to distract me, to make me forget, and so I set off for home by the longest way, going down the Rue de Beaune to the Seine.

I declare, we get some perfect winter days in Paris! Just now, the folks who sit indoors believe that the sun is down and have lighted their lamps; but outside, the sky—a pale, rain-washed blue—is streaked with broad rays of rose-pink. It is freezing, and the frost has sprinkled diamonds everywhere, on the trees, the roofs, the parapets, even on the cabmen's hats, that gather each a sparkling cockade as they pass along through the mist. The river is running in waves, white-capped here and there. On the penny steamers no one but the helmsman is visible. But what a crowd on the Pont de Carrousel! Fur cuffs and collars pass and repass on the pavements; the roadway trembles beneath the endless line of Batignolles—Clichy omnibuses and other vehicles. Every one seems in a hurry. The pedestrians are brisk, the drivers dexterous. Two lines of traffic meet, mingle without jostling, divide again into fresh lines and are gone like a column of smoke. Although slips are common in this crowd, its intelligent agility is all its own. Every face is ruddy, and almost all are young. The number of young men, young maidens, young wives, is beyond belief, Where are the aged? At home, no doubt, by the chimney-corner. All the city's youth is out of doors.

Its step is animated; that is the way of it. It is wideeyed, and in its eyes is the sparkle of life. The looks of the young are always full of the future; they are sure of life. Each has settled his position, his career, his dream of commonplace well-being. They are all alike; and they might all be judges, so serious they appear about it. They walk in pairs, bolt upright, looking neither right nor left, talking little as they hurry along toward the old Louvre, and are soon swallowed out of sight in the gathering mist, out of which the gaslights glimmer faintly.

They are all on their way to dine on the right bank.

I am going to dine on the left bank, at Carre's, where one sees many odd customers. Farewell, river!

Good night, old Charnot! Blessings on you, Mademoiselle Jeanne!

CHAPTER IV

THE STORY OF SYLVESTRE

8 P.M.

I am back in my study. It is very cold; Madame Menin, my housekeeper, has let the fire out. Hallo! she has left her duster, too, lying on the manuscript of my essay.

Is it an omen, a presage of that dust which awaits my still unfinished work? Who can fathom Dame Fortune's ironic humor?

Eight o'clock.... Counsellor Mouillard has finished his pleadings and must be sitting down to a game of whist with Counsellors Horlet and Hublette, of the Court of Bourges. They wait for me to make up the four. Perish the awful prospect!

And M. Charnot? He, I suppose, is still spinning the paper spiral. How easily serious people are amused! Perhaps I am a serious person. The least thing amuses me. By the way, is Mademoiselle Jeanne fair or dark? Let me try to recollect. Why, fair, of course. I remember the glint of gold in the little curls about her temples, as she stood by the lamp. A pleasant face, too; not exactly classic, but rosy and frank; and then she has that animation which so many pretty women lack.

Madame Menin has forgotten something else. She has forgotten to shut my window. She has designs upon my life!

I have just shut the window. The night is calm, its stars twinkling through a haze. The year ends mournfully.

I remember at school once waking suddenly on such a night as this, to find the moonlight streaming into my eyes. At such a moment it is always a little hard to collect one's scattered senses, and take in the midnight world around, so unhomely, so absolutely still. First I cast my eyes along the two rows of beds that stretched away down the dormitory—two parallel lines in long perspective; my comrades huddled under their blankets in shapeless masses, gray or white according as they lay near or far from the windows; the smoky glimmer of the oil lamp half-way down the room; and at the end, in the deeper shadows, the enclosure of yellow curtains surrounding the usher's bed.

Not a sound about me; all was still. But without, my ear, excited and almost feverishly awake, caught the sound of a strange call, very sweet, again and again repeated—fugitive notes breathing appeal, tender and troubled. Now they grew quite distant, and I heard no more than a phantom of sound; now they came near, passed over my head, and faded again into the distance. The moon's clear rays invited me to clear up the mystery. I sprang from my bed, and ran in my nightshirt to open the window. It was about eleven o'clock. Together the keen night-air and the moonlight wrapped me round, thrilling me with delight. The large courtyard lay deserted with its leafless poplars and spiked railings. Here and there a grain of sand sparkled. I raised my eyes, and from one constellation to another I sought the deep blue of heaven in vain; not a shadow upon it, not one dark wing outlined. Yet all the while the same sad and gentle cry wandered and was lost in air, the chant of an invisible soul which seemed in want of me, and had perhaps awakened me.

The thought came upon me that it was the soul of my mother calling to me —my mother, whose voice was soft and very musical.

"I am caring for thee," said the voice. "I am caring for thee; I can see thee," it said, "I can see thee. I love thee! I love thee!"

"Reveal thyself!" I called back. "Oh, mother, reveal thyself!" And I strove feverishly to catch sight of her, following the voice as it swept around in circles; and seeing nothing, I burst into tears.

Suddenly I was seized roughly by the ear.

"What are you doing here, you young rascal? Are you mad? The wind is blowing right on to my bed.

Five hundred lines!"

The usher, in nightdress and slippers, was rolling his angry eyes on me.

"Yes, sir; certainly, sir! But don't you hear her?"

"Who is it?"

"My mother."

He looked to see whether I were awake; cocked his head to one side and listened; then shut the window angrily and went off shrugging his shoulders.

"It's only the plovers flying about the moon," said he. "Five hundred lines!"

I did my five hundred lines. They taught me that dreaming was illegal and dangerous, but they neither convinced nor cured me.

I still believe that there are scattered up and down in nature voices that speak, but which few hear; just as there are millions of flowers that bloom unseen by man. It is sad for those who catch a hint of it. Perforce they come back and seek the hidden springs. They waste their youth and vigor upon empty dreams, and in return for the fleeting glimpses they have enjoyed, for the perfect phrase half caught and lost again, will have given up the intercourse of their kind, and even friendship itself. Yes, it is sad for the schoolboys who open their windows to gaze at the moon, and never drop the habit! They will find themselves, all too soon, solitaries in the midst of life, desolate as I am desolate tonight, beside my dead fire.

No friend will come to knock at my door; not one. I have a few comrades to whom I give that name. We do not loathe one another. At need they would help me. But we seldom meet. What should they do here? Dreamers make no confidences; they shrivel up into themselves and are caught away on the four winds of heaven. Politics drive them mad; gossip fails to interest them; the sorrows they create have no remedy save the joys that they invent; they are natural only when alone, and talk well only to themselves.

The only man who can put up with this moody contrariety of mine is Sylvestre Lampron. He is nearly twenty years older than I. That explains his forbearance. Besides, between an artist like him and a dreamer like myself there is only the difference of handiwork. He translates his dreams. I waste mine; but both dream. Dear old Lampron! Kindly, stalwart heart! He has withstood that hardening of the moral and physical fibre which comes over so many men as they near their fortieth year. He shows a brave front to work and to life. He is cheerful, with the manly cheerfulness of a noble heart resigned to life's disillusions.

When I enter his home, I nearly always find him sitting before a small ground-glass window in the corner of his studio, bent over some engraving. I have leave to enter at all hours. He is free not to stir from his work. "Good-day," he calls out, without raising his head, without knowing for certain who has come in, and goes on with the engraving he has in hand. I settle down at the end of the room, on the sofa with the faded cover, and, until Lampron deigns to grant me audience, I am free to sleep, or smoke, or turn over the wonderful drawings that lean against the walls. Among them are treasures beyond price; for Lampron is a genius whose only mistake is to live and act with modesty, so that as yet people only say that he has "immense talent." No painter or engraver of repute—and he is both—has served a more conscientious apprenticeship, or sets greater store on thoroughness in his art. His drawing is correct beyond reproach—a little stiff, like the early painters. You can guess from his works his partiality for the old masters—Perugino, Fra Angelico, Botticelli, Memling, Holbein—who, though not the masters in fashion, will always be masters in vigor of outline, directness, in simple grace, and genuine feeling. He has copied in oils, water-colors, pen, or pencil, nearly all the pictures of these masters in the Louvre, in Germany, in Holland, and especially in Italy, where he lived for many years. With tastes such as his came the habit, or rather the fixed determination, never to paint or engrave any but sacred subjects. Puffs and cliques are his abomination. His ideal is the archaic rendered by modern methods. An artist of this type can but obtain the half-grudging esteem of his own profession, and of the few critics who really understand something about art. Gladly, and with absolute disdain, he leaves to others the applause of the mob, the gilded patronage of American purchasers, and the right to wear lace cuffs. In short, in an age when the artist is often half a manufacturer and half a charlatan, he is an artist only.

Now and then he is rich, but never for long. Half of his earnings goes in alms; half into the pockets of his mendicant brethren. They hear the gold jingle before it is counted, and run with outstretched palms. Each is in the depths of misfortune; on the eve of ascending the fatal slope; lost, unless the helpful hand of Lampron will provide, saved if he will lend wherewithal to buy a block of marble, to pay

a model, to dine that evening. He lends—I should say gives; the words mean the same in many societies. Of all that he has gained, fame alone remains, and even this he tries to do without—modest, retiring, shunning all entertainments. I believe he would often be without the wherewithal to live were it not for his mother, whom he supports, and who does him the kindness to need something to live on. Madame Lampron does not hoard; she only fills the place of those dams of cut turf which the peasants build in the channels of the Berry in spring; the water passes over them, beneath them, even through them, but still a little is left for the great droughts.

I love my friend Lampron, though fully aware of his superiority. His energy sets me up, his advice strengthens me, he peoples for me the vast solitude of Paris.

Suppose I go to see him? A lonely watch to-night would be gloomier than usual. The death of the year brings gloomy thoughts, the thirty-first of December, St. Sylvester's day—St. Sylvester! Why, that is his birthday! Ungrateful friend, to give no thought to it! Quick! my coat, my stick, my hat, and let me run to see these two early birds before they seek their roost.

When I entered the studio, Lampron was so deep in his work that he did not hear me. The large room, lighted only in one corner, looked weird enough. Around me, and among the medley of pictures and casts and the piles of canvases stacked against the wall, the eye encountered only a series of cinder-gray tints and undetermined outlines casting long amorphous shadows half-way across the ceiling. A draped lay figure leaning against a door seemed to listen to the whistling of the wind outside; a large glass bay opened upon the night. Nothing was alive in this part of the room, nothing alight except a few rare glints upon the gold of the frames, and the blades of two crossed swords. Only in a corner, at the far end, at a distance exaggerated by the shadows, sat Lampron engraving, solitary, motionless, beneath the light of a lamp. His back was toward me. The lamp's rays threw a strong light on his delicate hand, on the workmanlike pose of his head, which it surrounded with a nimbus, and on a painting—a woman's head—which he was copying. He looked superb like that, and I thought how doubly tempted Rembrandt would have been by the deep significance as well as by the chiaroscuro of this interior.

I stamped my foot. Lampron started, and turned half around, narrowing his eyes as he peered into the darkness.

"Ah, it's you," he said. He rose and came quickly toward me, as if to prevent me from approaching the table.

"You don't wish me to look?"

He hesitated a moment.

"After all, why not?" he answered.

The copper plate was hardly marked with a few touches of the needle. He turned the reflector so as to throw all its rays upon the painting.

"O Lampron, what a charming head!"

It was indeed a lovely head; an Italian girl, three quarter face, painted after the manner of Leonardo, with firm but delicate touches, and lights and shades of infinite subtlety, and possessing, like all that master's portraits of women, a straightforward look that responds to the gazer's, but which he seeks to interrogate in vain. The hair, brown with golden lights, was dressed in smooth plaits above the temples. The neck, 1351 somewhat long, emerged from a dark robe broadly indicated.

"I do not know this, Sylvestre?"

"No, it's an old thing."

"A portrait, of course?"

"My first."

"You never did better; line, color, life, you have got them all."

"You need not tell me that! In one's young days, look you, there are moments of real inspiration, when some one whispers in the ear and guides the hand; a lightness of touch, the happy audacity of the beginner, a wealth of daring never met with again. Would you believe that I have tried ten times to reproduce that in etching without success?"

"Why do you try?"

"Yes, that is the question. Why? It's a bit foolish."

"You never could find such a model again; that is one reason."

"Ah, no, you are right. I never could find her again."

"An Italian of rank? a princess, eh?"

"Something like it."

"What has become of her?"

"Ah, no doubt what becomes of all princesses. Fabien, my young friend, you who still see life through fairy-tales, doubtless you imagine her happy in her lot—wealthy, spoiled, flattered, speaking with disdainful lips at nightfall, on the terrace of her villa among the great pines, of the barbarian from across the Alps who painted her portrait twenty years since; and, in the same sentence, of her—last new frock from Paris?"

"Yes, I see her so—still beautiful."

"You are good at guessing, Fabien. She is dead, my friend, and that ideal beauty is now a few white bones at the bottom of a grave."

"Poor girl!"

Sylvestre had used a sarcastic tone which was not usual with him.
He was contemplating his work with such genuine sadness that I was awed.
I divined that in his past, of which I knew but little, Lampron kept a
sorrow buried that I had all unwittingly revived.

"My friend," said I, "let that be; I come to wish you many happy returns."

"Many happy returns? Ah, yes, my poor mother wished me that this morning; then I set to work and forgot all about it. I am glad you came. She would feel hurt, dear soul, if I forgot to pass a bit of this evening with her. Let us go and find her."

"With all my heart, Sylvestre, but I, too, have forgotten something."

"What?"

"I have brought no flowers."

"Never mind, she has plenty; strong-scented flowers of the south, a whole basketful, enough to keep a hive of bees or kill a man in his sleep, which you will. It is a yearly attention from an unhappy creditor."

"Debtor, you mean."

"I mean what I say—a creditor."

He lifted the lamp. The shadows shifted and ran along the walls like huge spiders, the crossed swords flashed, the Venus of Milo threw us a lofty glance, Polyhymnia stood forth pensive and sank back into shadow. At the door I took the draped lay figure in my arms. "Excuse me," I said as I moved it—and we left the studio for Madame Lampron's little sitting-room.

She was seated near a small round table, knitting socks, her feet on a hot-water bottle. Her kind old rough and wrinkled face beamed upon us. She thrust her needles under the black lace cap she always wore, and drew them out again almost immediately.

"It needed your presence, Monsieur Mouillard," said she, "to drag him from his work."

"Saint Sylvester's day, too. It is fearful! Love for his art has changed your son's nature, Madame Lampron."

She gave him a tender look, as on entering the room he bent over the fire and shook out his half-smoked pipe against the bars, a thing he never failed to do the moment he entered his mother's room.

"Dear child!" said she.

Then turning to me:

"You are a good friend, Monsieur Fabien. Never have we celebrated a

Saint Sylvester without you since you came to Paris."

"Yet this evening, Madame, I have failed in my traditions, I have no flowers. But Sylvestre tells me that you have just received flowers from the south, from an unfortunate creditor."

My words produced an unusual effect upon her. She, who never stopped knitting to talk or to listen, laid her work upon her knees, and fixed her eyes upon me, filled with anxiety.

"Has he told you?"

Lampron who was poking the fire, his slippered feet stretched out toward the hearth, turned his head.

"No, mother, I merely told him that we had received a basket of flowers. Not much to confide. Yet why should he not know all? Surely he is our friend enough to know all. He should have known it long since were it not cruel to share between three a burden that two can well bear."

She made no answer, and began again to twist the wool between her needles, but nervously and as if her thoughts were sad.

To change the conversation I told them the story of my twofold mishap at the National Library and at M. Charnot's. I tried to be funny, and fancied I succeeded. The old lady smiled faintly. Lampron remained grave, and tossed his head impatiently. I summed my story thus:

"Net gain: two enemies, one of them charming."

"Oh, enemies!" said Sylvestre, "they spring up like weeds. One can not prevent them, and great sorrows do not come from them. Still, beware of charming enemies."

"She hates me, I swear. If you could have seen her!"

"And you?"

"Me? She is nothing to me."

"Are you sure?"

He put the question gravely, without looking in my face, as he twisted a paper spill.

I laughed.

"What is the matter with you to-day, misanthrope? I assure you that she is absolutely indifferent to me. But even were it otherwise, Sylvestre, where would be the wrong?"

"Wrong? No wrong at all; but I should be anxious for you; I should be afraid. See here, my friend. I know you well. You are a born man of letters, a dreamer, an artist in your way. You have to help you on entering the redoubtable lists of love neither foresight, nor a cool head, nor determination. You are guided solely by your impressions; by them you rise or fall. You are no more than a child."

"I quite agree. What next?"

"What next?" He had risen, and was speaking with unusual vehemence. "I once knew some one like you, whose first passion, rash, but deep as yours would be, broke his heart forever. The heart, my friend, is liable to break, and can not be mended like china."

Lampron's mother interrupted him afresh, reproachfully.

"He came to wish you a happy birthday, my child."

"One day, mother, is as good as another to listen to good advice. Besides, I am only talking of one of my friends. 'Tis but a short story, Fabien, and instructive. I will give it you in very few words. My friend was very young and enthusiastic. He was on his way through the galleries of Italy, brush in hand, his heart full of the ceaseless song of youth in holiday. The world never had played him false, nor balked him. He made the future bend to the fancy of his dreams. He seldom descended among common men from those loftier realms where the contemplation of endless masterpieces kept his spirit as on wings. He admired, copied, filled his soul with the glowing beauty of Italian landscape and Italian art. But one day, without reflection, without knowledge, without foresight, he was rash enough to fall in love with a girl of noble birth whose portrait he was painting; to speak to her and to win her love. He thought then, in the silly innocence of his youth, that art abridges all distance and that love effaces it. Crueller nonsense never was uttered, my poor Fabien. He soon found this; he tried to struggle against the

parent's denial, against himself, against her, powerless in all alike, beaten at every point.... The end was— Do you care to learn the end? The girl was carried off, struck down by a brief illness, soon dead; the man, hurled out of heaven, bruised, a fugitive also, is still so weak in presence of his sorrow that even after these long years he can not think of it without weeping."

Lampron actually was weeping, he who was so seldom moved. Down his brown beard, tinged already with gray, a tear was trickling. I noticed that Madame Lampron was stooping lower and lower over her needles. He went on:

"I have kept the portrait, the one you saw, Fabien. They would like to have it over yonder. They are old folk by now. Every year they ask me for this relic of our common sorrow; every year they send me, about this time a basket of white flowers, chiefly lilacs, the dead girl's flower, and their meaning is, 'Give up to us what is left of her, the masterpiece built up of your youth and hers.' But I am selfish, Fabien. I, like them, am jealous of all the sorrows this portrait recalls to me, and I deny them. Come, mother, where are the flowers? I have promised Fabien to show them to him."

But his old mother could not answer. Having no doubt bewept this sorrow too often to find fresh tears, her eyes followed her son with restless compassion. He, beside the window, was hunting among the chairs and lounges crowded in this corner of the little sitting-room.

He brought us a box of white wood. "See," said he, "'tis my wedding bouquet."

And he emptied it on the table. Parma violets, lilacs, white camellias and moss rolled out in slightly faded bunches, spreading a sweet smell in which there breathed already a vague scent of death and corruption. A violet fell on my knees. I picked it up.

He looked for a moment at the heap on the table.

"I keep none," said he: "I have too many reminders without them. Cursed flowers!"

With one motion of his arm he swept them all up and cast them upon the coals in the hearth. They shrivelled, crackled, grew limp and discolored, and vanished in smoke.

"Now I am going back to my etching. Good-by, Fabien. Good-night, mother."

Without turning his head, he left the room and went back to his studio.

I made a movement to follow him and bring him back.

Madame Lampron stopped me. "I will go myself," said she, "later—much later."

We sat awhile in silence. When she saw me somewhat recovered from the shock of my feelings she went on:

"You never have seen him like this, but I have seen it often. It is so hard! I knew her whom he loved almost as soon as he, for he never hid anything from me. You can judge from her portrait whether hers was not the face to attract an artist like Sylvestre. I saw at once that it was a trial, in which I could do nothing. They were very great people; different from us, you know."

"They refused to let them marry?"

"Oh, no! Sylvestre did not ask; they never had the opportunity of refusing. No, no; it was I. I said to him: 'Sylvestre, this can never be-never!' He was convinced against his will. Then she spoke to her parents on her own account. They carried her off, and there was an end of it."

"He never saw her again."

"Never; he would not have wished it; and then she lived a very little time. I went back there two years later, when they wanted to buy the picture. We were still living in Italy. That was one of the hardest hours of my life. I was afraid of their reproaches, and I did not feel sure of myself. But no, they suffered for their daughter as I for my son, and that brought us together. Still, I did not give up the portrait; Sylvestre set too great store by it. He insists on keeping it, feeding his eyes on it, reopening his wound day by day. Poor child! Forget all this, Monsieur Fabien; you can do nothing to help. Be true to your youth, and tell us next time of Monsieur Charnot and Mademoiselle Jeanne."

Dear Madame Lampron! I tried to console her; but as I never knew my mother, I could find but little to say. All the same, she thanked me and assured me I had done her good.

CHAPTER V

A FRUITLESS SEARCH

January 1, 1885.

The first of January! When one is not yet an uncle and no longer a godson, if one is in no government employ and goes out very little, the number of one's calls on New Year's Day is limited. I shall make five or six this afternoon. It will be "Not at home" in each case; and that will be all my compliments of the season.

No, I am wrong. I have received the compliments of the season.
My porter's wife came up just now, wreathed in smiles.

"Monsieur Mouillard, I wish you a Happy New Year, good health, and Heaven to end your days." She had just said the same to the tenants on the first, second, and third floors. My answer was the same as theirs. I slipped into her palm (with a "Many thanks!" of which she took no notice) a piece of gold, which brought another smile, a curtsey, and she is gone.

This smile comes only once a year; it is not reproduced at any other period, but is a dividend payable in one instalment. This, and a tear on All Souls' Day, when she has been to place a bunch of chrysanthemums on her baby's grave, are the only manifestations of sensibility that I have discovered in her. From the second of January to the second of November she is a human creature tied to a bell-rope, with an immovably stolid face and a monosyllabic vocabulary in which politer terms occur but sparsely.

This morning, contrary to her habits, she has brought up by post two letters; one from my Uncle Mouillard (an answer), and the other—I don't recognize the other. Let's open it first: big envelope, ill-written address, Paris postmark. Hallo! a smaller envelope inside, and on it:

ANTOINE AND MARIE PLUMET.

Poor souls! they have no visiting-cards. But kind hearts are more than pasteboard.

Ten months ago little Madame Plumet, then still unmarried, was in a terrible bother. I remember our first meeting, on a March day, at the corner of the Rue du Quatre-Septembre and the Rue Richelieu. I was walking along quickly, with a bundle of papers under my arm, on my way back to the office where I was head clerk. Suddenly a dressmaker's errand-girl set down her great oilcloth-covered box in my way. I nearly went head first over it, and was preparing to walk around it, when the little woman, red with haste and blushes, addressed me. "Excuse me, sir, are you a lawyer?"

"No, Mademoiselle, not yet."

"Perhaps, sir, you know some lawyers?"

"To be sure I do; my master, to begin with, Counsellor Boule. He is quite close, if you care to follow me."

"I am in a terrible hurry, but I can spare a minute or two. Thank you very much, Monsieur."

And thus I found myself escorted by a small dressmaker and a box of fashions. I remember that I walked a little ahead for fear of being seen in such company by a fellow-clerk, which would have damaged my reputation.

We got to the office. Down went the box again. The little dressmaker told me that she was engaged to M. Plumet, frame-maker. She told her tale very clearly; a little money put by, you see, out of ten years' wages; one may be careful and yet be taken in; and, alas! all has been lent to a cousin in the cabinetmaking trade, who wanted to set up shop; and now he refuses to pay up. The dowry is in danger, and the marriage in suspense.

"Do not be alarmed, Mademoiselle; we will summons this atrocious cabinet- maker, and get a judgment against him. We shall not let him go until he has disgorged, and you shall be Madame Plumet."

We kept our word. Less than two months later—thanks to my efforts—the dowry was recovered; the banns were put up; and the little dressmaker paid a second visit to the office, this time with M. Plumet, who was even more embarrassed than she.

"See, Antoine! this is Monsieur Mouillard, who undertook our case! Thank you again and again, Monsieur Mouillard, you really have been too kind! What do I owe you for your trouble?"

"You must ask my master what his fees come to, Mademoiselle."

"Yes, but you? What can I do for you?"

The whole office, from the messenger to the clerk who came next to me, had their eyes upon me. I rose to the occasion, and in my uncle's best manner I replied:

"Be happy, Mademoiselle, and remember me."

We laughed over it for a week.

She has done better, she has remembered it after eight months. But she has not given her address. That is a pity. I should have liked to see them both again. These young married folk are like the birds; you hear their song, but that does not tell you the whereabouts of their nest.

Now, uncle, it's your turn.

Here it is again, your unfailing letter anticipated, like the return of the comets, but less difficult to analyze than the weird substance of which comets are composed. Every year I write to you on December 28th, and you answer me on the 31st in time for your letter to reach me on New Year's morning. You are punctual, dear uncle; you are even attentive; there is something affectionate in this precision. But I do not know why your letters leave me unmoved. The eighteen to twenty-five lines of which each is composed are from your head, rather than your heart. Why do you not tell me of my parents, whom you knew; of your daily life; of your old servant Madeleine, who nursed me as a baby; of the Angora cat almost as old as she; of the big garden, so green, so enticing, which you trim with so much care, and which rewards your attention with such luxuriance. It would be so nice, dear uncle, to be a shade more intimate.

Ah, well! let us see what he writes:

"BOURGES, December 31, 1884.

"MY DEAR NEPHEW:

> "The approach of the New Year does not find me with the same sentiments with which it leaves you. I make up my yearly accounts from July 31st, so the advent of the 31st of December finds me as indifferent as that of any other day of the said month. Your repinings appear to me the expressions of a dreamer.

"It would, however, not be amiss if you made a start in practical life. You come of a family not addicted to dreaming. Three Mouillards have, if I may say so, adorned the legal profession at Bourges. You will be the fourth.

"As soon as you have taken your doctor's degree-which I presume should not be long—I shall expect you the very next day, or the day after that at the furthest; and I shall place you under my supervision.

"The practice is not falling off, I can assure you. In spite of age, I still possess good eyes and good teeth, the chief qualifications for a lawyer. You will find everything ready and in good order here.

"I am obliged to you for your good wishes, which I entirely reciprocate.

"Your affectionate uncle,
"BRUTUS MOUILLARD."

"P. S.—The Lorinet family have been to see me. Mademoiselle Berthe is really quite pretty. They have just inherited 751,351 francs.

"I was employed by them in an action relating thereto."

Yes, my dear uncle, you were employed, according to the formula, "in virtue of these and subsequent

engagements," and among the "subsequent engagements" you are kind enough to reckon one between Mademoiselle Berthe Lorinet, spinster, of no occupation, and M. Fabien Mouillard, lawyer. "Fabien Mouillard, lawyer"—that I may perhaps endure, but "Fabien Mouillard, son-in-law of Lorinet," never! One pays too dear for these rich wives. Mademoiselle Berthe is half a foot taller than I, who am moderately tall, and she has breadth in proportion. Moreover, I have heard that her wit is got in proportion. I saw her when she was seventeen, in a short frock of staring blue; she was very thin then, and was escorted by a brother, squeezed inside a schoolboy's suit; they were out for their first walk alone, both red-faced, flurried, shuffling along the sidewalks of Bourges. That was enough. For me she will always wear that look, that frock, that clumsy gait. Recollections, my good uncle, are not unlike instantaneous photographs; and this one is a distinct negative to your designs.

March 3d.

The year is getting on. My essay is growing. The Junian Latin emerges from the fogs of Tiber.

I have had to return to the National Library. My first visits were not made without trepidation. I fancied that the beadle was colder, and that the keepers were shadowing me like a political suspect. I thought it wise to change my side, so now I make out my list of books at the left- hand desk and occupy a seat on the left side of the room.

M. Charnot remains faithful to his post beneath the right-hand inkstand.

I have been watching him. He is usually one of the first to arrive, with nimble, almost springy, step. His hair, which he wears rather long, is always carefully parted in the middle, and he is always freshly shaven. His habit of filling the pockets of his frock-coat with bundles of notes has made that garment swell out at the top into the shape of a basket. He puts on a pair of spectacles mounted in very thin gold, and reads determinedly, very few books it is true, but they are all bound in vellum, and that fixes their date. In his way of turning the leaves there is something sacerdotal. He seems popular with the servants. Some of the keepers worship him. He has very good manners toward every one. Me he avoids. Still I meet him, sometimes in the cloakroom, oftener in the Rue Richelieu on his way to the Seine. He stops, and so do I, near the Fontaine Moliere, to buy chestnuts. We have this taste in common. He buys two sous' worth, I buy one; thus the distinctions of rank are preserved. If he arrives after me, I allow him the first turn to be served; if he is before me, I await my turn with a patience which betokens respect. Yet he never seems to notice it. Once or twice, certainly, I fancied I caught a smile at the corners of his mouth, and a sly twinkle in the corners of his eyes; but these old scholars smile so austerely.

He must have guessed that I wish to meet him. For I can not deny it. I am looking out for an opportunity to repair my clumsy mistake and show myself in a less unfavorable light than I did at that ill-starred visit. And she is the reason why I haunt his path!

Ever since M. Mouillard threatened me with Mademoiselle Berthe Lorinet, the graceful outlines of Mademoiselle Jeanne have haunted me with a persistence to which I have no objection.

It is not because I love her. It does not go as far as that. I am leaving her and leaving Paris forever in a few months. No; the height of my desire is to see her again—in the street, at the theatre, no matter where—to show her by my behavior and, if possible, by my words that I am sorry for the past, and implore her forgiveness. Then there will no longer be a gulf betwixt her and me, I shall be able to meet her without confusion, to invoke her image to put to flight that of Mademoiselle Lorinet without the vision of those disdainful lips to dash me. She will be for me at once the type of Parisian grace and of filial affection. I will carry off her image to the country like the remembered perfume of some rare flower; and if ever I sing 'Hymen Hymnaee'! it shall be with one who recalls her face to me.

I do not think my feelings overpass these bounds. Yet I am not quite sure. I watch for her with a keenness and determination which surprise me, and the disappointment which follows a fruitless search is a shade too lively to accord with cool reason.

After all, perhaps my reason is not cool.

Let me see, I will make up the account of my ventures.

One January afternoon I walked up and down the Rue de l'Universite eight times in succession, from No. 1 to No. 107, and from No. 107 to No. 1. Jeanne did not come out in spite of the brilliancy of the clear winter day.

On the nineteenth of the same month I went to see Andromache, although the classic writers, whom I swear by, are not the writers I most care to hear. I renewed this attempt on the twenty-seventh.

Neither on the first nor on the second occasion did I see Mademoiselle Charnot.

And yet if the Institute does not escort its daughters in shoals to applaud Andromache, where on earth does it take them?

Perhaps nowhere.

Every time I cross the Tuileries Garden I run my eyes over the groups scattered among the chestnut-trees. I see children playing and falling about; nursemaids who leave them crying; mothers who pick them up again; a vagrant guardsman. No Jeanne.

To wind up, yesterday I spent five hours at the Bon Marche.

The spring show was on, one of the great occasions of the year; and I presumed, not without an apparent foundation of reason, that no young or pretty Parisian could fail to be there. When I arrived, about one o'clock, the crowd already filled the vast bazaar. It was not easy to stand against certain currents that set toward the departments consecrated to spring novelties. Adrift like a floating spar I was swept away and driven ashore amid the baby-linen. There it flung me high and dry among the shop-girls, who laughed at the spectacle of an undergraduate shipwrecked among the necessaries of babyhood. I felt shy, and attaching myself to the fortunes of an Englishwoman, who worked her elbows with the vigor of her nation, I was borne around nearly twenty counters. At last, wearied, mazed, dusty as with a long summer walk, I took refuge in the reading-room.

Poor simpleton! I said to myself, you are too early; you might have known that. She can not come with her father before the National Library closes. Even supposing they take an omnibus, they will not get here before a quarter past four.

I had to find something to fill up the somewhat long interval which separated me from that happy moment. I wrote a letter to my Uncle Mouillard, taking seven minutes over the address alone. I had not shown such penmanship since I was nine years old. When the last flourish was completed I looked for a paper; they were all engaged. The directory was free. I took it, and opened it at Ch. I discovered that there were many Charnots in Paris without counting mine: Charnot, grocer; Charnot, upholsterer; Charnot, surgical bandage-maker. I built up a whole family tree for the member of the Institute, choosing, of course, those persons of the name who appeared most worthy to adorn its branches. Of what followed I retain but a vague recollection. I only remember that I felt twice as if some inquisitive individual were looking over my shoulder. The third time I woke up with a start.

"Sir," said a shopwalker, with the utmost politeness, "a gentleman has been waiting three quarters of an hour for the directory. Would you kindly hand it to him if you have quite finished with it?"

It was a quarter to six. I still waited a little while, and then I left, having wasted my day.

O Jeanne! where do you hide yourself? Must I, to meet you, attend mass at St. Germain des Pres? Are you one of those early birds who, before the world is up, are out in the Champs Elysees catching the first rays of the morning, and the country breeze before it is lost in the smoke of Paris? Are you attending lectures at the Sorbonne? Are you learning to sing? and, if so, who is your teacher?

You sing, Jeanne, of course. You remind me of a bird. You have all the quick and easy graces of the skylark. Why should you not have the skylark's voice?

Fabien, you are dropping into poetry!

CHAPTER VI

THE FLOWER-SHOW

April 3d.

For a month I have written nothing in this brown notebook. But to-day there is plenty to put down, and worth the trouble too.

Let me begin with the first shock. This morning, my head crammed with passages from Latin authors, I leaned my brow against the pane of my window which looks on the garden. The garden is not mine, of

course, since I live on the fourth floor; but I have a view of the big weeping- willow in the centre, the sanded path that runs around it, and the four walls lined with borders, one of which separates it from the huge premises of the Carmelites. It is an almost deserted garden. The first- floor tenant hardly ever walks there. His son, a schoolboy of seventeen, was there this morning. He stood two feet from the street wall, motionless, with head thrown back, whistling a monotonous air, which seemed to me like a signal. Before him, however, was nothing but the moss on the old wall gleaming like golden lights. People do not whistle to amuse stones nor yet moss. Farther off, on the other side of the street, the windows of the opposite houses stretched away in long straight lines, most of them standing open.

I thought: "The bird is somewhere there. Some small Abigail with her white cap will look out in a moment."

The suspicion was stupid and ill-natured. How rash are our lightest judgments! Suddenly the school-boy took one step forward, swept his hand quickly along the moss as if he were trying to catch a fly, and ran off to his mother triumphant, delighted, beside himself, with an innocent gray lizard on the tips of his fingers.

"I've got him! I've got him! He was basking in the sun and I charmed him!"

"Basking in the sun!" This was a revelation to me. I flung up the window. Yes, it was true. Warmth and light lay everywhere: on the roofs still glistening with last night's showers; across the sky, whose gay blue proclaimed that winter was done. I looked downward and saw what I had not seen before: the willow bursting into bud; the hepatica in flower at the foot of the camellias, which had ceased to bloom; the pear-trees in the Carmelites' garden flushing red as the sap rose within them; and upon the dead trunk of a fig-tree was a blackbird, escaped from the Luxembourg, who, on tiptoe, with throat outstretched, drunk with delight, answered some far-off call that the wind brought to him, singing, as if in woodland depths, the rapturous song of the year's new birth. Then, oh! then, I could contain myself no longer. I ran down the stairs four at a time, cursing Paris and the Junian Latins who had been cheating me of the spring. What! live there cut off from the world which was created for me, tread an artificial earth of stone or asphalt, live with a horizon of chimneys, see only the sky chopped into irregular strips by roofs smirched with smoke, and allow this exquisite spring to fleet by without drinking in her bountiful delight, without renewing in her youthfulness our youth, always a little staled and overcast by winter! No, that can not be; I mean to see the spring.

And I have seen it, in truth, though cut and tied into bouquets, for my aimless steps led me to the Place St. Sulpice, where the flower-sellers were. There were flowers in plenty, but very few people; it was already late. None the less did I enjoy the sight of all the plants arranged by height and kind, from the double hyacinths, dear to hall-porters, to the first carnations, scarcely in bud, whose pink or white tips just peeped from their green sheaths; then the bouquets, bundles of the same kinds and same shades of flowers wrapped up in paper: lilies-of-the-valley, lilacs, forget-me-nots, mignonette, which being grown under glass has guarded its honey from the bees to scent the air here. Everyone had a look of welcome for those exiles. The girls smiled at them without knowing the reason why. The cabdrivers in line along the sidewalk seemed to enjoy their neighborhood. I heard one of them, with a face like a halfripened strawberry, red, with a white nose, say to a comrade, "Hallo, Francis! that smells good, doesn't it!"

I was walking along slowly, looking into every stall, and when I came to the end I turned right about face.

Great Heavens! Not ten feet off! M. Flamaran, M. Charnot, and Mademoiselle Jeanne!

They had stopped before one of the stalls that I had just left. M. Flamaran was carrying under his arm a pot of cineraria, which made his stomach a perfect bower. M. Charnot was stooping, examining a superb pink carnation. Jeanne was hovering undecided between twenty bunches of flowers, bending her pretty head in its spring hat over each in turn.

"Which, father?"

"Whichever you like; but make up your mind soon; Flamaran is waiting."

A moment more, and the elective affinities carried the day.

"This bunch of mignonette," she said.

I would have wagered on it. She was sure to choose the mignonette— a fair, well-bred, graceful plant like herself. Others choose their camellias and their hyacinths; Jeanne must have something more refined.

She put down her money, caught up the bunch, looked at it for a moment, and held it close to her breast as a mother might hold her child, while all its golden locks drooped over her arm. Then off she ran after her father, who had only changed one carnation for another. They went on toward St. Sulpice—M. Flamaran on the right, M. Charnot in the middle, Jeanne on the left. She brushed past without seeing me. I followed them at a distance. All three were laughing. At what? I can guess; she because she was eighteen, they for joy to be with her. At the end of the marketplace they turned to the left, followed the railings of the church, and bent their steps toward the Rue St. Sulpice, doubtless to take home M. Flamaran, whose cineraria blazed amid the crowd. I was about to turn in the same direction when an omnibus of the Batignolles-Clichy line stopped my way. In an instant I was overwhelmed by the flood of passengers which it poured on the pavements.

"Hallo, you here! How goes it? What are you staring at? My stovepipe? Observe it well, my dear fellow—the latest invention of Leon; the patent ventilating, anti-sudorific, and evaporating hat!"

It was Larive who had just climbed down from the knifeboard.

Every one knows Larive, head clerk in Machin's office. He is to be seen everywhere—a tall, fair man, with little closetrimmed beard, and moustache carefully twisted. He is always perfectly dressed, always in a tall hat and new gloves, full of all the new stories, which he tells as his own. If you believe him, he is at home in all the ministries, whatever party is in power; he has cards for every ball, and tickets for every first night. With all that he never misses a funeral, is a good lawyer, and as solemn when in court as a dozen old mandarins.

"Come, Fabien, will you answer? What are you staring at?"

He turned his head.

"Oh, I see—pretty Mademoiselle Charnot."

"You know her?"

"Of course I do, and her father, too. A pretty little thing!"

I blushed with pleasure.

"Yes, a very pretty little thing; but wants style—dances poorly."

"An admirable defect."

"A little big, too, for her eyes."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Her eyes are a little too small, you understand me?"

"What matters that if they are bright and loving?"

"No matter at all to me; but it seems to have some effect on you. Might you be related?"

"No."

"Or connected by marriage?"

"No."

"So much the better—eh, my boy? And how's uncle? Still going strong?"

"Yes; and longing to snatch me from this Babylon."

"You mean to succeed him?"

"As long hence as possible."

"I had heard you were not enthusiastic. A small practice, isn't it?"

"Not exactly. A matter of a thousand a year!"

"Clear profit?"

"Yes."

"That's good enough. But in the country, my poor fellow, in the country!"

"It would be the death of you, wouldn't it?"

"In forty-eight hours."

"However did you manage to be born there, Larive? I'm surprised at you."

"So am I. I often think about it. Good-by. I must be off."

I caught him by the hand which he held out to me.

"Larive, tell me where you have met Mademoiselle Charnot?"

"Oh, come!—I see it's serious. My dear fellow, I am so sorry I did not tell you she was perfection. If I had only known!"

"That's not what I asked you. Where have you seen her?"

"In society, of course. Where do you expect me to see young girls except in society? My dear Fabien!"

He went off laughing. When he was about ten yards off he turned, and making a speaking-trumpet of his hands, he shouted through them:

"She's perfection!"

Larive is decidedly an ass. His jokes strike you as funny at first; but there's nothing in him, he's a mere hawker of stale puns; there's nothing but selfishness under his jesting exterior. I have no belief in him. Yet he is an old school friend; the only one of my twenty-eight classmates whose acquaintance I have kept up. Four are dead, twenty- three others are scattered about in obscure country places; lost for want of news, as they say at the private inquiry offices. Larive makes up the twenty-eight. I used to admire him, when we were low in the school, because of his long trousers, his lofty contempt of discipline, and his precocious intimacy with tobacco. I preferred him to the good, well- behaved boys. Whenever we had leave out I used to buy gum-arabic at the druggist's in La Chatre, and break it up with a small hammer at the far end of my room, away from prying eyes. I used there to distribute it into three bags ticketed respectively: "large pieces," "middle-sized pieces," "small pieces." When I returned to school with the three bags in my pocket, I would draw out one or the other to offer them to my friends, according to the importance of the occasion, or the degrees of friendship. Larive always had the big bits, and plenty of them. Yet he was none the more grateful to me, and even did not mind chaffing me about these petty attentions by which he was the gainer. He used to make fun of everything, and I used to look up to him. He still makes fun of everything; but for me the age of gumarabic is past and my faith in Larive is gone.

If he believes that he will disparage this charming girl in my eyes by telling me that she is a bad dancer, he is wrong. Of great importance it is to have a wife who dances well! She does not dance in her own house, nor with her husband from the wardrobe to the cradle, but at others' houses, and with other men. Besides, a young girl who dances much has a lot of nonsense talked to her. She may acquire a taste for Larive's buffooneries, for a neat leg, or a sharp tongue. In that case what welcome can she give to simple, timid affection? She will only laugh at it. But you would not laugh, Jeanne, were I to tell you that I loved you. No, I am quite convinced that you would not laugh. And if you loved me, Jeanne, we should not go into society. That would just suit me. I should protect you, yet not hide you. We should have felicity at home instead of running after it to balls and crushes, where it is never to be found. You could not help being aware of the fascination you exert; but you would not squander it on a mob of dancers, and bring home only the last remnants of your good spirits, with the last remnants of your train. Jeanne, I am delighted to hear that you dance badly.

Whither away, Fabien, my friend, whither away? You are letting your imagination run away with you again. A hint from it, and off you go. Come, do use your reason a little. You have seen this young lady again, that is true. You admired her; that was for the second time. But she, whom you so calmly speak of as "Jeanne," as if she were something to you, never even noticed you. You know nothing about her but what you suspect from her maiden grace and a dozen words from her lips. You do not know whether she is free, nor how she would welcome the notions you entertain if you gave them utterance, yet here you are saying, "We should go here," "We should do this and that." Keep to the singular, my poor fellow. The plural is far away, very far away, if not entirely beyond your reach.

CHAPTER VII

April 27th.

The end of April. Students, pack and be off! The first warm breezes burst the buds. Meudon is smiling; Clamart breaks into song;, the air in the valley of Chevreuse is heavy with violets; the willows shower their catkins on the banks of the Yvette; and farther yet, over yonder beneath the green domes of the forest of Fontainebleau, the deer prick their ears at the sound of the first riding-parties. Off with you! Flowers line the pathways, the moors are pink with bloom, the undergrowth teems with darting wings. All the town troops out to see the country in its gala dress. The very poorest have a favorite nook, a recollection of the bygone year to be revived and renewed; a sheltered corner that invited sleep, a glade where the shade was grateful, a spot beside the river's brink where the fish used to bite. Each one says, "Don't you remember?" Each one seeks his nest like a home-coming swallow. Does it still hold together? What havoc has been made by the winter's winds, and the rain, and the frost? Will it welcome us, as of old?

I, too, said to Lampron, "Don't you remember?" for we, too, have our nest, and summer days that smile to us in memory. He was in the mood for work, and hesitated. I added in a whisper, "The blackbird's pool!" He smiled, and off we went.

Again, as of old, our destination was St. Germain—not the town, nor the Italian palace, nor yet the terrace whence the view spreads so wide over the Seine, the country dotted with villas, to Montmartre blue in the distance—not these, but the forest. "Our forest," we call it; for we know all its young shoots, all its giant trees, all its paths where poachers and young lovers hide. With my eyes shut I could find the blackbird's pool, the way to which was first shown us by a deer.

Imagine at thirty paces from an avenue, a pool—no, not a pool (the word is incorrect), nor yet a pond—but a fountain hollowed out by the removal of a giant oak. Since the death of this monarch the birches which its branches kept apart have never closed together, and the fountain forms the centre of a little clearing where the moss is thick at all seasons and starred in August with wild pinks. The water, though deep, is deliciously clear. At a depth of more than six feet you can distinguish the dead leaves at the bottom, the grass, the twigs, and here and there a stone's iridescent outline. They all lie asleep there, the waste of seasons gone by, soon to be covered by others in their turn. From time to time out of the depths of these submerged thickets an eft darts up. He comes circling up, quivering his yellowbanded tail, snatches a mouthful of air, and goes down again head first. Save for these alarms the pool is untroubled. It is guarded from the winds by a juniper, which an eglantine has chosen for its guardian and crowns each year with a wreath of roses. Each year, too, a blackbird makes his nest here. We keep his secret. He knows we shall not disturb him. And when I come back to this little nook in the woods, which custom has endeared to us, merely by looking in the water I feel my very heart refreshed.

"What a spot to sleep in!" cried Lampron. "Keep sentry, Fabien; I am going to take a nap."

We had walked fast. It was very hot. He took off his coat, rolled it into a pillow, and placed it beneath his head as he lay down on the grass. I stretched myself prone on a velvety carpet of moss, and gave myself up to a profound investigation of the one square foot of ground which lay beneath my eyes. The number of blades of grass was prodigious. A few, already awned, stood above their fellows, waving like palms- meadowgrass, fescue, foxtail, brome-grass—each slender stalk crowned with a tuft. Others were budding, only half unfolded, amid the darker mass of spongy moss which gave them sustenance. Amid the numberless shafts thus raised toward heaven a thousand paths crisscrossed, each full of obstacles-chips of bark, juniper-berries, beech-nuts, tangled roots, hills raised by burrowing insects, ravines formed by the draining off of the rains. Ants and beetles bustled along them, pressing up hill and down to some mysterious goal. Above them a cunning red spider was tying a blade of grass to an orchid leaf, the pillars it had chosen for its future web; and. when the wind shook the leaves and the sun pierced through to this spot, I saw the delicate roof already mapped out.

I do not know how long my contemplation lasted. The woods were still.
Save for a swarm of gnats which hummed in a minor key around the sleeping
Lampron, nothing stirred, not a leaf even. All nature was silent as it
drank in the full sunshine.

A murmur of distant voices stole on my ear. I rose, and crept through the birches and hazels to the edge of the glade.

At the top of the slope, on the green margin of the glade, shaded by the tall trees, two pedestrians were slowly advancing. At the distance they still were I could distinguish very little except that the man wore a frock-coat, and that the girl was dressed in gray, and was young, to judge by the suppleness of her walk. Nevertheless I felt at once that it was she!

I hid at they came near, and saw her pass on her father's arm, chatting in low tones, full of joy to have escaped from the Rue de l'Universite. She was looking before her with wide-open eyes. M. Charnot kept his eyes on his daughter, more interested in her than in all the wealth of spring. He kept well to the right of the path as the sun ate away the edge of the shadows; and asked, from time to time:

"Are you tired?"

"Oh, no!"

"As soon as you are tired, my dear, we will sit down. I am not walking too fast?"

She answered "No" again, and laughed, and they went on.

Soon they left the avenue and were lost in a green alley. Then a sudden twilight seemed to have closed down on me, an infinite sadness swelled in my heart. I closed my eyes, and—God forgive my weakness, but the tears came.

"Hallo! What part do you intend me to play in all this?" said Lampron behind me.

"'What part'?"

"Yes. It's an odd notion to invite me to your trysting-place."

"Trysting-place? I haven't one."

"You mean to tell me, perhaps, that you came here by chance?"

"Certainly."

"And chanced upon the very moment and the spot where she was passing?"

"Do you want a proof? That young lady is Mademoiselle Charnot."

"Well?"

"Well, I never have said another word to her since my one visit to her father; I have only seen her once, for a moment, in the street. You see there can be no question of trysting-places in this case. I was wondering at her appearance when you awoke. It is luck, or a friendly providence, that has used the beauty of the sunlight, the breeze, and all the sweets of April to bring her, as it brought us, to the forest."

"And that is what fetched the tears?"

"Well, no."

"What, then?"

"I don't know."

"My full-grown baby, I will tell you. You are in love with her!"

"Indeed, Sylvestre, I believe you're right. I confess it frankly to you as to my best friend. It is an old story already; as old, perhaps, as the day I first met her. At first her figure would rise in my imagination, and I took pleasure in contemplating it. Soon this phantom ceased to satisfy; I longed to see her in person. I sought her in the streets, the shops, the theatre. I still blinded myself, and pretended that I only wanted to ask her pardon, so as to remove, before I left Paris, the unpleasant impression I had made at our first meeting. But now, Sylvestre, all these false reasons have disappeared, and the true one is clear. I love her!"

"Not a doubt of it, my friend, not a doubt of it. I have been through it myself."

He was silent, and his eyes wandered away to the faroff woods, perhaps back to those distant memories of his. A shadow rested on his strong face, but only for an instant. He shook off his depression, and his old smile came back as he said:

"It's serious, then?"

"Yes, very serious."

"I'm not surprised; she is a very pretty girl."

"Isn't she lovely?"

"Better than that, my friend; she is good. What do you know about her?"

"Only that she is a bad dancer."

"That's something, to be sure."

"But it isn't all."

"Well, no. But never mind, find out the rest, speak to her, declare your passion, ask for her hand, and marry her."

"Good heavens, Sylvestre, you are going ahead!"

"My dear fellow, that is the best and wisest plan; these vague idyls ought to be hurried on, either to a painless separation or an honorable end in wedlock. In your place I should begin to-morrow."

"Why not to-day?"

"How so?"

"Let's catch them up, and see her again at least."

He began to laugh.

"Run after young girls at my age! Well, well, it was my advice. Come along!"

We crossed the avenue, and plunged into the forest.

Lampron had formerly acquired a reputation for tireless agility among the fox-hunters of the Roman Campagna. He still deserves it. In twenty strides he left me behind. I saw him jumping over the heather, knocking off with his cane the young shoots on the oaks, or turning his head to look at me as I struggled after, torn by brambles and pricked by gorse. A startled pheasant brought him to a halt. The bird rose under his feet and soared into the full light.

"Isn't it beautiful?" said he. "Look out, we must be more careful; we are scaring the game. We should come upon the path they took, about sixty yards ahead."

Five minutes later he was signalling to me from behind the trunk of a great beech.

"Here they are."

Jeanne and M. Charnot were seated on a fallen trunk beside the path, which here was almost lost beneath the green boughs. Their backs were toward us. The old man, with his shoulders bent and his goldknobbed cane stuck into the ground beside him, was reading out of a book which we could not see, while Jeanne, attentive, motionless, her face half turned toward him, was listening. Her profile was outlined against a strip of clear sky. The deep silence of the wood wrapped us round, and we could hear the old scholar's voice; it just reached us.

"Straightway the godlike Odysseus spake these cunning words to the fair Nausicaa: 'Be thou goddess or mortal, O queen, I bow myself before thee! If thou art one of the deities who dwell in boundless heaven, by thy loveliness and grace and height I guess thee to be Artemis, daughter of high Zeus. If thou art a mortal dwelling upon earth, thrice blessed thy father and thy queenly mother, thrice blessed thy dear brothers! Surely their souls ever swell with gladness because of thee, when they see a maiden so lovely step into the circle of the dance. But far the most blessed of all is he who shall prevail on thee with presents and lead thee to his home!'"

I turned to Lampron, who had stopped a few steps in front of me, a little to the right. He had got out his sketch-book, and was drawing hurriedly. Presently he forgot all prudence, and came forth from the shelter of a beech to get nearer to his model. In vain I made sign upon sign, and tried to remind him that we were not thereto paint or sketch. It was useless; the artist within him had broken loose. Sitting down at the required distance on a gnarled root, right in the open, he went on with his work with no thought but for his art.

The inevitable happened. Growing impatient over some difficulty in his sketch, Lampron shuffled his feet; a twig broke, some leaves rustled- Jeanne turned round and saw me looking at her, Lampron sketching her.

What are the feelings of a young girl who in the middle of a forest suddenly discovers that two pairs of eyes are busy with her? A little fright at first; then—when the idea of robbers is dismissed, and a second glance has shown her that it is her beauty, not her life, they want—a touch of satisfied vanity at

the compliment, not unmixed with confusion.

This is exactly what we thought we saw. At first she slightly drew back, with brows knitted, on the verge of an exclamation; then her brows unbent, and the pleasure of finding herself admired, confusion at being taken unawares, the desire of appearing at ease, all appeared at once on her rosy cheeks and in her faintly troubled smile.

I bowed. Sylvestre pulled off his cap.

M. Charnot never stirred.

"Another squirrel?" he said.

"Two this time, I think, father," she answered, in a low voice.

He went on reading.

"'My guest,' made answer the fair Nausicaa, 'for I call thee so since thou seemest not base nor foolish, it is Zeus himself that giveth weal to men—'"

Jeanne was no longer listening. She was thinking. Of what? Of several things, perhaps, but certainly of how to beat a retreat. I guessed it by the movement of her sunshade, which was nervously tracing figures in the turf. I signalled to Lampron. We retired backward. Yet it was in vain; the charm was broken, the peace had been disturbed.

She gave two coughs—musical little coughs, produced at will.

M. Charnot broke off his reading.

"You are cold, Jeanne?"

"Why, no, father."

"Yes, yes, you're cold. Why did you not say so before? Lord, Lord, these children! Always the same—think of nothing!"

He rose without delay, put his book in his pocket, buttoned up his coat, and, leaning on his stick, glanced up a moment at the tree-tops. Then, side by side, they disappeared down the path, Jeanne stepping briskly, upright and supple, between the young branches which soon concealed her.

Still Lampron continued to watch the turning in the path down which she had vanished.

"What are you thinking about?" said I.

He stroked his beard, where lurked a few gray hairs.

"I am thinking, my friend, that youth leaves us in this same way, at the time when we love it most, with a faint smile, and without a word to tell us whither. Mine played me this trick."

"What a good idea of yours to sketch them both. Let me see the sketch."

"No!"

"Why not?"

"It can scarcely be called a sketch; it's a mere scratch."

"Show it, all the same."

"My good Fabien, you ought to know that when I am obstinate I have my reasons, like Balaam's ass. You will not see my sketch-book to-day, nor to-morrow, nor the day after."

I answered with foolish warmth:

"Please yourself; I don't care."

Really I was very much annoyed, and I was rather cool with Lampron when we parted on the platform.

What has come to the fellow? To refuse to show me a sketch he had made before my eyes, and a sketch of Jeanne, too!

April 28th, 9 A.M.

Hide your sketches, Sylvestre; stuff them away in your portfolios, or your pockets; I care little, for I bear Jeanne's image in my heart, and can see it when I will, and I love her, I love her, I love her!

What is to become of her and of me I can not tell. I hope without knowing what or why, or when, and hope alone is comforting.

9 P.M.

This afternoon, at two o'clock, I met Lampron in the Boulevard St. Michel. He was walking fast with a portfolio under his arm. I went up to him. He looked annoyed, and hardly seemed pleased when I offered to accompany him. I grew red and angry.

"Oh, very well," I said; "good-by, then, since you don't care to be seen with me."

He pondered a moment.

"Oh, come along if you like; I am going to my framemaker's."

"A picture?"

"Something of the kind."

"And that's all the mystery! Yesterday it was a sketch I mustn't look at; to-day it's a picture. It is not nice of you, Sylvestre; no, decidedly it is not nice."

He gave me a look of friendly compassion.

"Poor little chap!" said he.

Then, in his usual clear, strong voice:

"I am in a great hurry; but come if you like. I would rather it were four days later; but as it is, never mind; it is never too soon to be happy."

When Lampron chooses to hold his tongue it is useless to ask him questions. I gave myself up to meditating on the words, "It is never too soon to be happy."

We went down the boulevard, past the beer-houses. There is distinction in my friend's walk; he is not to be confused with the crowd through which he passes. You can tell, from the simple seriousness of the man, his indifference to the noise and petty incidents of the streets, that he is a stout and noble soul. Among the passers-by he is a somebody. I heard from a group of students seated before a cafe the following words, which Sylvestre did not seem to notice:

"Look, do you see the taller of those two there? That's Sylvestre
Lampron."

"Prix du Salon two years ago?"

"A great gun, you know."

"He looks it."

"To the left," said Lampron.

We turned to the left, and found ourselves in the Rue Hautefeuille, before a shabby house, within the porch of which hung notices of apartments to let; this was the framemaker's. The passage was dark, the walls were chipped by the innumerable removals of furniture they had witnessed. We went upstairs. On the fourth floor a smell of glue and sour paste on the landing announced the tenant's profession. To make quite certain there was a card nailed to the door with "Plumet, Frame- Maker."

"Plumet? A newly-married couple?"

But already Madame Plumet is at the door. It is the same little woman who came to Boule's office. She recognizes me in the dim light of the staircase.

"What, Monsieur Lampron, do you know Monsieur Mouillard?"

"As you apparently do, too, Madame Plumet."

"Oh, yes! I know him well; he won my action, you know."

"Ah, to be sure-against the cabinet-maker. Is your husband in?"

"Yes, sir, in the workshop. Plumet!"

Through the half-opened door giving access to an inner room w e could see-in the midst of his molders, gilders, burnishers, and framers—a little dark man with a beard, who looked up and hurriedly undid the strings of his working-apron.

"Coming, Marie!"

Little Madame Plumet was a trifle upset at having to receive us in undress, before she had tidied up her rooms. I could see it by her blushes and by the instinctive movement she made to smooth her disordered curls.

The husband had hardly answered her call before she left us and went off to the end of the room, into the obscure recesses of an alcove overcrowded with furniture. There she bent over an oblong object, which I could not quite see at first, and rocked it with her hand.

"Monsieur Mouillard," said she, looking up to me—"Monsieur Mouillard, this is my son, Pierre!"

What tender pride in those words, and the smile which accompanied them! With a finger she drew one of the curtains aside. Under the blue muslin, between the pillow and the white coverlet, I discovered two little black eyes and a tuft of golden hair.

"Isn't he a little rogue!" she went on, and began to caress the waking baby.

Meanwhile Sylvestre had been talking to Plumet at the other end of the room.

"Out of the question," said the frame-maker; "we are up to our knees in arrears; twenty orders waiting."

"I ask you to oblige me as a friend."

"I wish I could oblige you, Monsieur Lampron; but if I made you a promise, I should not be able to keep it."

"What a pity! All was so well arranged, too. The sketch was to have been hung with my two engravings. Poor Fabien! I was saving up a surprise for you. Come and look here."

I went across. Sylvestre opened his portfolio.

"Do you recognize it?"

At once I recognized them. M. Charnot's back; Jeanne's profile, exactly like her; a forest nook; the parasol on the ground; the cane stuck into the grass; a bit of genre, perfect in truth and execution.

"When did you do that?"

"Last night."

"And you want to exhibit it?"

"At the Salon."

"But, Sylvestre, it is too late to send in to the Salon. The Ides of
March are long past."

"Yes, for that very reason I have had the devil of a time, intriguing all the morning. With a large picture I never should have succeeded; but with a bit of a sketch, six inches by nine—"

"Bribery of officials, then?"

"Followed by substitution, which is strictly forbidden. I happened to have hung there between two engravings a little sketch of underwoods not unlike this; one comes down, the other is hung instead—a little bit of jobbery of which I am still ashamed. I risked it all for you, in the hope that she would come and recognize the subject."

"Of course she will recognize it, and understand; how on earth could she help it? My dear Sylvestre, how can I thank you?"

I seized my friend's hand and begged his forgiveness for my foolish haste of speech.

He, too, was a little touched and overcome by the pleasure his surprise had given me.

"Look here, Plumet," he said to the frame-maker, who had taken the sketch over to the light, and was studying it with a professional eye. "This young man has even a greater interest than I in the matter. He is a suitor for the lady's hand, and you can be very useful to him. If you do not frame the picture his happiness is blighted."

The frame-maker shook his head.

"Let's see, Antoine," said a coaxing little voice, and Madame Plumet left the cradle to come to our aid.

I considered our cause as won. Plumet repeated in vain, as he pulled his beard, that it was impossible; she declared it was not. He made a move for his workshop; she pulled him back by the sleeve, made him laugh and give his consent.

"Antoine," she insisted, "we owe our marriage to Monsieur Mouillard; you must at least pay what you owe."

I was delighted. Still, a doubt seized me.

"Sylvestre," I said to Lampron, who already had his hand upon the door- handle, "do you really think she will come?"

"I hope so; but I will not answer for it. To make certain, some one must send word to her: 'Mademoiselle Jeanne, your portrait is at the Salon.' If you know any one who would not mind taking this message to the Rue de l'Universite—"

"I'm afraid I don't."

"Come on, then, and trust to luck."

"Rue de l'Universite, did you say?" broke in little Madame Plumet, who certainly took the liveliest interest in my cause.

"Yes; why?"

"Because I have a friend in the neighborhood, and perhaps—"

I risked giving her the number and name under the seal of secrecy; and it was a good thing I did so.

In three minutes she had concocted a plan. It was like this: her friend lived near the hotel in the Rue de l'Universite, a porter's wife of advanced years, and quite safe; by means of her it might be possible to hint to Mademoiselle Jeanne that her portrait, or something like it, was to be seen at the Salon—discreetly, of course, and as if it were the merest piece of news.

What a plucky, clever little woman it is! Surely I was inspired when I did her that service. I never thought I should be repaid. And here I am repaid both capital and interest.

Yet I hesitated. She snatched my consent.

"No, no," said she, "leave me to act. I promise you, Monsieur Mouillard, that she shall hear of it, and you, Monsieur Lampron, that the picture shall be framed."

She showed us to the top of the stairs, did little Madame Plumet, pleased at having won over her husband, at having shown herself so cunning, and at being employed in a conspiracy of love. In the street Lampron shook me by the hand. "Good-by, my friend," he said; "happy men don't need company. Four days hence, at noon, I shall come to fetch you, and we will pay our first visit to the Salon together."

Yes, I was a happy man! I walked fast, without seeing anything, my eyes lost in day dreams, my ears listening to celestial harmonies. I seemed to wear a halo. It abashed me somewhat; for there is something insolent in proclaiming on the housetops: "Look up at me, my heart is full, Jeanne is going to love me!" Decidedly, my brain was affected.

Near the fountain in the Luxembourg, in front of the old palace where the senate sits, two little girls were playing. One pushed the other, who fell down crying,

"Naughty Jeanne, naughty girl!" I rushed to pick her up, and kissed her before the eyes of her astonished nurse, saying, "No, Mademoiselle, she is the most charming girl in the world!"

And M. Legrand! I still blush when I think of my conversation with M. Legrand. He was standing in a dignified attitude at the door of his shop

"ITALIAN WAREHOUSE; DRESSED PROVISIONS; SPECIALTY IN COLONIAL PRODUCE."

He and I are upon good terms; I buy oranges, licorice from him, and rum when I want to make punch. But there are distinctions. Well, to-day I called him "Dear Monsieur Legrand;" I addressed him, though I had nothing to buy; I asked after his business; I remarked to him, "What a heavenly day, Monsieur Legrand! We really have got fine weather at last!"

He looked up to the top of the street, and looked down again at me, but refrained from differing, out of respect.

And, as a matter of fact, I noticed afterward that there was a most unpleasant drizzle.

To wind up with, just now as I was coming home after dinner, I passed a workman and his family in the Rue Bonaparte, and the man pointed after me, saying:

"Look! there goes a poet."

He was right. In me the lawyer's clerk is in abeyance, the lawyer of to- morrow has disappeared, only the poet is left—that is to say, the essence of youth freed from the parasitic growths of everyday life. I feel it roused and stirring. How sweet life is, and what wonderful instruments we are, that Hope can make us thus vibrate by a touch of her little finger!

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Happy men don't need company
Lends—I should say gives
Natural only when alone, and talk well only to themselves
One doesn't offer apologies to a man in his wrath
Silence, alas! is not the reproof of kings alone
The looks of the young are always full of the future
You a law student, while our farmers are in want of hands

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE INK-STAIN (TACHE D'ENCRE) — VOLUME 1 ***

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.

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. 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), 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.

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

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.

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

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.

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.