

Jacques Bonneval eBook

Jacques Bonneval by Anne Manning

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CHAPTER I.

The fair of Beaucaire.

There was magic, to my young ears, in the very name of the Fair of Beaucaire. Beaucaire is only ten miles from Nismes, therefore no wonder I heard plenty about it. It is true, that in my time, the world-famous fair did not exercise so vast an influence on commercial affairs in general, as in the old days, when it was the great market of France; and not only France, but of all civilized countries. With what enjoyment would I hear my grandfather relate how great caravans of wealthy merchants would assemble for mutual protection, because of the audacious outlaws, often headed by some powerful baron, who lay in wait for them to despoil them of their merchandise, and often to carry them off prisoners and extort heavy ransom. My grandfather would tell how long files of mules, laden with rich silks, cloths, serges, camlets, and furs, from Montpelier, from Narbonne, from Toulouse, from Carcassonne, and other places, would wend towards Beaucaire, as the day called the Feast of St. Magdalene approached, on which the fair was opened. The roads were then thronged with travelers; the city was choke-full of strangers; not a bed to be had, unless long preengaged, for love or money. The shops exhibited the utmost profusion of rich goods; hospitality was exercised without grudging; old friends met from year to year; matches between their children were frequently concerted; bargains were struck, and commercial bills were commonly made payable at the Fair of Beaucaire. The crowd was immense while it lasted; a hundred thousand strangers being generally present.

Thus, you can easily conceive what charms such a lively scene had for the young; while to the old it was the crown of their industry during the year. Those at a distance, finding communications difficult and journeys expensive, were glad to make an annual pilgrimage serve their turn, when they were certain of meeting their fellow-traders, and of having under their notice goods from all parts of the world.

It was with great glee, therefore, that I, a youth of nineteen, started with my family for the Fair of Beaucaire on the 21st of July, 1685. Accommodation was promised us by my uncle Nicolas, and we went the day before the festival in order to see it from the beginning. I drove a large and commodious char-a-banc, in which were my father and mother, my younger brothers and sisters, Monsieur Bourdinave, my father's partner, his two fair daughters, Madeleine and Gabrielle, and their old servant Alice, who was also their kinswoman in a distant degree.

I was held to be a smart youth in those days, by my family and friends, and certainly I had made myself as fine as I could, in the hope of pleasing Madeleine, who, to my mind, was the most charming girl in the world. Nor was she behindhand in the way of ornament, for she and her sister were dressed in their best, and looked as fresh as

daisies. In fact, we were, one and all, in holiday attire; even the horse being tricked out with ribbons, tassels, fringes, and flowers, till he was quite a sight.

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My father opened the day with family worship, which always seemed to put us in tune for the morning, and spread a balmy influence over us. I well remember the portion of Scripture he read was the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, which, I need not remind you, contains this verse—"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." My father dwelt on this in his prayer, and said, "Lord, I know that these dear young people cannot pass through life without hearing and seeing much of evil: but, oh, keep them unspotted by it! Let an atmosphere of sanctity and safety surround them even in the midst of the fires, that they receive no hurt. In their allowed pleasures and pastimes, let them wear that spiritual hauberk which is invulnerable to the darts of the wicked; let them steadfastly set their faces against whatever thy word disallows; and, should fiery trial and temptation beset them, enable them, having done all, to stand."

I am confident that these were as nearly as possible the very words of my father; for they made an impression on me that I could hardly account for: and as he had recently been explaining to the children the nature of a hauberk, as a coat of defensive armor, and remarking on its pliancy and being often worn out of sight, the metaphor fixed itself in my memory.

We had a substantial breakfast of soup and bread before we started; and then drove in state to M. Bourdinave's door, where I sprang out to help the smiling girls into the char-a-banc. I would gladly have had Madeleine next me, but, as ill-luck would have it, M. Bourdinave placed himself at my side, and my father just behind; so that I was completely shut out from her, to my great chagrin. However, if I could not see her, unless by looking round, I knew she could see me; so I carried myself my best, and flourished my whip in fine style.

And thus we went to the Fair of Beaucaire. As we passed Les Arenes, that famous Roman amphitheatre in the centre of our city, I heard my father and his old friend allude to its former uses, without paying much heed to them. I believe they reminded one another that not only wild beasts but Christians had formerly been put to death there, for the recreation of those who were wild beasts themselves; and my father said how he hated the Sunday bull-fights that took place there still, and never would let me go near them; on which I put in soberly, "I never want to, father."

"Thou art a steady lad, I'll warrant thee," said M. Bourdinave, approvingly. "Hold fast the form of sound words which hath been given thee in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."



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“Ay, ay, sir,” said I, whipping old Rene smartly. And in another minute we were thumping and bumping over great paving-stones, too noisily for conversation to be carried on, and getting into a melee of carts, wagons, and horsemen, all bound for Beaucaire. The women were now in great delight, looking from side to side, commenting on the dress of one, the equipage of another, nodding to acquaintance, and crying “O, look!” to each other, when they saw anything beyond common. I had enough to do, I assure you, to steer a straight course; and M. Bourdinave observing it, remarked that he hoped I should be equally vigilant in steering a straight course through life, which made me cry “Ay, ay, sir,” and set me thinking.

When the road became a little quieter, I heard him and my father discussing the price of cocoons, the superiority of good cocoons to cocalons, dupions, and soufflons; which last, I need not tell you, are very imperfect cocoons; dupions have two threads, and confuse one with another; and pointed cocoons are apt to break in the winding. But all these, as you know, are turned to account by the silk-spinner, and worked up into stockings, sewing-silk, and handkerchiefs. But the good cocoons that yield a strong, thick, compact filament, are appropriated by the silk-throwsters.

But this trade-talk was interrupted by cries of amused delight from the women, and on looking about to see what tickled their fancies, they pointed out to us a most extraordinary figure, standing bolt upright in a cart. He was tall and meagre, and wore a long black robe and tall pointed cap, both of which appeared spangled with silver; instead of which, they were studded with steel buttons, needles, and pins, of which he was an itinerant vendor. I believe the women would have purchased largely of him, had my father let me stop.

Next we came up with a little house upon wheels, drawn by a sorry horse, and on the wooden wall of the said house was depicted, many sizes larger than life, a great human tooth, with bleeding fangs. Beneath was an inscription that the owner of the cart was a traveling dentist, who drew teeth without the least pain.

Alice, the maid, had instantly a great desire to let him draw a troublesome tooth of hers which, she took pains to assure us, was not impaired by natural decay, but only accidentally broken in cracking a cherry-stone. “The edge is so rough,” said she, “that it hurts my tongue; and since this honest gentleman can extract it painlessly, I have a great mind to try his hand.”

“Plenty of time for that when we get to Beaucaire,” said M. Bourdinave. “Sure, you would not have a tooth drawn in the middle of the high road?”

“Truly, I should not mind it, inside that nice little wooden house,” said she.

But no, she was not allowed to do so; and, to console her, Madeleine uncovered a little basket she carried on her arm, and discovered cherries as red as her own lips, nestling

in dark green leaves. "Here," said she, cheerfully, "are some stones to take your revenge on."

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“Ah, what beauties,” cried Alice, taking a few; and the basket being handed round, we were soon all eating cherries; and Gabrielle asked me if I did not wish she had the gift of St. Marguerite.

“I do not know what gift you mean,” said I, turning half round, and looking full at her.

“Once on a time,” said the lively girl, “the foolish story goes, that two saints, who were brother and sister, lived in separate monasteries; but the brother was frequently visited by his sister, on the pretence of seeking spiritual advice. Their names were St. Honorat and St. Marguerite. At length the brother grew rather tired of his sister’s visits, and called them a waste of time. ‘Henceforth, let it suffice that I shall visit you occasionally,’ said he. ‘When?’ said St. Marguerite. ‘When the cherry-trees blossom,’ said St Honorat. Thereupon, St. Marguerite prayed that the cherry-trees might blossom once a month, which they did; so her brother acknowledged himself outwitted.”

“Fie for shame, daughter,” said M. Bourdinave, with displeasure. “I am grieved that you should remember and repeat such lying legends.”

“Dear father, they exercise the fancy—”

“Exercise the fancy, indeed! Let fancy confine herself to her own province. She is a good servant, but a bad mistress. The Jews exercised their fancies in the wild Talmudical fables. What said our Saviour of them? ‘Ye make the word of God of none effect through your traditions. Let me hear no more papistical fables.”

Gabrielle hung her head, and stealing a glance that way, I saw Madeleine pass her arm round her sister’s waist, and look sweetly at her, which made me think Madeleine more attractive than ever. M. Bourdinave did not immediately recover his equanimity, but addressing my father, said it more than ever behooved good Reformers to walk warily, and not give in to any of the ensnaring practices of the surrounding Catholics. “Little by little they are stealing in on us already,” said he, “and, if our sagacious men are to be believed, a time of trouble is preparing for us that may perhaps not fall very short of the massacre on the day of St. Bartholomew.”

“Still,” said my father, “we are under the protection of the Edict of Nantes.”

“Edicts may be set aside,” said M. Bourdinave, in a lowered voice, which yet I heard, being next him. “Only think how we have been annoyed and injured the last two or three years, by edicts differing greatly from the Edict of Nantes. That one, for instance, which rendered us liable to the intrusion of Catholics into our temples, to spy at our observances, pick up scraps of our sermons, and report them incorrectly. What advantage the rabble have taken of it!”

“Too true,” said my father, gravely.

“Last year,” pursued M. Bourdinave, “that attempted confederacy for mutual protection, when all our closed meetinghouses were reopened for worship, showed what temper our adversaries were of.”

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“It was an ill-considered measure,” said my father, slowly.

“Ill-conducted, rather,” said M. Bourdinave. “The act should have been simultaneous; whereas the want of concert among our people betrayed their weakness, and laid them open to attack. The military at Bordeaux acted with shocking barbarity.”

“I do not like to think upon it,” said my father. “I trust there will be no recurrence of such lamentable scenes.”

“I much fear there will be, though,” said M. Bourdinave, gloomily. “Satan desires to have us, that he may sift us like wheat. Let us hope to abide the trial.”

At this moment a burst of noisy music, drowned their voices; and the needle-seller’s horse, which was just before us, making a sudden start, the poor needle-vendor was thrown off his balance, and jerked out of his cart on to a heap of flints by the road-side, while his horse began to kick. Giving the reins to my father, I jumped out, and ran to his assistance; but he was so prickly all over, that it was difficult to lay hold of him. His needles and pins ran into my fingers in a dozen places. To make matters worse, his nose began to bleed, so that he was in a pitiable plight. However, I picked him up at last, found he was not seriously injured, gave him a clean handkerchief (which he promised to return), and started him off again in his cart, in a sitting position this time, and much crestfallen.

The throng increased as we approached Beaucaire, and when we got into the streets there was frequently a complete stoppage. Oh, what a lively scene it was! and what a noise! Music playing, bells ringing, people talking at the top of their voices. What joyous meetings! what hearty welcomes! what various smells of fried fish, hot soups, and roast meats! Truly, the Fair of Beaucaire exceeded my liveliest imaginings, and yours will certainly never come up to it.

The fair, you have perhaps heard, is held on a wide open ground between the Rhone and the castle rock. This space was covered with streets of booths and sheds, in which all kinds of merchandise were displayed. The river was choked with heavily-freighted barges. As for the streets, they were hung from their upper windows with the richest tapestries; silks, damasks, velvets, and goldsmiths’ work were displayed in the richest abundance; the most costly valuables exposed, almost at the mercy of jostling wayfarers; banners flaunting overhead, and casting fleeting shadows beneath. Languages of all nations mingled in strange medley—German, Spanish, Italian, Turkish, Arabic, Russian. Ah, it was like a dream!



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My uncle Nicolas received us most heartily; and, while my father and M. Bourdinave went about their affairs, I had the pleasing charge of the women, and showing them what was to be seen. My mother, with a child in each hand, Madeleine and I, each with another child, Gabrielle and old Alice close behind us, formed such a phalanx that we made way for ourselves, or had it made for us, wherever we went, and saw everything we wanted to see. We even saw the dentist, and Alice would not be foiled this time, but almost thrust herself on his notice. He made her sit on the ground, put her head between his knees and dragged out the tooth by main force. She screamed horribly, and said, "You engaged to give no pain!" "To myself," said he, "but I could not engage for you." So there was the laugh against her. However, the tooth was out, and he generously gave it to her; so we walked away laughing.

CHAPTER II.

The feast of st. Magdalen.

We looked about us till dinner, and after dinner we looked about us again; for the women and children seemed as though they would never be sated with sightseeing; and as for me, I was never sated of going about with Madeleine. All at once she cried out in a frightened voice, "Where is Gabrielle?"

We looked about and could see neither her nor Alice; and as it was nearly the hour they call vesper, though the days were still pretty long, we were greatly alarmed at their disappearance. Little Louison, however, plucked my sleeve, and said, "I think they went in there," pointing to a church-door; so, although my father specially objected to my setting foot within a Catholic place of worship, Madeleine and I went in to look for her sister; but my mother kept the children outside. As soon as we entered we found ourselves almost in darkness, what little light there was proceeding from great wax candles; and there was a good deal of tawdry finery and trumpery all about, and a strong smell of incense. I was looking about me with curiosity and interest, mixed with a certain repulsion, when Madeleine, in an eager undertone, exclaimed, "There she is!" and pressed forward, I close following, to a little side-altar, where Gabrielle and Alice were listening, with amused wonder, to a priest, who was telling a group of people about him that what he was exhibiting to them was one of Mary Magdalen's bones; and that she and Lazarus, and Martha his sister, had put to sea in an old boat, and in process of time, after being sorely buffeted by winds and waves, had been cast ashore at Marseilles, where they preached the gospel to the natives, and converted them all.



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I did not believe one word of this, nor did Madeleine, who drew her reluctant sister away; and when we got her into the open air, rebuked her for doing what their father would not approve. Gabrielle looked inclined to defend herself, and make a joke of it. However, a great bell began to clang so near us as to drown her voice; people were pushing past us into church, and we found ourselves going against the stream, and made the best of our way out of it, and back to our quarters. My father and M. Bourdinave were standing at the door, conversing with my uncle, and when they saw us they smiled, and my father said, with unwonted softness in his tone, "Well, children, are you come back? Have you enjoyed yourselves?" and looked earnestly at Madeleine, whose eyes sank under his.

My uncle Nicolas kept a mercer's shop, and his shelves and counters were now so laden with goods that it was difficult to steer our way through them to the steep stair which led to the floor above; and that, too, was converted, for the time, into a kind of warehouse; but above that was the living-room, and above that, again, numerous bedrooms with sloping sides, and small windows piercing the steep roof. My aunt Jeanne was good and hospitable to excess. She would not let M. Bourdinave and his family return to their lodging till they had supped with her, though there were other guests; so we were jammed rather closely around the table with little elbow-room. Then ensued clinking of glasses, clatter of plates, dishes, knives, forks, the buzzing of many tongues, savory smells of hot viands, and much helping and pressing of one another; much talk of the price of silks, velvets, and serges; of the credit of such and such a house; of the state of trade; of the court; and of the country. I, wedged between Madeleine and her sister, had the opportunity of giving her many tender looks, though few words passed between us. Among the strangers at table was a strangely unpleasant Englishman, who prefaced every speech with "I want to know—" and would not be satisfied with a short answer. At length my father mildly said—

"Sir, you seek to know trade secrets. You know there are secrets in all trades."

"That is precisely why I want to know them," said he, laughing.

"But a good reason why we should not tell them," said my father; who then turned from him, and addressed some one else. Gabrielle whispered, "I shall call that man Monsieur I-want-to-know."

"Ah, well, I know already what I chiefly want," pursued the Englishman, who, had he not been drinking more freely than was good for him, would probably have been less communicative. "I've been to Italy, and have seen the Italian machinery for throwing silk, and shall carry back a pretty good idea of the process."

"That man shall never carry anything back," whispered a vindictive-looking Italian, whose eyes glittered like fire.

“Hush! he is only an empty boaster.”

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“We want no empty boasters. We will not let him steal our trade secrets.”

That night, going home to his lodging, the Englishman was set upon by the Italian, and pricked with his stiletto, narrowly escaping with his life. He gave him what he called “a good English black-eye,” and bawled loudly for justice. The Italian ran off, and was no more seen; and the Englishman, whose ugly name was Hogg, talked big about applying to his ambassador, Sir William Trumbull, but was induced to let the matter drop. The ambassador shortly had worse things to complain of.

The next day was the Catholic Feast of St. Magdalen, which, though we Huguenots felt no manner of respect for, we were obliged to conform to outwardly, by not selling or working in open shops, till the services of the day were over. We made up to ourselves for it by having a prayer-service of our own in-doors, followed by a long exposition and exhortation from a godly minister named Brignolles, who warned us of times of trial that should soon be revealed, and adjured us to put on the whole armor of God, that we might be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Then, after our mid-day meal, we went forth to see the show.

This time I had the care of Gabrielle, and wished I had not, for she was in her giddiest humor, and a young man, whose appearance I did not like, continually hung about us, and looked attentively at her, which I resented, but she was evidently pleased with. At length, some waxwork attracting our notice, a change took place in the disposition of our party. I shifted the charge of Gabrielle to her father, and got Madeleine instead. My memories of the rest of the day are more about Madeleine than anything else.

I remember, though, that we fell in with our neighbors the Lefevres at a waxwork stall, and while Madeleine and I were admiring some fruit that exactly imitated nature, little Jules Lefevre stretched out his hand to touch a little waxen boy with a lamb, saying, “Pretty, pretty!”

“Dear child, you shall have it!” cried a honeyed voice behind; and a lady nicely dressed put the image into his hand, and stooped down to kiss him. When Marie Lefevre turned round, and saw what her little boy held, she looked displeased, and made him lay it on the stall again, for it was one of those papistical images which we hold in detestation.

At night, when all had dispersed but our own immediate party, there was a pause, and I saw that the elders had something on their minds that they were about to unfold. I felt a strange emotion that presaged what was coming, for not a hint had been dropped.

“Son,” said my father—and I looked towards him with awe—“you are now on the confines of manhood, and it behooves us to consider your future. At your time of life I was betrothed to your mother, and a share was promised me of my father’s business. What are your own views respecting your course in life?”

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All the elder people fixed their eyes on me with gravity, and Madeleine afterwards told me her heart stopped beating; while Gabrielle struggled with a disposition to laugh.

“My views are,” returned I, boldly, “to follow my honored father, step by step, and, his concurrence obtained, to get betrothed as fast as I can.”

“Well said, my boy,” said my father, heartily, while every face wore a broad smile but one, which was mantling with blushes.

“Provided,” continued I, “that I may choose the young lady.”

“Let us know where your choice will fall,” said my father, trying to keep the corners of his mouth in order, while M. Bourdinave scarcely suppressed a chuckle.

I stepped across the room, and took Madeleine’s hand. “Here is my choice,” said I, “if she will have me. We have known each other from childhood.”

Madeleine instantly snatched her hand away, and covered her face. However, the next moment her father joined our hands, and gave us his blessing; and then we were bewildered with congratulations and good auguries; and Master Brignolles gave us a world of good advice, and offered a prayer; and my father gave me a ring of betrothal to put on her finger, and thus we became plighted to one another.

The rest of our stay at Beaucaire passed like a dream, and its brightness yet remained while we pursued our homeward journey. Madeleine sat close behind me this time, and on her knee was little Jules Lefevre, whom we had taken in charge of because his father’s wagon was over-full. He had something clasped tight in his hand, which he unclosed for a moment at Madeleine’s request, and gave her a glimpse of a little “Agnus Dei,” which he said had been given him by “the pretty lady.” How or when she had done so, we never made out. Madeleine tried to get it from him; but he resisted with all his might, saying it was “his own.”

“It must be confessed,” said Gabrielle, “that the Catholic churches have much more in them to attract the eye than our plain temples.”

“Who denies it?” said I. “Their appeals are to the outward senses, which never influence the heart.”

“I think my heart would be very much influenced by them,” said Gabrielle, “if I had not been brought up to think them wrong.”

“I cannot bear to hear you talk in that way, sister,” said Madeleine. “Pray, do not seem indifferent to the blessings of a purer faith.”



Gabrielle pouted, and said, "Indifferent? no; but perhaps if you and I had been brought up Catholics, we might have been as positive we held the purer faith as we are now that we are of the Reformed."

"A very good thing, then, that you were not so brought up," said I, "for then I should not have been betrothed to Madeleine;" and to prevent her pursuing so unpleasant a subject, I lifted up my voice and sang. Little Jules presently dropped asleep in Madeleine's arms, and his little fat fingers unclosing, the dangerous bauble dropped from them, and, by a dexterous touch of my whip, I flicked it into the road. By-and-by, awaking, he cried for it, and beat Madeleine with his tiny fists; nor was pacified till his attention was diverted by an almost interminable file of mules, with their five or six olive-faced muleteers in brown jackets and red sashes.



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CHAPTER III.

Les Arenes.

When we got back, we found my uncle Chambrun, my mother's only brother, standing at the door. He was the minister of a small town near Avignon, and did not care to go to the Fair; nevertheless he was very glad to hear all about it from those who had been there. We were well pleased to have so ready a listener; and when we had said our say, he fell into grave talk with my father and mother of the signs of the times, which he thought very threatening.

"What can we expect otherwise," said he, "with Louis the Fourteenth for king and Louvois for his minister, and Pere la Chaise for his confessor, and Madame de Maintenon for his confidante and adviser? A storm is gathering overhead, but never mind—there is a heaven higher than all." These words checked us; but youthful spirits soon rise, and the impression did not last long. I now seemed walking on air, for I loved and was loved by Madeleine.

A few days after our return from Beaucaire, Marie Lefevre burst in on us with troubled looks, and exclaimed,

"Have you seen my boy?"

"No!" exclaimed we all.

"Then something has befallen him," cried she, wringing her hands. "We have lost sight of him."

We gathered about her, full of pity, and asked where he had last been seen.

"Near Les Arenes."

"He may have fallen into some pit, or lost himself among the dungeons," said my mother. "We will go and help you to find him."

So she and I accompanied Marie, who was crying bitterly, and made frequent inquiries for him by the way.

When we got inside that vast, circular inclosure, we agreed that Marie should explore one side and we the other, and thus meet at the other end. This took us some time, for you must know that it consists of two stories, each of sixty arcades, seventy feet high; and under its great arches and pillars are many vaulted chambers and passages, wherein good Christians have been confined; and again, wherein other good Christians have found asylums in time of hot persecution. Within the amphitheatre were originally



thirty-two rows of seats, which would accommodate at least twenty thousand spectators that had a mind to feast their eyes on scenes of blood in the central arena. I looked with curiosity at this place, which I had never so thoroughly visited before. Some of the dens were still in use for the bulls that were baited on Sundays, and others seemed lairs for rogues and vagabonds; but there was many a corner which, as I said to my mother, would afford a good hiding-place in time of danger, and one, especially, in which I thought a fugitive might defy detection (though I had detected it).

Well, we hunted high and low, but could not find little Jules. His mother was distracted: we feared she would lose her reason altogether. Madeleine devoted herself to her like an angel; neighbors were full of compassion—those of our own persuasion, I mean; for the Catholics mocked her and said, “Go seek him in the Jews’ quarter. The Jew baker’s daughter has, doubtless, made him into pies. Go seek him in their secret assemblies—in their cellars—in their slaughter-houses—doubtless they are fattening him for their Passover.” Conceive the anguish of the mother.



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At length she found he was not dead. Her heart leaped for joy. But when she found how the case stood with him, she was ready to wish him dead and numbered among the little children that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Jules had been kidnapped and tampered with by the Catholics. The little apostate had been taught to curse his parents.

The case occasioned a great deal of talk in Nismes at the time; unhappily, similar kidnappings made it soon forgotten, except by the family.

One day, when I had been hunting for him, I came suddenly on the young man who had stared so rudely at Gabrielle at Beaucaire. I was sorry to see him in Nismes. I did not like the look of him, with his narrow head, low forehead, and eyes too near his nose, though otherwise he was well enough. Returning to our factory, I found him just coming out of it. I said to my father, "Who is that?" He said, "A troublesome fellow, I think, but he brought a message from your uncle Nicolas. He is called Martin Prunevaux. He asked me all manner of impertinent questions, and, if he fall in with you, may ask you as many; but remember Jaques Coeur's motto,

"En close bouche
N'entre mouche—"

"And again, 'Dire, faire, taire.'"

"Ay, ay, father, you may depend on me," said I, heartily.

Sometimes, before I went to bed, I stepped out to get a glimpse of the light in Madeleine's window. I should observe, it was also Gabrielle's, for the sisters shared the same room. The moon cast strong lights and shadows, and I kept in the shade till close to the house, when what was my disgust to hear the wretched tinkle of a guitar under the window! Serenades might be all very well for Italy, but we did not favor them in Nismes; and stepping briskly up to the musician, I said abruptly, "We want none of this miserable noise!"

He started as if shot, saying, "Pardon, monsieur," evidently taking me for one of the family; a mistake which I favored by knocking at the door. As I was in deep shadow he did not recognize me, but the moonlight fell full on his face, and I saw it was Martin Prunevaux. I felt exceedingly inclined to fall on him and beat him for daring to tune his wretched pipes under Madeleine's window; but a second thought assured me that Gabrielle must be his object; the more so that I was sure I saw her shadow (which was shorter than her sister's) fall on the curtain, and I could even fancy her making merry behind it. Still, I liked not such a fellow to come prowling about either of the sisters. I stood my ground, that I might not be guilty of a runaway knock, and when Alice came to the door I made a bungling speech and said, "Oh, I suppose the family are all gone to bed. I am late tonight." She said, "They are so, sir," and looked surprised. I said,



“There was a street musician of some sort before the house when I came up. I think I have chased him away.” She said, “All the better, sir; we are much obliged to you; we never encourage such people.”



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When I rallied Madeleine, next day, on having been serenaded, tears sprang into her eyes, and she assured me it was not her fault, adding that she feared Gabrielle, in her thoughtlessness, must have given some encouragement to a presumptuous young man. "However, when my father returns, he will take measures," she added, "to prevent our being further troubled with him." Monsieur Bourdinave was at this time traveling on business.

The sisters spent that evening at our house as was not unusual. On these occasions we often sang hymns; and I had just set the tune of "Chantez de Dieu le renom"—

"Chantez de Dieu le renom,
Vous serviteurs du Seigneur!
Venez pour lui faire honneur,
Vous qui avez eu ce don"—

and was lifting up my voice on high, followed by the sweet treble of the girls, when a shower of stones rattled against the casement, and a flint passed close to Madeleine and hit my father on the cheekbone. Hot with anger, I rushed into the street, and found a group of unmannerly fellows outside, who, instead of taking to their heels, gathered round me with defiant looks.

"What is the meaning of this?" cried I in anger.

"What is the meaning of your disturbing the neighborhood with your uproar?" cried one of them, saucily.

"Uproar! We were singing to the praise and glory of God. Do you know that you have hurt my father?"

"We neither know nor care; and if you don't keep a quiet tongue in your head, will slit it as soon as not."

"Come in, son, come in," said my father, whose cheek was covered with blood. "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men"—drawing me indoors as he spoke.

"Excellent advice! Take care that he follows it," cried they, tauntingly, as my father shut to the door. I was burning with rage; Madeleine was in tears; the children, with scared looks, were gathered round my mother. My father, with gentle force, drew me into the little circle, and made me sit down beside him.

"My children," said he, "we have been warned that evil times are coming, and this may be the beginning. If it prove otherwise, we shall have the more reason to praise the Lord; but if it please Him to try and to prove us, let us not be found unprepared. Our strength lies in prayer, in not giving offence, and in not being easily offended."



“We gave no offence, father,” said I.

“But you were too easily offended. If any one had cause of complaint, it was I; but I do not take it up.”

My mother was meanwhile bathing his cut cheek and applying a plaster.

“Sure, it would make any son’s blood boil, to see his father hit!” cried I; and I saw that Madeleine sympathized with me.

“Why, then, let his blood cool again,” said my father, jocularly. “Tush, many a school-boy gets a worse hurt than this, and makes no moan. There! your mother has made all right, and I feel no smart. Let us say no more about it.”

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I thought he strikingly acted on our Lord's axiom of "If thine enemy smite thee on the one cheek, offer him the other," but could not just then enter into it. I longed to give those rascals a good beating.

"Now, then, I'll set the tune again," said I, affecting composure.

But, "No, no," said the girls simultaneously; and "No, no," said my dear mother. "Don't you see," she continued, "I have all this broken glass to pick up? If you will do me a real kindness, you will step round to the glazier, the first thing in the morning, and get him to mend the window before breakfast."

"I'll go at once," said I; but "No, no," was again the word. My father laid his hand firmly on my right arm, and Madeleine hers on my left. Though her touch was as light as a snow-flake, I would not have shaken it off for the world.

"The streets are unquiet to-night," said my father, "and I mean no one to go forth till the girls return home, when we will see them safely to their door; going out the back way."

So we spent the next hour in a sober, subdued manner. Madeleine shyly let me steal her hand and hold it some minutes, as though she knew it would calm me. And so it did; there was much sweetness in that hour, after all.

At length it was time to see them home; my mother kissed and blessed them as if they were going further than into the next street. We went out the back way, my father taking Gabrielle and I Madeleine, and we met with no evil by the way. Being rather high-wrought, I would willingly have faced a little danger for Madeleine's sake.

I kissed her soft cheek unrebuked, and followed my father through the dark with a happy heart. Mechanically, rather than from either devotion or defiance, I began to hum "Chantez de Dieu," when my father's warning hand plucked my sleeve, and, at the same instant, a rough voice beside me said, "Hold your peace! Have you not heard of the *arret*?" and passed on.

We had heard nothing of any *arret*; but next morning, when I went to the glazier's, he told me that an order had been issued forbidding the Reformed to sing psalms in the streets and public walks, or even within their own houses loud enough to be heard outside. And he told me he was so full of work that he hardly knew which way to turn, in consequence of the many windows broken over night by evil-disposed men suborned to interrupt psalmody. I asked him, half jesting, if he thought any of the suborned men were glaziers; but it hurt him, for he was as good a Huguenot as any in Nismes.

Going home with him, I saw a horrid sight—a dead body that had been some time buried, torn from the grave, stripped of its shroud, and lying in the gutter. I shuddered, and asked the glazier if we had not better tell the authorities; but he hurried on, saying,

“Better let it be. The authorities doubtless know all about it.” So there had we to leave the ghastly object, though its remaining there was equally prejudicial to decency and to health.



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Men's tongues were very busy that day; every one foreboding calamity and nobody knowing how to meet it.

My mother sent me, after breakfast, to visit my uncle Chambrun, who had fallen sick; and as the distance was about seven leagues, I went to him on a small but active horse. On my arrival, I found him in bed, with a royal commissioner seated beside him, who was talking to him with great show of courtesy, while my uncle looked much wearied. The bishop of Valence was on the other side of his bed. Finding myself in such high company, I fell back, and awaited a better opportunity of presenting myself.

The commissioner was inquiring very sedulously after my uncle's health, and assuring him he respected him greatly, and wished to show him favor.

"We have been constrained," said he, "to subject several of your colleagues to temporary confinement, but I have great hope that nothing of the kind will be necessary in your case, if you are a man of wisdom who know how to comply with exigencies as they arise, and thereby set an example to those around you. To this end the bishop has come to put a few easy interrogations. It is a mere form, and I am sure you will make no difficulty."

My uncle thanked him for his kind expressions, but said he had a Master in heaven to whom he owed his first duty.

"So have we all," interposed the bishop. And that he should make answer with that end in view and nothing else.

The bishop then took up the word, and very little can I remember of what he said, so hampered was I by his presence; but it was plain that he sought to entangle my uncle in his talk. That was no easy thing to do, my uncle was so temperate and logical, and so much more conversant with the Holy Scriptures than the bishop was.

The commissioner, perceiving that the bishop was getting the worst of it, broke in with

"All this is beside the mark. The king is determined that you, Monsieur Chambrun, should be a good Catholic; so it is no good begging off. You had much better accept the good offer made you, which I trust you will do on thinking it over."

"The only offer I desire," replied my uncle, "is of a passport, to enable me, as soon as I am well enough, to follow my brother ministers to Holland. My reason tells me—"

"A truce with your reason," interrupted the bishop, rising to go away. "You have too much rhetoric by half. I advise you to reflect and to obey."



“Monseigneur, I am sure you think you are giving me the best advice,” said my uncle, feebly. “Nephew, see the noble and reverend gentlemen out.”

CHAPTER IV.

My uncle Chambrun.

Having done so, I returned to my uncle, and said to him,—“Uncle, the bishop has gone away in great wrath, vowing that you shall repent of your conduct.”

“And when I would have made way for him,” said my aunt, indignantly, “he called me a bad name, and looked as if I were the very scum of the earth.”



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“Ah, he does not recognize marriages among the clergy,” said my uncle, calmly. “Never mind him, my good Dorothee; he’d be glad enough to have a wife of his own, and seeing me so much better off than he is, makes him captious and querulous. Come and shake up my pillow, for my poor head aches sadly. I will try to get a little sleep.”

At that instant, a loud trampling of horses’ feet was heard, together with the jingling of spurs and the clanking of armor.

“What’s that?” cried Aunt Dorothee, running from the bed to the window, and pulling back the little curtain, “Ah, le beau spectacle! Look out, Jacques!”

It was indeed a fine spectacle, as far as mere outward splendor went, to see a troupe of cavalry in blue and burnished steel, on powerful black horses, ride proudly by, making the very earth shake under them; and many children, attracted by the sight, ran towards them, shouting and throwing up their caps; but when I looked at the ferocious faces of these men, seamed with many an ugly scar—their lowering brows, their terrible eyes, their sour aspect—I felt they might be as dreadful to face in peace as in war. I watched them out of sight, and then placed myself beside my uncle, who, with closed eyes and folded hands, was endeavoring to sleep. My aunt went below to baste the poulet for his dinner. The house was very still; nothing was to be heard but the ticking of the clock.

All at once I heard heavy feet trampling towards the house, and a confused medley of rough voices. The next instant, the house door was battered as if to break it in, which, being of solid oak, was no easy matter. The door being opened, I heard a faint cry of terror from my aunt, and a brawling and trampling impossible to describe. I looked down from the stair-head and counted forty-two dragoons, trampling in one after another, till, the house being of moderate size, there was hardly room for them to stand. Yet they continued to pour in, jostling, pushing, and elbowing one another, each trying to shout louder than his comrades, “Hola! hola! House! house!—Give us to eat! Give us to drink!” with frightful oaths and curses.

“Good sirs, a moment’s patience, and you shall be waited on,” cried my terrified aunt.

“To Jericho with your patience! We wait for nobody. I decide for this poulet,” said one, taking it up hot in his hands, and bawling because they were burnt; “dress two dozen more—cook all you have in the poultry-yard, or we will cook you.”

“I claim my share of that poulet,” says one.

“Why not have one apiece?” said another. “Who would make two bites of a cherry? He has gnawn off all the best mouthfuls already. Come, be quick, mistress housewife! Where are the cellar keys?”

“I’ve mislaid them, good sirs,” said the poor terrified woman.

“We’ll kick the door open, then. Here’s a ham! here are two hams! Ha! ha! ham is good —we will heat the copper and boil them.”



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“No, slice them and fry them,” says another; “they take too long to boil. Bread!—where’s the bread? Where’s the oven? If it were big enough, goody, we’d put you into it.”

“Ha! ha! what have I found here!—a bag of money.”

“Divide! divide!” shouted two dozen voices.

“It’s mine, I found it!” cried the first. Then they fell to blows, and some of them fell sprawling to the ground, and were kicked, the bag was snatched from the finder, and the money scattered on the floor; then they scrambled for it, as many as could get near it, laughing and cursing; while others ransacked drawers, cupboards, and shelves, and others broke open the cellar door, and began to drink.

Terrified beyond expression, I went back to my uncle, and saw, to my surprise and relief, that he had fallen into a heavy sleep, which was a restorative he particularly needed. On looking from the window, I saw my aunt, almost incapacitated by her fears, attempting to catch the poultry, in which the dragoons alternately helped and hindered her, roaring with laughter when a hen flew shrieking over their heads, and then abusing my aunt. They were quickly caught and plucked, and set, some to roast, some to broil, according to their capricious mandates; and then, when everything was in as fair train for their disorderly feast as it well could be (two or three additional fires having been kindled), one of them said, “Let us divert the time with a little good music;” and began to beat a drum.

“Louder! louder!” cried his comrades. “Let’s have a chorus of drums!” How they came to have so many, I know not, except that they were brought for the special purpose of tormenting; but they produced six or eight, slung them round their necks, and began to beat them, crying,—

“Now for the tour of the house!”

“Sure my uncle must be dead!” thought I, leaning over him anxiously. But no, his breath came and went, though inaudibly, and had he been allowed to finish his sleep in peace it might have been for his healing.

Instead of this, I heard the dragoons come stamping upstairs, producing a muffled roll on their drums that sounded like muttering thunder. They went into one room after another, and speedily reached that of my uncle, on catching sight of whom they triumphantly exclaimed, “Hah! ha! v’la notre ami! Here is he whom we seek, and for whom we prepare the reveille.” And ranging themselves round his bed in a moment of time, in spite of a warning gesture from me, it being impossible for my voice to be heard, they simultaneously beat their drums with a clangor that might have waked the dead. No wonder, therefore, that my poor uncle started from his sleep bewildered, terrified,



and looking as if he believed himself in some horrid dream. In vain he moved his lips, in vain he raised his clasped hands to one and another, as if in supplication; the more distress he showed the more noise they made, till



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it seemed to me as if my eardrums would split. In the midst of it all up came my aunt, whose fortitude and presence of mind at that moment I can never sufficiently admire; and with forced smiles and courteous gestures made them to understand, in dumb show, that the first course of their meal was served. Instantly the drums ceased; one of them seized her by the shoulders, and hurried her down stairs before him, the others clattering after him. I turned, and saw my uncle raise his eyes and hands to heaven, and fall back on his pillow.

There was now a lull, while the viands were being consumed; but soon a new uproar arose—the supply was inadequate for the demand: every morsel of food in the house was consumed at one sitting, and yet there was not nearly enough. The dragoons were furious: they gathered about my aunt, pulling her hair, threatening her with their fists, threatening to boil her in her own copper, and set fire to the house, with her sick husband in it, if she did not procure an ample supply. With matchless patience she looked one after another in the face, said, “Attendez, attendez, messieurs, s’il vous plait;” and then, calling me down, bid me go forth and beg of my neighbors as much food as I could.

When wondering much at my aunt’s fortitude and self-possession, she afterwards told me that she lifted her heart to God in earnest prayer, and there came to her the comforting remembrance of these words. “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Alas! what a scene presented itself out of doors. The people were running up and down in despair; a woman rushed wildly out of her house, and seized me by the arm, crying, “They are batoning my husband!” Another shrieked from a window, “Help, help, they are killing my father!” Children ran about the streets, crying, “Oh, my father!—oh, my mother!” It seemed a heartless task to be going from one to another begging something to eat under such piteous circumstances; and yet how knew I that as bad or worse a tragedy might be acted at my uncle’s if I failed to supply what was wanted?

At length I returned, staggering under the weight of a huge cheese and a bag of chestnuts. And though I was reviled for not bringing them better cheer, yet I pacified them by smiling like my aunt, and echoing her “Attendez, messieurs, s’il vous plait;” and started forth again on my foraging expedition, though very doubtful of having anything to bring back.

How long were these horrible men going to stay? How could we go on supplying their wants at this rate? If their orders were to eat my uncle out of house and home, and drive him and my aunt to distraction, would it not be just as well to let them do so at once, and have done with it?



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One and another to whom I applied were so full of their own griefs that I had to listen to what they had to say before they would or could hear a word from me in return. One had been hung up by his feet over a chimney; another had a knife held to his throat; one had seen her little infant nearly strangled; another had been dragged along the ground by her hair. I could not help pitying them sincerely, but not so much as I should have done, but for the sad plight of my uncle. When I, with a kind of wrench, forced the talk into the subject of what was going on at his house, they, through their great love for him, forgot for a moment their own trials in thinking of his; and those who had anything to contribute brought it out, and those who had nothing to spare made up for it in pity. All this consumed so much time that when I got back it was nearly dark, and the house was all in a blaze with lights, for the dragoons had lighted candles all over the house; and some of them were stupid with drink, and lying in heaps; others were rendered quarrelsome by it, and fighting and abusing one another; but as for the drummers, they never ceased. They were at it when I set forth, they were at it while I was away, they were at it when I came back again, and stared at the good things I spread out before them without once staying their drumsticks. I was so sick of it by this time, and so unable to disguise my disgust and anger, that I persuaded myself I might as well return home, for that I could do no good where I was, and things could get no worse without me. So I went up to my aunt, who was then sitting like a stone image, without seeming able to hear or see anything, and made signs of leave-taking. She grasped my hand in both hers, and looked up so piteously at me, her lips moving as if with the words "do not go," that I felt I must stay by her, come what would. For was she not my mother's sister-in-law? and was not my uncle my mother's brother? I made a sign I would remain, on which she kissed my hands; and then I patted her on the shoulder, and could not help letting fall a tear. Then she got up, and bestirred herself for the men, hoping, no doubt, they would intermit their drumming if she could but conciliate them. But as soon as one relay ceased drumming another took it up; and thus, shameful to relate, they continued the whole night without intermission, crowding round my uncle's bed, making his room intolerably hot and close, and pushing in and out of the room and up and down the stairs.

My uncle now lay in a kind of torpor; the expression of his face painful to witness; his wan hands lying outside the counterpane, and now and then slightly moving, which showed me he still lived. Towards daybreak I was so worn out that I dropped asleep as I sat beside him with my face on the edge of his pillow—such deep sleep that I neither heard nor dreamed of the drumming. When I woke, with a strangely confused, unrefreshed feeling, the daylight was faintly making



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its way into the room, which had no one in it but my uncle, my aunt, and me. She seemed to have crawled with difficulty to the foot of his bed, and there sunk and fallen asleep I went out on the landing—candles were burning in their sockets with a vile smell—the house was full of vile smells and of confusion and disorder—the house-door stood ajar—one or two dragoons lay sleeping heavily on the ground. I went up again to tell my aunt, and found her straightening my uncle like a corpse. At the same moment a dragoon came up behind me. He was going to recommence the disturbance, when I pointed to the bed, and said, sternly, “See what you have done. You may now go away satisfied with having made this lately peaceful family completely wretched. God grant you forgiveness ere you are laid out like those cold remains.”

The dragoon looked confounded. He muttered something, turned on his heel, said something to his companions below, and we presently saw them run out of the house. I went and shut the door. On returning I saw my uncle was not dead. Their thinking him so was a mercy, since it gave him a little respite. He was too weak to be moved, but he begged me to return home and tell what had happened to my parents: adding, as I left him, “Do not make the affair worse than it is.” I thought it would be difficult to do that.

CHAPTER V.

The passport.

When I reached home it was some hours after sunrise. The dragoons, just recalled from the Spanish frontier, where they were no longer wanted, were spreading themselves over the country with the express commission to harass the Huguenot inhabitants as much as possible, short of death, but had not yet reached Nismes.

I entered my father’s house. Contrary to custom, he was not at the factory, but awaiting my return. He rose when I appeared, and stood silently looking at me, while my mother put her hands on my shoulders, and looked piteously in my face.

“Son, thou hast been out all night.”

“At my uncle’s, mother. He was ill in bed; the dragoons were there; and my aunt begged me to stay as a safeguard.”

“You did quite right to comply, my boy,” said my father, heartily. “I trust the dragoons did not misuse thy good uncle.”

“I know not what you call misusing,” replied I, “if beating their drums round his bed all night did not deserve that term. They almost killed him with their clamor—ate



everything in the house—called for more—reviled my aunt—scrambled for her money
—broke open the cellar, and drank every drop it contained.”



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I spoke this so fast as to be almost unintelligible; they listened in silent dismay. My father, then bidding me be seated, desired me to go over the whole matter from the beginning, with composure and method. Having drunk a cup of water, I did so; and we then held a family council, in which it was decided that my uncle, in his precarious health, would probably sink under a similar attack of the dragoons, and that it would be expedient for me to return to him at dusk with a covered cart, well supplied with hay, and to place him thereon and bring him back with me, to be kept at our house, in secrecy and safety, till he should be able to escape from the kingdom—"though this would have been an easier matter to effect," observed my father, "before he had made himself personally obnoxious to the bishop."

My father then went to his daily business at the silk-factory, while I remained behind awhile with my mother, to assist her in clearing out a loft for my uncle's reception, the entrance to which could be concealed.

I then paid a hasty visit to Madeleine, whom I found bathed in tears, as she had learnt from my mother that I had been away all night; and though this at another time would have occasioned no alarm, yet at a season of so much uneasiness she had foreboded some sad calamity. My sudden appearance caused a fresh flow of tears, but they were of thankfulness for my safety. A few tender words reassured her. I then gave her a short account of what had passed, taking care, as my uncle desired me, not to make things worse than they were. But still it was evident that he was marked for the victim of a persecution he was not in a condition to support; and as Madeleine had a sincere regard for him, which his character justly merited, she commended me for standing by him, and rejoiced that I was going to fetch him to our house.

"We have not been quite undisturbed, even during your short absence," said she. "Our evening service was yesterday interrupted, just as the congregation were in the middle of a psalm, by several officials rudely entering the temple, and commanding us to desist, because the Host was being carried by."

"In the temper in which those in authority seem to be at present," said I, "it is to be feared that things will grow worse before they mend."

"Meanwhile, remember your father's admonition, I entreat you," said Madeleine; "and, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

"Rely on it, sweet Madeleine," said I. "I am a man of peace, not of war."

Cheered by my little interview with her, I proceeded to my usual work, and, after supping with my family, stole quietly forth on my mission.

I reached the neighboring town without misadventure, and, leaving the cart out of sight, raised my uncle's latch and went in. He and my aunt had the house to themselves (for

their only servant had gone to her friends); and she was sitting on the bed, supporting his head on her shoulder.



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“Here’s Jacques,” said she, looking up.

“Jacques, my good lad,” said my uncle, holding out his feeble hand, “I thank you for this visit, and yet more for staying with us last night.”

“You have not noticed any of the dragoons lurking about outside, I hope?” said my aunt, anxiously.

“No,” said I, “all seems quiet at present; but there is no knowing when they will return, and my parents have sent me to fetch you away. My mother declares she shall know no peace till she has you under her roof.”

“My good boy, I can no more go to her than I can fly,” said my uncle.

“Oh yes, uncle, you can. I have brought you a nice covered cart, filled with hay, on which you will lie quite easily, and I will carry you down to it on my back.”

My uncle and aunt were most thankful for this, and, after very little preparation, closed the shutters of the little dwelling, and turned the key on it. My uncle was made tolerably comfortable, with my aunt seated beside him; and in this way we stealthily quitted the neighborhood. I could hear uproarious voices in the distance, and occasionally a faint scream or wail, but gradually left these painful sounds behind. To say truth, I was by no means sure of our performing this journey in safety, and had many alarms by the way; and as for my uncle, my aunt afterwards told me he was in prayer the whole of the way, to which might probably be ascribed our safety; for ours is a God that heareth prayer, not when it is a mere babble of words, in a language we do not understand, repeated over and over again, and made a merit of; but His ears are attent unto the cry of the contrite heart, and the prayer of them that are sorrowful.

It was far into the night, or rather near morning, when we reached our journey’s end. My father cautiously admitted us; my mother received the fugitives with the tenderest affection. A hot supper awaited them, after partaking which they were thankful to retire to the loft; and not even the children were to know they were there, and the youngest of our two servants had been sent to her home; for my father told me that the dragoons were expected to pay us a visit shortly, when the premises would doubtless be ransacked; “and since your uncle has borne the journey better than might have been expected,” said he, “the sooner we can get him out of the country the better.”

He then told me what plans he had been devising for this purpose, and that if my uncle were equal to it on the morrow, I should set him and my aunt on their way to a certain point, which, if they reached in safety, they would then be cared for.

“The greatest difficulty,” said he, “is about a passport; but that may possibly be procured on the frontier, for the great object of government seems to be to chase all our godly

ministers out of the kingdom, that their flocks, deprived of their strengthening exhortations, may fall an easier prey.”



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While he thus spoke, a noise at the door, as if some one were hammering on it with his fist, made us start.

“Who’s there?” said my father, without withdrawing the bolt.

“Your neighbor Romilly,” returned the other; and we, knowing his voice, let him in.

“Neighbor, I have traveled far and fast,” said he, “and would not go home without looking in to tell you the bad news. They are carrying things hardly at Arles and Usez, and you had better warn M. Chambrun he is in danger.”

My father changed countenance.

“He and his wife are with us at this moment,” said he.

“They must depart, then,” said Romilly, “and without loss of time, or she will not be allowed to go with him. See, here is a passport,” said he, dubiously smiling, “which will do for him as well as the person for whom it was intended. He shall have it.”

We thanked him warmly, and after a little more eager talk, he hurried homeward. Day was now breaking, and I threw myself on my bed for a short sleep. When I awoke, my dear mother was beside me.

“Your uncle is awake, and talking to your father,” said she, softly. “He refuses the passport, because it was not made out for himself, saying he will not do an evil that good may come.”

“This is sheer madness,” said I, springing up.

“It is consistency,” said my mother. “We are now on the brink of a great struggle between the powers of light and darkness. Those who feel they have no strength of their own to meet it with, and do not care to seek it from above, will probably give in at the very first word—certainly do so sooner or later; but those whose adhesion to God’s cause is of any worth, will brace themselves for the encounter, knowing that He can and will arm them for the fight.”

“You approve my uncle’s making a point of conscience, then, of this?”

“I must say I do, though your father is angry with him for it. Perhaps, during the day, we may yet get him a proper passport; for if the authorities are so anxious to get rid of our godly ministers, surely they will not hinder their departure. However that may be, you are to convey your uncle and aunt towards the coast tonight.”

“She goes with him, then?”



“She will not leave him. They have lost all their money, but we have made a little purse for them. Oh, my child, what times are these! You have scarcely had any rest these two nights; but do not forget to say your morning prayers.”

And kissing my forehead, she left me, that I might obey her injunction.

It may be said that trade was at a standstill that day. The weaver at his loom, the jeweler behind his counter, the baker at his kneading-trough, all thought and talked but of one subject, the expected visitation of the dragoons.

My father, with vexation, gave me back the passport, saying, “Your uncle will not use it, so you must return it to Romilly.”



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Romilly raised his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders when I did so, saying, "What will he do, then?"

"I know not. Take his chance, I suppose."

"Here, take you it," said he, thrusting it into my pocket "He may be glad of it at the end."

It was a sad day. Mothers were weeping over their new-born infants; men were talking to one another in anger and sorrow. The Catholics were already carrying their heads high, and smiling scornfully as we passed them. I thought, "Oh that we were in a desert, all to ourselves, with none to impugn our faith!" But then I called to mind that without needing to be in a desert, people might dwell in happy countries where each man's faith is respected and tolerated. I hoped my uncle would safely reach one of these happy countries; but yet one's native land is very dear after all!

Twilight came; the parting took place amid tears and embraces and benedictions; and soon I was driving my good uncle and aunt towards the coast. We had gone some miles, when a man, scarcely distinguishable in the dark, emerged from a corner and said, "Who goes there?"

I was greatly alarmed, but my uncle, recognizing the voice, said, "Oh, Joseph, is it thou? Whither art thou bound?"

"Fleeing for my life," said Joseph, "as I take it you are doing. It is well you have escaped, though I cannot make out how you come to be so far on the road. I have just left your neighborhood; the dragoons are turning your house out of window."

"Give him a lift, Jacques," said my uncle to me; "the poor man is weary." Finding him to be one of my uncle's flock, I readily did so; the more that his tone and words betokened honesty.

"Sir, you are doubtless going to join your brother-ministers," said Joseph. "Have you a passport?"

"I have not, but I hope to get one on the frontier, or find some other path open to me," said my uncle.

"Let us trust the 'other path' may open, then," said Joseph, "for most vexatious obstacles are being thrown in the way of our ministers on the frontier; they are either refused passports altogether, or such as they are provided with are declared worthless."

"Romilly's passport, then, will be no good," thought I, and I was musing on the moral advantage to my uncle of his having refused to use it from the first, when Joseph in alarm cried—



“Hist—I hear some one galloping hard after us. Let us whip on as fast as we can.”

But we had just reached the foot of a heavy ascent, and the pursuer gained upon us, and presently came up panting.

“Is Minister Chambrun here?” cried he, breathlessly.

“Who are you that ask?” returned I. At the same instant my uncle cried—

“Yes, here I am. What is it?”

“What a dance you have led me!” cried the messenger. “I come from the commissioner, who sends you a passport, and desires you to go to Bordeaux as fast as you can.”



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What a smile broke over my uncle's face!

"Said I not," cried he, joyfully, "that a path would doubtless open for me? Henceforth, my children, never distrust the Lord."

His course was now altered. Instead of making for the nearest coast, now within a few miles, on the borders of the Mediterranean, he decided to proceed with all convenient speed to Montauban, where my aunt had friends, thence down the Garonne, and so to Bordeaux. I could but set him on his way and trust his future course to the same good Providence that had hitherto protected him. My aunt was decided to follow his fortunes, happen what would.

CHAPTER VI.

Trial by fire.

Day was far spent before I got back, my horse having gone lame. There seemed unusual disturbance in the town; I distinguished a distant hum of many voices, and all at once a shrill cry that made me shudder, followed by the passionate wailing of children, and the incessant barking of dogs. I took the back way to our house, where lay our stable, and entering the little yard, saw to my dismay six or eight cavalry horses standing in it. I sprang from my cart and hurried into the house, on the threshold of which my little brother Charles met me all in tears, and cried, "Oh, they're burning mamma!"

I burst into the kitchen; there was a roaring fire on the hearth, which a dragoon was feeding with handfuls of paper torn from our great family Bible; but there were also great billets of wood burning, which threw out intense heat, and close in front of it was placed my mother, penned in with heavy pieces of furniture, while two dragoons in front of her were thrusting their clenched fists in her face, saying, "Now then, you obstinate woman! will you roast like a pig, or say where he is gone?"

My mother looked immovable as stone, but directly I entered, I saw her change countenance a little. My father lay on the ground, bound hand and foot, while a dragoon was preparing to beat him with a heavy bridle.

"Ah, ah, here is the young cub," cried they as I entered; "here is the young fellow that was attending on his uncle!" Then, with more bad language than I choose to repeat, they bade me tell where I had carried him, unless I would see my mother roasted alive.

"Out of your reach," said I, boldly; "so now let my mother go free," and springing towards her, I released her before they could throw themselves upon me. The next minute, we were rolling on the ground, but, as my mother for the moment was safe, I did not mind the blows I was getting, but returned them with a fire-iron that lay within reach. I dealt



blows with such a will that for a time I had the advantage, never ceasing to shout, "Never fear, mother! All's safe! he's on the wide sea. Fly with the children and leave me to deal with these gentry."

This so enraged them that they redoubled their violence; no wonder, then, that I was got down at last, bound hand and foot, and my feet made bare to receive the bastinado. Before they laid it on, they put the question to me:



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“Wilt thou now, then, recant thine accursed doctrines?”

“What doctrines?” said I, to gain time.

“Those that are falsely called reformed.”

“Oh yes, all that are falsely called reformed.”

They stood at pause on this, and looked at one another.

“He gives in,” muttered one.

“Not a bit,” replied another. “He is only lying.”

“Well but, mark you, that’s no matter of ours,” said the first.

“I tell you it is!” roared the second, pushing him aside. “Let me take him in hand. You don’t know how to question him.” Then accosting me, in a defiant sort of way (he was far from sober), he said,

“Hark ye, young man. Now answer for your life. Give us no double meanings. What is your religion?”

“That which was brought us and taught us by our Lord Jesus Christ.”

“Do you believe in St. Peter?”

“Of course.”

“And in the Virgin Mother of God?”

“The angel Gabriel called her blessed among women.”

“But do you worship her?”

“I reverence her, and worship her Divine Son.”

“Do you worship her, I say?” threatening me with the stirrup-leather.

“Son, son,” put in my father.

“Silence, old man!” and they hit him on the mouth.

“Do you worship her?”

“I do not.”



Then they beat the soles of my feet, till my father in anguish cried, “Oh, I cannot bear this—” but had to bear it. And so had I. But on their burning my soles with a red-hot iron, a merciful Providence took me out of their hands, by bringing me insensibility. How long they pursued their barbarities after I fainted, I know not; but when I came to myself, it was in cold and darkness, lying in the open street, where I suppose they had cast me, thinking me dead. How long a time must have passed! for the stars were shining above me. Where were my parents, my brothers and sisters? I tried to raise myself a little and look around, but was beaten and bruised so that I was in agonies of pain, and sank back on the ground. The cold made my wounded feet smart indescribably; but while, with closed eyes, I was inwardly murmuring, “Lord, help thy poor servant, for I cannot help myself;” something that made me wince with pain, but the next moment gave exquisite relief, was applied to the soles of my feet, and the next instant I heard the hushed voices of those who were dearest to me on earth, my mother and Madeleine “Can it be that we are too late?” said Madeleine. “No, his pulse yet beats, though as feebly as possible. Oh, what he must have suffered, and how I love him for not having given in!”

In pain though I was, a smile of joy broke over my face on this, and I opened my eyes.

“Praise the Lord, he revives!” said my mother. “How art thou, my son?”

“I shall do well, my mother—,” but I could not speak another word. I closed my eyes, and felt about to faint.



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“Jacques, dear Jacques,” said Madeleine, whispering energetically and distinctly, close to my ear, “be of good courage, and God will help thee. I have found a place of safety in the vaults of Les Arenes, whither Gabrielle has already taken the children; and now, if you can but master the pain enough to get there with such help as we can give you, before the dragoons return, we shall all be safe.”

“Oh, most certainly I will,” said I, trying to rise; but when I attempted to set my feet to the ground, I was in such anguish that I nearly fell down; but what will not “needs must” effect? The poor galley-slaves at Marseilles and Dunkirk can tell how, when it seems impossible for them to pull another stroke, the taskmaster’s whip, mercilessly applied, proves that they not only can pull still, but pull well too. I am ashamed to say how these two beloved women had almost to carry me, a stout youth; and even all their strength might have been insufficient but for the potent spur of the dragoons’ return. With an arm round the neck of each, and resting almost my entire weight on their shoulders, I managed to scuffle along, very slowly and with fearful pain, towards Les Arenes. We paused now and then, under the deep shadow of a wall, for me to regain my strength. I was astonished at my mother’s utter forgetfulness of herself in her care for me; and said, “Were you much burnt, my mother?”

“No, my son; no,” she answered, cheerfully; but in truth she was sadly seared and blistered, and her heroism under suffering might be likened to that of the martyrs of old.

“What took place after I fainted?” said I.

“They believed you were dead, and threw you into the road,” said my mother, “saying they hoped the dogs would come and lick your blood like Ahab’s. After that a trumpet was blown, and there seemed something going on in the town, and they all ran off. The children had meanwhile taken refuge with Madeleine; and I then took the opportunity of raising your father, after cutting his bonds, and sending him off to the factory, whence he was to return with men to carry you away, but they have never come, and I fear some mischief may have befallen him. I would fain have gone to see, but you were my first object. I could not carry you, and went to Madeleine for help. She had just gone with Gabrielle and the children to Les Arenes; but while I was preparing bandages and a liniment for your poor feet, she returned and accompanied me back.”

“Madeleine is a good angel,” said I, pressing my arm more closely to her.

“What is your case to-day, may be ours to-morrow,” said she.



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We continued our painful and tedious course, “lurking in the thievish corners of the streets,” like evil-doers, if we saw any one coming. The moon was dangerously bright, but the shadows were proportionately dark, and at length we reached Les Arenes, with their depths of mysterious shadow, and solemn pillars and arches silvered by the white beams. Though the amphitheatre is in the heart of the city, the neighborhood seemed unusually deserted. People had fled, or were cowering in hiding-places, or were flocking to see what was going on elsewhere. I cannot otherwise account for it. Only that as we passed near the house of good old Monsieur de Laccassagne, we could hear the abominable uproar of drums within it, and it would seem as if all the drummers in Nismes must have been congregated to drive the poor old gentleman to distraction. We had also seen in the distance, floods of light streaming from the windows of the cathedral, and heard a strange murmur of cries, and we afterwards learnt that multitudes of poor people of the baser sort had been driven like oxen or silly sheep into the church, pricked on by the dragoons’ swords and shouts of “Kill! kill!” to be present at mass.

But now, as we gained a spot where, at the end of a street, we could gain a distant glimpse of our factory, we perceived the sky red with flurid flames bursting from it.

“The factory is on fire!” I exclaimed.

Then my mother wrung her hands, crying, “Oh, my husband! you are ruined, perhaps sacrificed! I must go in quest of thee, and leave my son with a faithful friend.”

Then she hastened off towards the factory, and I could not blame her nor wonder at her, though my heart misgave me that she might fall into mischief.

Madeleine’s support was insufficient for me now; but I set my teeth like a flint, and commanded the pain I was in every time I set foot to the ground. Was it not alleviation enough to have her dear arm for my stay, and her tender hand wiping from my brow the drops forced forth by my suffering?

Then we came to some steps. These gave me much trouble to descend, especially as we were so nearly in the dark, but Madeleine seemed to know them pretty well.

“I have often been here already,” whispered she, “only not after dark, and have laid in stores of many things necessary for our subsistence.”

We were now groping along a chill stone passage, and were presently brought up by a wall right in front, against which we violently hit our heads.

“I fear I have missed the way,” said Madeleine, in alarm. “Hark! I hear the children laughing. Nothing damps the spirits at their age.”



The next turn brought us to the entrance of a chamber, or rather den, for it had probably been built for wild beasts, and formerly tenanted by them. A ruddy fire burned in the middle, and circles of smoke escaped through crannies and fissures, for of course there was no chimney. A savory steam arose from a large black pot suspended over this fire, and round it was gathered a motley and unruly group, not Gabrielle and the children, but of tramps, gipsies, peddlers, and very likely thieves. Swarthy Morescoes, Basques, I know not how many nations, were there represented. They were singing, carousing, and making much noise.



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"Here's a pretty lady," cried a gipsy woman, as Madeleine shrank back affrighted.

"Welcome, welcome!" cried one or two voices. "Come and make one of us."

"Not so fast," said a dissentient voice. "There's a young man with her. How do we know he is not a spy?"

"Good sir, I am lame on both feet," said I, and was turning away with Madeleine, both of us anxious to plunge into the darkness, out of their sight, when a threatening, swarthy man, of great strength, prevented our departure.

"You are neither of you going," said he, defiantly, "till you give some account of yourselves and your object."

"We are harmless people; we have only mistaken our way," interposed Madeleine.

"Soho! Only mistaken your way? And how come harmless people to be abroad at this time of night, groping about among the vaults of Les Arenes?"

Before there was time to answer, a tall, lean man in black, with a bottle in his hand, which he had just removed from his lips, came forward from a corner, and said. "Hold, there, enough has been said. I know this young man, and, I dare say, this young maiden. We are very good friends. Don't you remember me?" looking sharply at me.

"Not exactly," said I, straining my memory.

"Oh, come, don't deny it. Last time you had the best of it; this time I have. Don't you remember the Fair of Beaucaire?"

"Yes, of course, sir," said Madeleine, readily, "and your beautiful needles and pins and pretty equipage."

The needle-vender looked pleased, and said, "You have a better memory than the young fellow; however, I owe him a good turn. You saved me from the hoofs of le Docteur Jameray's horse, and lent me your handkerchief. I have had it in keeping for you ever since," drawing it from his breast. Then, turning to his companions, he said, "Excuse me; I attend these young persons a little way. They are friends, and the young man is ill."

In fact, my head swam round, and I swooned again, and have no remembrance but of a confused babble of sounds. When I came to, Madeleine and the needle-seller, whose name was La Croisette, were conveying me between them; or, in fact, he was chiefly carrying me, and she supporting my feet. I said, "Set me down, I'll try to walk," but found I could not. Then she said, "Wait here; I'll run on a little, and find where Gabrielle is."



I would have stayed her, but she was gone. La Croisette said, "You seem in trouble; what is it?"

I said, "Don't you know the dragoons are in Nismes? They have tried to burn my mother, have bound and beaten my father, destroyed our property, and cudgelled and burnt me till I cannot stand."

He drew in his breath, and said, "Any one of those things is trouble enough. Is that pretty girl your sister?"

"No; my affianced wife."

"And you have taken to Les Arenes for safety, and left your father and mother behind?"



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“Not willingly, you may be sure. My mother and Madeleine half carried me hither. Then we saw my father’s silk factory in flames, and she ran to find him.”

Madeleine here returned, and said, encouragingly, “I have found where they are; it is a very little way, and they look so comfortable!”

With her help and La Croisette’s I dragged myself along, and though it seemed a long way off, we got there at last; and very snug did the old vault look, with the little brazier and the lamp, and the curtain to keep off the draught, and food and bedding on the floor. I sank down on the straw they had prepared for me, and never was couch of down more grateful to a luxurious man than this poor pallet to me. La Croisette viewed the whole party with keenness, then, putting his bottle to my lips, said, “Take this; there’s a little left.” Whatever it was, it revived me; and then he nodded, said “Bon soir,” and went away.

I now became anxious for my parents, though Madeleine assured me they knew the way to our retreat. A long time passed; the children fell asleep; we remained in anxious suspense. At length we heard footsteps. Were they of friend or foe? Madeleine went out to see. I could not bear her taking on herself every office that ought to devolve upon me, but could not help it. In a few instants she guided my father and mother into our dungeon, holding a hand of each. As they entered, the red fire-light leaped up and showed their grave faces. The first thing my father did, after taking us in at a glance, was to say, “Children, let us pray!”

Even the little ones, roused from their slumber, and but half awake, put up their hands. My mother and the girls knelt; my father stood. His prayer began with earnest thanksgiving that we were all together again, and that, though his worldly substance had been taken from him, there was no loss of life or limb. Then he returned hearty thanks that, in this our day of spiritual trial and temptation, there had been no apostacy, no temporizing cowardice, no falling short. But, he added, he knew, and we all knew, that this was but the beginning of sorrows; that many a sore trial and temptation remained behind; that we had no strength of our own wherewith to meet it; but that there was all-sufficient strength in the great Captain of our salvation. Then he prayed the Lord to give us his strength, sufficient for our day, whatever it might be, even as He had strengthened Daniel in the lions’ den, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace, and Peter and Paul and Silas in prison, and John in Patmos; and that we might have grace to rejoice at being accounted worthy to suffer for his name’s sake, and be strengthened to bear testimony even before kings if need were; and to cast all our burden upon Him, not caring much for the things of this life, knowing that he could reduplicate them if it were his will, at any time, as he had done to Job.

While he thus prayed, an ineffable calm and sweetness took possession of me, my eyes involuntarily closed, or, if opened at intervals, only saw vague, uncertain forms, and thus

a deep, deep sleep fell on me, without even a dream, that lulled all sense of pain, and loss, and fear, and sorrow, until morning.



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“For so he giveth his beloved sleep.” Words how beautiful, and true, and reassuring! They that expend all their little strength for him, and lay their little substance at his feet, are his beloved. There is no need to be afraid we are not; we know it; we feel it; we have the witness in ourselves, just as the child, nestling in his father’s arms, knows that he loves and is beloved. I have heard persons say, “Have you the faith of assurance?” Yes, thank God, I have it, and have had it ever since He was first graciously pleased to call me to Him, and that was long, long ago. But all have not this faith; just as a man, wanting to go to Bordeaux, may not be assured he is on the road to Bordeaux, and yet he may be on the way thither nevertheless. Then if you have not the faith of assurance, practise at least the faith of adherence. That, at least, is in your own power. Cleave to God exactly as if you were certain of being accepted by Him at last; and thus, fulfilling his own conditions, you will be accepted by Him whether you are assured of it beforehand or not. “Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.”

CHAPTER VII.

La Croisette.

How chill and painful was my awaking! The soles of my feet were raw with so much walking after they were blistered, and the inflammation irritated my whole frame, which was likewise stiffened with so much beating. When I opened my eyes, I saw the anxious face of my dear mother, as she examined my wounds, and prepared with light hand to dress them. Nor would anybody have guessed she herself was terribly burnt, had not one of the children, inadvertently running against her, caused a sudden wince, but without any audible expression of pain. The thought of what she was enduring with such stoicism, or rather, let me say, with such Christianity, enabled me, better than any stimulant would have done, to endure without murmuring; and she said to me, with strong approval in her kind eyes, “Your wounds tell me, my poor boy, how much you have to bear; therefore there is no need to cry out. Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

“Yes, that is true indeed,” said my father, “and things might have gone much worse with us.”

“Can you say that, my father,” said I, “when you have lost all?”

“I have not lost all,” replied he. “Before the factory was attacked, I had time to disperse the workmen, dispatch a hasty line to an English correspondent, and secrete certain bills of exchange; so that if we can but find our way to England we shall, indeed, have to begin life again, but with God’s blessing, shall not fare badly. And with that blessing, my son, we shall not fare badly even here.”



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“No, indeed, father.” And as I spoke I looked towards where the lamp-light (for we had no other) fell on the bending head of Madeleine, as she talked in a low voice to the children, and kept them amused. Not a glimpse of the sun’s light could penetrate our refuge, and thus it always seemed night with us when, in fact, it was bright day. Doubtless this was tedious to all; but no one, even the children, so much as murmured at it, except Gabrielle, who was inexpressibly wearied, and now and then gave a long yawn, which set others yawning, and procured her a good-humored rebuke.

“How long is this to last?” said she.

“Till the dragoons find us out, perhaps,” said my father, gravely; which silenced her for a little while.

“Our provisions will not last long,” said she presently.

“Then we must procure more,” said my mother. “We have enough for the present.”

“Yes, we have cheese and wine and flour; but what good is flour unless it is cooked?”

“Do not make mountains of molehills, Gabrielle,” said Madeleine, aside; “it is such a bad example for the children.”

“Well, but they are not molehills,” returned Gabrielle, in rather a lower tone, which, however, we could hear well enough. “I suppose we cannot starve.”

“Has your endurance so soon ceased, my dear girl?” said my father. “Think of the believers of old. They had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned; they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And yet none of these, though they obtained a good report in God’s own word for their faith, had received the explicit promises through Christ, God having provided those better things for us; wherefore we surely should be ashamed to show less constancy than they did.”

“Oh, of course,” said Gabrielle.

“Think of what Jacques is bearing without a murmur,” said Madeleine. “I’m sure he sets an example to us all.”

“And as to minding what we eat,” said little Charles, “I’m sure I don’t mind it a bit. Do I, mamma?”

“Oh, if you are all going to be against me, I shall say no more,” said Gabrielle.



“That’s right,” said my mother. “Put a brave heart on it, my dear; I know you have it in you.”

Gabrielle bit her lip, but took out a comb, and began to arrange little Louison’s hair. “Now,” she whispered, “I’ll make you as smart as the young lady we saw with Madame de Laccassagne;” and in this way she amused herself and the child, talking nonsense with her, and inventing imaginary scenes and people, all in a hushed voice, that my father might not hear.

Suddenly, some one at the entrance of our dungeon wishing us “Bon jour,” made us start violently and look towards him in alarm.



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“You need not shrink from me,” said La Croisette, advancing among us when he had looked around. “I may not be as good as yourselves, or I may be—that’s neither here nor there. I’m not quite a bad fellow, I believe, though at times I am driven to keep indifferent company. Still, I am not very fond of those I’m among at present, so I thought I’d look in on you. Your servant, sir,” to my father. “A votre service, madame,” very politely to my mother. “You were not here last night, when your son and that young lady rather unexpectedly looked in on us. To speak the truth, there are reasons why some of us don’t relish being looked in on unexpectedly.”

“Quite natural,” said my father; “no more do we.”

“Ah, but you need not be afraid of me,” said La Croisette, “I’m no traitor, I! It might be rash, though, to say as much of some of my companions, and therefore I advise you not to be too familiar with them.”

“My good friend, we have not the least intention of being so.”

“Age is wary, and youth is full of trust,” said La Croisette. “Not knowing that you, respected sir, and you, madame, were here to look after the younger persons, I ventured to do so myself, to bid them beware of their neighbors.”

“That was very friendly, and I thank you heartily for it,” said my father.

“Shall you remain here long?” said La Croisette.

“That depends entirely on circumstances.”

“Doubtless you are hiding from the dragoons.”

“Is it necessary to tell you?”

“Why, no; but you might do so without fear. I have no love for them myself, but nothing to fear; I am certainly not a Huguenot; but neither would I betray one. Come, I see you would rather I went away. I am going into town. There is nothing I can do for you, then?”

“Nothing; we thank you very much.”

When he was gone, Gabrielle exclaimed, “Now that is what I call an opportunity wasted.”

“We must beware, my child, who we trust,” said my mother.

“Of course; but he was so evidently a harmless, good sort of man.”



“We had no occasion to trouble him.”

Gabrielle plainly thought there was a good deal of occasion. Indeed, had she known she was actually doomed to spend a few days in the vaults of Les Arenes, I am persuaded she would have fitted them up with upholstery and eatables, even to pickles and preserves. Meanwhile Madeleine was beguiling the time to the children by setting them easy sums on the wall, scratched with a nail, and drawing pictures for them with the same implement, accompanied with stories, as thus:—“Once on a time there was a poor Christian captive in this very dungeon—here he is (drawing his picture)—sentenced to be thrown to the lions (picture). Once he had been a little boy like this (picture), fond of playing with other little boys (picture), and ready to carry his mother’s pitcher to the well (picture),



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or sweep her floor (picture), or make himself useful to her in any way whatever. One day,—and so forth. Gabrielle's fancy was tickled with this, and when Madeleine desisted she continued it, though now and then with a furtive yawn. Meanwhile my father was pondering over the papers he had about him, and sitting immersed in thought, or now and then saying a little to my mother. By-and-by he ventured out a little without quitting the precincts of the amphitheatre, and returned, saying several tramps were loitering about, whose attention it would not be prudent to attract. The day, which seemed the longest I ever knew, at length drew to a close, which we only learnt by my father's watch, for we were out of hearing of the town clocks. He said it would make time pass less heavily if we divided it methodically, and had our set hours for meals, rest, prayer, and mutual improvement, whether by exhortation, discussion, or general discourse, We followed his lead as well as we could, but our thoughts were chiefly with the outer world.

Just after the women and children had retired for the night to a little inner dungeon, La Croisette once more presented himself uninvited.

"I thought, messieurs, you might like to hear the news of the day," said he.

"Most certainly," said my father. "Pray be seated. I wish I had a better seat to offer you. What is stirring?"

"The news, then, is, that Nismes is being converted as fast as possible," said La Croisette. "No persuader, sirs, like fire and sword. Dragoons are quartered on every Protestant. They are destroying whatever they cannot make booty of. Some are littering their fine black horses with bales of broadcloth, silk, and cotton; others with fine Holland cloths. The common people are being driven to church at the sword's point, and conforming by shoals. The gentry give more trouble, but end by coming round."

"Some may—some weak-hearted persons," said my father, reluctantly.

"Well, they may be weak-hearted; I'm sure I should be, in their place," said La Croisette. "In fact, what is it?—a mere form. They just slur over a few words—cross themselves—kiss a relic, or some little matter of that sort. No more is required; the bishop lets them off easy."

"Will the Lord let them off easy?" said my father. "Christianity admits of no such temporizing. The early Christians might have saved their lives by burning a handful of incense before the Roman Emperor's statue; but they did not hold it a mere form. And the Romanists admit in principle what they dissent from in practice; for they almost deify those early martyrs for their constancy to the truth, and yet would martyr us for doing the very same thing."



“Well, I don’t mean them to martyr me,” said La Croisette, “I’ve an elastic creed, I!—it stretches or collapses like an easy stocking.”

“Beware, beware, my friend, of fancying a creed like that of any worth at all.”



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“Sir, we all have our weak points and our strong ones. I’m no polemic, I!—I prefer meddling with things that will not bring me into trouble. There was a factory burnt down last night—”

“Ah!” groaned my father.

“Some say both the partners were burnt; others that one of them is at a distance. Some think the factory was set on fire on purpose; others that it was an accident. Nothing remains of it but the outer walls and a smoking heap of ruins.”

My father covered his face with his hand.

“Then, again,” pursued La Croisette, “that worthy old Monsieur Laccassagne, unable to stand the deprivation of sleep any longer, has conformed—”

“Has he, though!” cried my father, with a start. “Oh, how sad a fall!”

“Outwardly, only outwardly,” said La Croisette. “The poor old gentleman was driven almost out of his senses by that deafening drumming. ‘You shall have rest now,’ said the bishop. ‘Alas!’ replied he, ‘I look for no rest on this side heaven; and may God grant that its doors may not be closed against me by this act.’”

“Poor old man! poor Monsieur Laccassagne!” ejaculated my father. “Well might he say so.”

“Yes, but what reasonable person can suppose the doors of heaven will be closed against him by it?” said La Croisette. “The Lord is a God of mercy—”

“But will by no means clear the guilty,” said my father.

“And He looketh not to the outward appearance, but to the heart,” said La Croisette.

“That expression applies to the personal, bodily appearance, which none of us can help,” said my father, “not to the pretence of believing one thing, when we believe, its opposite. I mourn over the backsliding of my old friend. Better had it been to suffer affliction for a season.

“So the virtuous lady his wife thought,” said La Croisette. “She escaped in the disguise of a servant, and is now wandering in the open fields.”

“Ah, what sorrow! May the good Lord support her under it!”

“Ay, and the many other women who are in similar case. Numbers of them are at this instant cowering in the cold and darkness in ditches and under hedges.”



“Monsieur Laccassagne might well say he could hope for no rest on this side heaven,” said my father, bitterly. “How can he rest, knowing that his excellent wife, accustomed to every comfort, is now an outcast for her faith—the faith which he has denied?”

“Well, I wish I could have brought you more cheerful news,” said La Croisette, rising. “In truth, you need it, in this dismal hole, to keep up your spirits. Tell me, now, good sir, how long do you expect to be able, you and yours, to hold out?”

“Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof,” said my father. “Thanks be to God, He does not require us to dwell on what may be in store for our chastening. He says explicitly, ‘Take no thought for the morrow—the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.’ Words how kind and how wise!”



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This seemed to strike La Croisette a good deal. He remained in thought a few minutes, and then said, "Well, it is time I should take my leave. I respect you very much." Then, resuming his bantering tone, "Since you are so willing to hazard the disturbance which poor old Monsieur Laccassagne found it so hard to bear, I advise you to sleep day and night while you are here, and lay in a good stock of repose against the time when you will be deprived of it."

Stepping back again, just as he seemed going, he said, "You fancy yourselves very safe here; and, indeed, the dragoons unless with a guide to you, might possibly take some time to find you out; but depend on it, Les Arenes will be well searched some day—perhaps very soon; it is too well known as having been an old hiding-place. Every corner—this among the rest—is known to outcasts, many of them of bad reputation, who, for a morsel of bread, would give up St. Paul or St. Peter. All are not so, however, and those I am now among have a kind of the honor which exists among thieves. Do not depend too much on it, however."

And with this very unsatisfactory speech, he left us. My father, after brooding on what he had said for some time, knelt down, and was long in prayer: then he murmured, "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." And I knew soon, by his breathing, that he had indeed found rest in sleep. For me, I could not close my eyes: the text that dwelt in my mind was, "My soul is among lions." I thought of Madame Laccassagne and the other poor women wandering in the fields, and pictured a thousand distressing circumstances. Our solitary oil-lamp was beginning to languish for want of trimming, and I thought, "What if it should leave us in darkness altogether, and we should never know when it is day?" and dwelt on the Egyptians in the plague of darkness, when none of them rose from his place for three days. I was so feverish that it seemed to me a darkness like that would madden me—I must dash my head against the wall, or do something desperate; and I thought of Jonah in the whale's belly, when the waters compassed him round about, and his soul fainted in that hideous darkness; and again it was "three days." Then I thought, "Why three days?" Was it because the Son of Man was three days in the heart of the earth? And shall we remain here in this subterranean darkness three days?

Just as the lamp seemed going out my loved mother stole out of the inner dungeon, and trimmed it; then noiselessly stole to my side, and, seeing my eyes open, smiled on me and kissed me, and then lay down beside my father. Oh, the peace, the security of her presence! I sank into dreamless sleep.

I was awakened by the most horrid noise I ever heard in my life. It seemed like the roar of a lion close to my ear, and I started up in wild affright, fancying myself a Christian prisoner about to be thrown to the wild beasts. All around was dark as pitch—the lamp had gone out! The frightful bellowing continued without intermission; and, besides, there were sobs and screams, brutal laughter and cursing. Dreadful moment! Presently a spark of light momentarily illumined our cell, and showed the anxious face

of my mother, as she re-kindled the lamp, surrounded by the terrified children and girls, roused from their sleep by the hideous uproar.



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“Oh, what is it?—what is it?” cried I. My mother’s lips moved, but she could not make herself heard. Having succeeded in lighting the lamp, she came close to me, and said

“They seem to have put one of the bulls of La Camargue into the adjoining den for the next bull-baiting, and to have lashed it to frenzy with their goads. The noise is terrific, but I do not suppose the animal can break loose.”

La Croisette now appeared among us, suffocating with laughter. “Are you frightened out of your lives?” said he. “’Tis nothing.”

“Nay, sir,” said my mother, “’tis something, I think, to be raised up in the middle of the night by such a dreadful noise.”

“Night? ’tis broad daylight! No wonder you were frightened. I can hardly hear myself speak; but I felt impelled to come and see how you took it. They have put an enormous bull in the adjoining den; and if you don’t like his company, you will have to change your quarters, which I advise you to do at any rate; for the Basques who have him in charge are brutal fellows, whose jargon I don’t understand. Ten to one they will discover you before the day’s out; and then what will you do?”

“Truly, our case is hard,” said my mother, looking wistfully at my father.

“It is so, my dear wife,” replied he; “and I do not see my way clearly. Let us ask God to make it a little clearer to us.”

La Croisette looked amazed when he saw the whole family kneel down, and made a movement to go, but paused at the entrance and looked back on us. Though the bellowing still continued, it was neither so loud nor so frequent; but still only snatches of my father’s voice could be heard. But his very look and attitude was a prayer; and there were the two sweet sisters, with their clasped hands and bent heads, and the little ones crowded about my mother. Now and then such broken sentences were heard as—
“Lord, thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another—Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance—The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the air, and the flesh of thy saints to the beasts of the land—We are become an open shame to our enemies, and a very scorn to them that hate us. Return, O Lord! how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants—Oh, satisfy us with thy mercy, and that soon; so will we rejoice, and give thanks to thee all the days of our life—Make thy way plain before us, O Lord, because of our enemies.”

I could not help furtively watching the workings of La Croisette’s face as he listened to these words of the Psalmist, so appropriate and pathetic. He started as if shot when touched by some one behind; and the next instant M. Bourdinave stood among us.



CHAPTER VIII.

Persecuted, yet not forsaken.

"My father!" exclaimed the girls, and flew into his arms. The next instant the bellowing recommenced.



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“What is that?” cried M. Bourdinave, starting.

“One of the bulls intended for baiting,” said my father.

“Ah, what a vicinity to find you in?” said M. Bourdinave.

“Better, my dear friend, than the captives of old had in this very dungeon. And now, what news? Where have you been?”

“I’d better go; I’m not wanted.” muttered La Croisette, heard only by me, and then retiring.

“I bring the worst of news,” returned M. Bourdinave, sitting down. “The Edict of Nantes is revoked.”

“Ah!” and a general cry broke from us.

“What signifies it,” said my mother, bitterly, “when already its provisions have been set at nought? Are we any the better for it?”

“We may be yet worse for losing it,” said M. Bourdinave. “Every Reformed meeting-house in France is to be demolished; no private assemblages for devotional purposes are to be allowed on any pretext whatever. All Huguenot schools are to be suppressed; all children born of Huguenot parents to be baptized and educated as Catholics; all non-conforming ministers to quit the country within fifteen days, on pain of the galleys.”

“Let us rise, my children,” cried my father in great agitation, “and leave this country, which is no longer a mother to us, shaking the dust off our feet. Alas, what am I saying? Whither can we go?”

“To England,” replied M. Bourdinave. “I have already taken measures for it.”

“Heaven be praised!” cried we simultaneously.

“But it will be under circumstances of great hardship, difficulty, and danger.”

“Never mind; we willingly encounter them. Yes, yes,” said one after another.

“Have you the courage, my daughters?” looking earnestly at them.

Madeleine threw herself into his arms.

“I knew what your answer would be,” said he, fondly kissing her; “but my little Gabrielle —”



“Oh, fear me not, father,” cried Gabrielle, hastily. “Anything to get out of this horrid place. I believe I have seemed too impatient of it to those around me, but that was because inaction is always so trying to me.”

“My love, you may yet be exposed to it. I have known one of our brethren put into a chest, with very few air-holes, and lowered into the hold of a merchant-vessel, with considerable roughness, where he was left many hours before he could be released.”

Gabrielle changed color. “Never mind,” said she, in a low voice, and pressing her father’s hand. “What man has done man may do, though I am but a woman who say it.”

“That’s my brave girl!” fondly kissing her. “Well, my friends, if we can but get to Bordeaux, we shall escape; that is provided for. It was this which kept me from you so long. And what a return has been mine! I got no answers from you to my letters; I heard the persecution here was raging with fury; I came to snatch you from it, and found my home deserted, the factory burnt, the workmen scattered, no tidings of you to be found. At length I got news of you from one of the men, who told me of your retreat, and that he, under cover of night, brought you bread. We planned how to remove you hence to-night, but it must be in detachments. At a place agreed on there will be a small cart that will convey the children and perhaps their mother.”



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"I prefer walking," interposed my mother. "Jacques is unable to do so."

"Impossible! I am sure you have not the strength for it," said we all.

"Never fear," said she, stoutly.

"No, no; it must not be," said I.

"And you, my son?"

"I will undertake for him," said La Croisette, who, it now appeared, had been listening behind the doorway all this time.

"Who are you, my man?" said M. Bourdinave, in surprise and some distrust.

"An honest fellow, though I say it that shouldn't," was his answer. "I am one of those who deal in deeds more than words. I cannot patter Ave Marias with a Catholic, nor sing interminable psalms like a Huguenot, but neither can I endure the ways the Catholics are taking to compel the Huguenots to submission. I take my own way, d'ye see, and am fettered by nobody. No one would molest La Croisette the needle-seller, not even a dragoon. And I have learnt to esteem you all; I admire the young ladies, and respect the old lady and gentleman. Therefore, there's my hand; you may take it or not. 'Tis not over soft; but there's no blood on it, and it never took a bribe. Let those say so who can. And what I say next is this: Dr. Jameray has fallen sick, and I've undertaken to drive his little wagon, with the sign of the bleeding tooth, from hence to Montauban. As far as that I'll give my young friend here a cast, and he may thence easily take boat down the Garonne to Bordeaux. At least, if he cannot of himself, I'll manage it for him."

How grateful we were to the worthy La Croisette! Not one of us distrusted him in the least; at any rate, if M. Bourdinave did so at first, he was soon reassured by us, and took the honest fellow heartily by the hand. A good deal more was now said than I have space to recount or memory to recall. Indeed, my head was in a confused state, and I was conscious of little but of the tender pressure of dear Madeleine's hand, from whom I must so soon part.

We were to start as soon as night afforded us its friendly cover; but some hours of daylight remained. My father and M. Bourdinave had many business affairs to discuss, and Madeleine kept the children quiet, that they might not interrupt them. I never thought Gabrielle so pretty as now that she had spoken with resolution, and seemed strengthening herself to keep up to it. Nevertheless, we have no real strength of our own; it all comes from God; but He gives it to all who ask it faithfully. Madeleine whispered to me, "Let us pray that strength for her duty may be given her." I nodded and smiled.



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Meanwhile my mother went out to the appointed place where, it seems, Raoul had daily placed a loaf. We, who were not in the secret, had much wondered where our bread came from, and how it lasted out. This time she returned with a large sausage as well; so we ate our meal with gladness and thankfulness of heart, La Croisette insisting on passing round his bottle, which, somehow, he always kept well filled. And had this man had a mind to betray us, how easily he might have done so! He overheard our plans, might have drugged our wine, and stretched us all powerless; might have told his comrades to make sport of us, and kept out of sight himself; or might openly have led the dragoons to our hiding-place with torches and weapons. Our blessed Lord had more reason, humanly speaking, to trust Judas, than we to trust La Croisette; but you see this man was honest; you could not have tempted him to sell us for thirty pieces of silver.

When he went forth, though, after supper, my mind misgave me for a while, thinking, "What if he be gone to betray us?" I wronged his worthy heart. So many people are worse than we think them, that it is a comfort when some prove better than we think them. Worthy La Croisette! I have thy tall, meagre form and lantern jaws now before me. Many a showy professor might be bettered by having as true a heart.

When he was gone, my father said, "Let us join once more in family worship, and then get a little sleep before our night-journey begins."

I think he and M. Bourdinave and the children actually did sleep, but not my mother or the girls. I certainly did not. My mother dressed and bandaged my wounded feet for the last time. They were healing, but too tender for walking or standing without injury to the newly-formed skin. Then she sat beside me, with looks of love, and was presently joined by Madeleine. We knew so well what was passing in each other's minds, that we did not need to say much. Then my father awoke, with all his faculties about him, looked at his watch, and said it was time to start. M. Bourdinave went out, and after what seemed to our impatience rather a long time, returned, and said Raoul reported unusual disturbance in the city, but that now all was ready. We took leave of one another, agreed on places of rendezvous (if we were ever enabled to reach them), and had a valedictory prayer. Still they did not like to go and leave me without La Croisette. At length he appeared, and, addressing my father, said:

"You had better avoid the precincts of your famous temple, La Calade: it has been completely demolished, and crowds are yet hanging about their beloved place of worship, regardless of danger, but the military will presently disperse them."

"Ah, what desecration!" exclaimed my mother.

"Keep your regrets for the sufferings of living people, my good lady," said La Croisette. "Stones have no feeling, and are not prone to revenge insult. 'Tis said, walls have ears. The walls of La Calade have, at all events, a tongue; for on the summit of the

ruins lies a stone with these words on it, 'Lo, this is the house of God; this is the gate of heaven!'"



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Then addressing my father, he said. "The very fact of the public attention being drawn to this point makes other parts of the city comparatively deserted, and therefore favors your escape. Lose no time, I advise you, in availing yourselves of it."

We exchanged our last embraces in tears, and they went forth, he following them. I felt inexpressibly lonely and sad.

Just as I was beginning to get uneasy at his absence, and to think, "What if he should never come back?" he returned.

"They are safely off now," said he, "and little know what peril they have been in here. Another twelve hours, and they would all have been taken. Now, then, let us bestir ourselves, young man. They call you Jacques; but I shall call you Jean, after my younger brother."

Helped on by him, I hobbled along, though in pain. How chill, but how fresh and pleasant, felt the open air! It seemed the breath of life to me, and revived me like a potent medicine. There was a distant, sullen murmur in the city, but around us all was still. Above us were bright stars, but no moon.

At length we got among low dwellings, some of which had twinkling lights. We entered a dark, narrow passage, smelling powerfully of fried fish and onions. Some one from above said cautiously, "Who goes there?"

"La Croisette."

"Who else?"

"My brother Jean."

"Advance, brothers La Croisette."

We ascended a mean staircase and entered a room where we found a man and woman standing beside a large basket.

"Now get you into this," said La Croisette to me, "and we will lower you from the window. Stay, I will go first; it will give you confidence."

Twisting his long frame into the basket, he clasped his arms round his knees, and the others began to raise him by well-secured pulleys. The woman grew quite red in the face with the exertion of getting him over the window-ledge, and I own I trembled for him.

"All is right, he is safely down," said she, at length, and helped to pull up the basket. "Now, young man; you're not afraid?"



“Oh no; only don’t let me down too fast.”

“That must depend on how heavy you are. We can’t keep dangling you between sky and earth all night. Come; you are not nearly as heavy as your brother. Adieu, mon cher; bon voyage!”

“Adieu, madame; mille remerciements.”

I thought of St. Paul in the basket, and the two Israelitish spies. La Croisette eased my descent a good deal, by steadying the basket, and helped me out of it to our mutual satisfaction. It was then swiftly drawn up, and taken in.

“Thank heaven, we are safe!” said I. “That was very cleverly managed.”

“Do you suppose it the first time?” said La Croisette. “Far from it, I can tell you. Many things are done in Nismes that the authorities know nothing of, for all their vigilance. Now we are fairly outside the city, and, with ordinary good luck, shall perform our night-journey in safety.”



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“With God’s blessing we may,” said I.

“Make that proviso with all my heart,” said La Croisette. “some trust in Providence and some in luck. I have nothing to say against either. Now get into the cart.”

He led the horse a little out of the shadow as he spoke, and helped me inside the little house on wheels, where I found a mattress that proved a most acceptable rest; and then we drove slowly and quietly off, and gradually got among fields and hedges.

“How are you getting on?” said La Croisette, at length. “Do you mind the shaking?”

“Oh,” said I, “I have so many things on my mind that I take no thought for the body.”

“All the better; though some say that pain of the mind is the worst to bear of the two.”

“I have little doubt of it,” said I, “though each are bad enough. But all I meant was that my mind is preoccupied and anxious, and prevents my noticing any mere discomforts; for I cannot say I am miserable.”

“Indeed I think you ought not to be, for you have had an escape from that troubled city that many would rejoice at.”

“Tell me truly; do you think I have actually escaped?”

“What know I? You have escaped from the evils behind; you may not escape from the evils before. Yesterday was cloudy, to-morrow may be rainy, the day after may be fine; none of us knows. At least there is a weather-prophet at Arles whom some of the fools believe in; but he broke his leg a little while ago, and his spirit of prophecy did not enable him to foresee that, therefore I doubt his knowing about the weather.”

“There have always been those who dealt in lying signs and wonders,” said I, “from the days of Moses, when the magicians feigned to change their rods into serpents, which of course they could not do really.”

“They were clever at sleight-of-hand, I suppose,” said La Croisette. “So is Doctor Jameray. He can do many wonderful things. I can do some of them myself. You see, some of his conjuring tricks require a second person, who must not be known for his assistant; so that when he sets out on his tours through the provinces, I generally do the same, and contrive to cross his path, as if by accident. Then we play off on a new set of people the tricks we have played twenty times before in other places.”

“Then needle-selling is only a blind?” said I.



“I turn a little money by it; the more, that I am careful always to sell the best needles and pins. Thus I have acquired a name—the housewives trust me; I have a character to support. And my character supports me.”

“A good character always does so in the long run,” said I.

“Well, I don’t know what to say about that. You are too young to have any authority of weight. It must be your father’s wisdom, and I am not sure it will stand the test.”

“I feel sure of it,” said I.

“What, when you are this very moment a houseless wanderer, without having done any wrong? How does your good character support you now?”



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“For example, it has secured me your good offices,” said I. “You would not have given me this good turn if I had been a worthless villain.”

“Well, perhaps not; supposing I had known you for such—though worthless villains often escape deserved punishment, and sometimes are very plausible, and pay very well. And sometimes not”—reflectively.

“You seem to remember a case in point,” said I, smiling.

“Well, I do,” said La Croisette. “There was a young lord who led a sad course, and nearly fell into the hands of justice. He had a dashing, off-hand manner, that made friends till he was found out for what he was; and partly because he talked me over, and partly for high pay, I smuggled him beyond the reach of his enemies. But the pay never came. He won’t get me to help him another time.”

“He’ll miss the want of a good character in the long run, then,” said I.

“Oh, he has done so already; he lies in prison now. But so do many of you Huguenots, who have done nothing amiss. It seems to me there is one event to the good and to the wicked.”

“Oh no, do not believe it,” said I. “In the first place, none of us are righteous; no, not one; our merits only comparative. Thus, there is something in every one of us to punish; and sometimes the Lord sees fit to chasten His best-loved servants so severely, that it is difficult to distinguish their chastisement from His judgments on the wicked.”

“That comes to what I was saying,” said La Croisette; “that there is but one event to the good and to the bad.”

“It seems so, though it is not so,” said I. “But don’t you perceive in this a grand argument in favor of a future life?”

“I am no scholar, I;—you must explain it to me,” said La Croisette.

“If the Lord lets his dear children fall into the same afflictions here as the rebellious and impenitent, it is because He knows that in the long run, it will be to their advantage rather than otherwise: that they will turn their trials to such good account as actually to be the better for them; and that their light affliction, which is but for a moment, will work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. So that hereafter they shall look back on their present pains, not only with indifference but with thankfulness. But ah! where shall then the unrighteous and sinner appear?”

“You seem to have a natural gift for preaching,” said La Croisette, after a pause.

“Where will they appear, say you? Why, if our priests are to be believed, those of them,



even the very worst, who have money enough to pay for masses and indulgences, may buy themselves off from purgatory, and shine in glory with the best.”

“Does not that carry incredibility and absurdity on the very face of it?”

“It seems very hard on the poor man who can’t buy himself off,” said La Croisette.

“You Huguenots, then, don’t believe in it?”



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“Most assuredly not. God accepts no prayers that do not spring from a lowly and contrite heart: and they may be offered by a poor man as well as a rich one.”

“But does not a poor man’s soul require those purgatorial fires?”

“Oh no, my dear La Croisette! The Son of God told of no purgatory—only of heaven and hell. And He was so truthful that He would not have told of a hell if there had not been one—nor have failed to tell of a purgatory if there had been one. The end would not have been commensurate with the means, had He laid down his life to save us from anything short of condign punishment, or to save us only incompletely. If there were a purgatory to endure at any rate, where would be the all-sufficiency of his sacrifice once offered?”

He bade us believe in him and be saved. He did not say, ‘believe also in my mother, and my brethren, and my apostles, and ask them to ask me to save you.’ He said, ‘Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’”

“No! did he, though?” said La Croisette, suddenly checking his horse.

At the same moment, a woman sprang from the hedge and laid her hand on the shaft, saying:

“Good sir, save us! we perish!”

“What is the matter?” said he, starting.

“We are fugitives from Nismes; we were beaten, we were burnt, we were pillaged.”

“My poor good woman, there are numbers in like case.”

“But we starve,” said she, bursting into tears. “My aged mother and my little ones.”

“I am very sorry for you, but I am a poor man myself—here, take this trifle.”

“Alas, we cannot eat money!” in a tone of such mournful reproach.

“No, true; it will buy a little bread—but there are no shops. Jean,” in a lower voice to me, “I’ve a loaf in the cart, shall we part with it?”

“Give it to her by all means,” said I.

Before he did so, he said to her, “True, you cannot eat money, but money will buy you bread in Nismes. Why not return there? The authorities are welcoming all that conform.”



“Death rather than that!” said she, clasping her hands to her heart, and turning away.

“Stay, stay. Here is bread for you. It is all we have.”

“Ah! bless—.” She could say no more, but sobbed bitterly. La Croisette turned his face away.

“There are many of us, many!” sobbed she. “We shall so bless you. We will pray for you.”

“Do so; do,” said he, affecting composure, and whipping on.

CHAPTER IX.

Cast down, but not destroyed.



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The moon had now risen, and shone full on our road, which was completely exposed; but happily we met with no hindrance. The motion of the cart now made me very drowsy, and I fell into deep dreamless sleep. When I woke, feeling stiff and chilled, I wondered where I was. The cart had stopped, I was alone, the gray light of morning was forcing its way through the chinks of my little lodging-house, but the door was locked. I thought my position a curious one, and wondered whether La Croisette was going to give me up after all, to my enemies, but could not readily distrust a fellow apparently so kind-hearted. I lay still and listened to the sounds about me; the clucking of hens, gobbling of turkeys, stamping of horses, and lowing of calves, told me I was in a farm-yard. Then I heard voices, including that of La Croisette, and presently a sharp cry and then a laugh. By-and-by, the key turned in the lock and he looked in on me.

“So ho, you are awake after a famous long nap,” said he. “Do you want your breakfast?”

“If I do, want must be my master,” said I, returning his smile. “We gave away our only loaf.”

“But what if I have earned another, and a good bowl of milk?” rejoined La Croisette, producing both as he spoke. “There, sit up and eat your fill; I’ve had my share in the house.”

“Where are we?” said I, readily obeying his instructions.

“At a wayside farm-house, where the honest people have given my horse a good feed, and you and me a good breakfast.”

“How did you earn it, then?”

“By pulling out a tooth for a great lubberly boy, whose cheek had swollen enormously with toothache. Did you not hear him cry out? You might almost have heard him from here to Nismes.”

“Yes, I heard him cry and then laugh.”

“Because he was so glad to have got rid of it.”

“Can you draw teeth, then?”

“I never drew one before, but I went at it as if it was a regular thing with me.”

“How could you venture?”

“Psha! it is good to show confidence; and every one must have a beginning. Which of us would let a doctor try his hand on us, if we knew it was for the first time?”



I smiled and shook my head at him, but said no more. When I had swallowed the delicious milk, he said,

“Now I will return the bowl, and bring out my horse. I told them I had a sick brother in the cart, recovering from a burning fever, or you would have had some visitors. To make doubly sure, I locked you up.”

“Would not that have been enough without the other?” I said, grieved at his want of truth.

“No, I think not, and I’m not as particular as you are.”

Presently we were driving off again, and for a mile or so in silence. Then La Croisette, looking back at me, said,

“There are certainly good people on both sides. That poor wretch to whom we gave the loaf was undoubtedly a good Huguenot; she would rather starve and die than abjure her faith. But here, again, are a family of Catholics, who are good, too, and believed every word I said, and liberally supplied my wants.”



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“Doubtless there are good people on both sides,” said I; “and if the Catholics would believe it of us, we might yet live in peace and quietness together. We have not harmed them—it is they who harm us.”

“For your good, they will tell you.”

“They may tell us, but we cannot believe it. Their compulsions are not in the spirit of love.”

La Croisette softly whistled, and presently talked of other things. By-and-by he said,

“Now we are coming to a town, and you shall see some fun.”

“Will it be quite safe?”

“Safer than anything else. It is a fair-day; I shall drive straight into the market-place, blow my horn, and play the quack doctor. Nay, you shall be my accomplice and blow the horn. Let me put you in costume at once.”

Saying which, he fished out a soiled scarlet cloak, gaily spangled, which he threw over my shoulders, produced a half-mask with an enormous red nose, with which he concealed the upper part of my face, covered my head with a Spanish hat and feather, and gave me a horn.

“Now blow as much as you like,” said he; “be as brazen as your trumpet.”

I laughed, and entered into the joke; no one would suspect me for a Huguenot.

La Croisette then disguised himself in Dr. Jameray’s long black gown, and added a pair of green spectacles, which certainly heightened the effect. Having driven into the market-place, he placed a little table before him and spread it with boxes and phials, I blowing the horn from time to time in a way which he called quite original, and which speedily drew people about us. Then, with wonderful self-possession, he harangued them on the merits of his medicines. For instance, taking up a phial which contained a pink-colored fluid, he descanted on its virtues in this style:

“My friends, this small bottle contains a famous specific, for those who know how to use it prudently. When I say prudently, I mean that there are certain things it will do and others it will not. This remedy is for increasing the strength, improving the appetite, and clearing the head. Will it, therefore, set a broken arm or draw a tooth? Most certainly not. I can draw a tooth for you, if you like it (by-the-by, some think I have a gift that way, but self-praise is no recommendation); I can draw a tooth, I say, no matter with how many fangs; but this medicine cannot. Does it follow, then, that it will cure a cough or sore throat? Not at all. Here, if you like (taking up another bottle) is something that will, but what is that to the purpose? Will it cure sore eyes? No; or sprains? Far from it.



No, no, my most excellent ladies and gentlemen, let us not form unreasonable expectations; day is not night; summer is not winter; nor is a horse-medicine a febrifuge. It is useless to assert such trash to sensible, well-informed people, Here is an opportunity, such as most of you may possibly never have again, of buying a most delightful and effectual medicine, sweet, not nauseous (strongly reminding one of cherry-brandy), gently exhilarating, and very difficult to be procured; indeed, I have only three small doses of it—three, did I say? I'm afraid I have only two—let me see—Oh, yes, here are three; and the price is merely nominal—”



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The extreme frankness and moderation of this harangue of course met with great success; and purchasers speedily bought, not only his three pink bottles, but his green ones, his blue ones, his pills, his pomades, and his perfumed medicinal soaps that were to soften the skin, strengthen the joints, and promote longevity. After this, he sang a comic song of innumerable verses (with horn obligato) and delivered a discourse, in which he said there had never been more than three great men in the world, Louis the Fourteenth, Alexander the Great, and Hippocrates, the father of physic.

It was surprising to me how he carried on this game hour after hour, apparently without fatigue, and always to the delight of his audience, new-comers continually pressing around him, and old ones lingering in the distance with broad smiles on their faces. A little of it was well enough, but I thought that to be always at it must be harder work than the hardest handywork trade I knew. At last the day closed in, the people departed, we supplied ourselves with food, and departed like the rest.

“Now, then, have I not come off with flying colors?” said La Croisette, complacently.

“Assuredly you have: but you must be very tired.”

“Tired as can be—you know I had no sleep last night—we are coming to a little thicket where we will roost for the night.”

We had scarcely drawn up under the trees, which were thinning of leaves, when we heard a distant hollow sound gradually growing louder as it approached. “The dragoons,” said La Croisette, in a low voice. “I trust we shall escape their notice.”

They passed by like a whirlwind, taking the direction we had just left, and we congratulated ourselves on having quitted their path.

“These wretches, look you,” said La Croisette, “know neither mercy nor justice; they know they are let loose on the country to do all the mischief they can, and if they find a Paradise, they leave it a howling wilderness.”

Of this we had proof next day, when we came on their track, and found wretched women and children in tears and lamentations impossible for us to assuage: men that had been cudgelled within an inch of their lives, or hung up by their wrists or their heels till they swooned, lying on the ground uncared for and dying. Ah, what wickedness! and all under pretence of doing God service! I cannot dwell on the terrible scenes we saw in crossing the country. Sometimes La Croisette did some trifling act of kindness, but the evils demanded more potent remedies.

“This unfits me for my calling,” said he, one day, as he scrambled into the cart and drove off. “How can one play the merry-andrew under such circumstances? What will become of these poor creatures as winter comes on, even if they can last till then? It is



impossible they should all escape from the country—they will have to conform after all, and had they not better do so now?”



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I replied, "It is written, 'Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'"

"The kingdom of France?"

"No, the kingdom of heaven."

"To whom were the words spoken?"

"To the early Christians, whose praise is in all the churches—whom the Catholics not only reverence but worship."

"Hum. Well, if they weathered such persecution as this, perhaps these may; but I could not stand it, I!—Do you know (with great awe) there are dungeons called Hippocrates' Sleeves, the walls of which slope like the inside of a funnel tapering to a point, so that those who are put inside them can neither lie, sit, nor stand? They are let down into them with cords, and drawn up every day to be whipped."

"And have any come forth alive from such places?"

"I grant you; but sometimes without teeth or hair."

"O, what glorious faith, to survive such a test!" exclaimed I.

"But some don't survive."

"O, what hallelujahs their freed spirits must sing as they find themselves suddenly released and soaring upward with myriads of rejoicing angels, to receive their welcome at the throne of God!"

"Jean, I never knew anything like you!" said La Croisette. "The worse the stories I tell you, the greater the triumph and exultation you cap them with."

I answered, "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. xii. II.

"Do you think you could bear being put into a Hippocrates' Sleeve?"

"I am not called on to think what I could bear: only to bear what is put on me."

"Your father, every word! As the old cock crows, so does the young one. But after all, 'tis a fearful thing to lie at the mercy of those that can devise and carry out such tortures."



“It is written, 'I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear. Fear Him which after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear Him.'”

“You seem to have all the texts on this particular head at the tips of your fingers. Did you learn them for this particular purpose?”

“My dear mother used to repeat to me a text every night, and expect me to repeat it to her the next day.”

“An excellent plan,” said La Croisette, whipping his horse. And he hummed a tune.

When we reached Montauban, he said,

“I must now begin my old tricks, to earn a little money;” and he drew up in the market-place. But the people had been as heavily visited as at Nismes, and were in no mood for jesting. When he began to vend his nostrums, an old man of severe aspect held up his hand, and said:

“Peace, unfeeling man—you bring your senseless ribaldry to the wrong market. Here are only lamentations, and mourning, and woe.”



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“My good sir, one must live,” said La Croisette.

“And how? tell me that!” retorted the old man, indignantly. “They that fed delicately are desolate in the streets; they that were clad in scarlet are cast on dunghills; the tongue of the suckling child cleaves to the roof of its mouth for thirst; the young children ask for bread, and no man giveth unto them.”

Then, with a wail that was almost like a howl, he tore his hair and cried, “For this, for this mine eyes run down with water and mine eyelids take no rest. Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?”

“Jean, I cannot stand this,” said La Croisette, as the old man hurried away. “All the people seem with broken hearts—it takes all spirit out of me. I cannot even hawk needles and pins among the starving—who would buy?”

I could only say, “How dreadful is this place! The Lord seems to have forsaken his sanctuary.”

“Let us seek another place as soon as we can—”

“You forget: I am to be met here by an agent of my father’s at La Boule d’Or.”

“Ah, well, we will go thither.”

When we drove into the inn-yard, however, we could hear unruly voices in the house, and feared we might fall into bad company. A man immediately came up to us, and said to me, in a low voice:

“Are you M. Jacques Bonneval?”

“I am. Are you Antoine Leroux?”

“Hist!—yes. There are ill-disposed people in the inn; you had better not go in-doors. Can you walk a little way?”

“Yes.”

“Come with me, then.”

“I must bid my companion farewell.” Turning to La Croisette, I took his hand in both mine, and pressed it fervently, saying:

“My dear La Croisette, adieu. May God bless you in this world and the next. I wish I could make some return for your exceeding kindness, but, unfortunately, can give you nothing but my prayers.”



“Pray say nothing of it,” said he, cordially. “Your prayers are the very thing I should like to have, for, unfortunately, I am not good at them myself. As I pass a Calvary by the roadside I pull off my hat, in token of respect, you know, for what it represents; and had I had a bringing up like yours I might have had as pretty a turn for psalmody; but as the matter stands, why, you will be Jacques Bonneval, and I Bartholome La Croisette to the end of the chapter. As for what I have done for you, why, it’s nothing! I was coming this way, at any rate, and I’ve given you a lift; that’s all.”

“You may make light of it, if you will,” said I, “but I know you have continually run risks for me; and depend on it, I shall never forget you. Adieu, my friend.”

“Farewell, then,” said he, “and take my best wishes with you. I hope you will now slip safely out of the country, but a good piece of it remains before you yet. Nor are your feet in good condition for walking.”

“That has been provided for,” said Antoine. “As soon as we get to the waterside we shall find a boat awaiting us, which will carry us to Bordeaux.”



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“But you are some way from the water.”

“Yes, but I have a cart.”

We then parted, La Croisette kissing me on both cheeks with the utmost kindness; and I turned away with Antoine. Looking round as we quitted the court, I had my last glimpse of his tall, meagre figure, as he stood with his hand on his hip, looking after me; and I thought how strange and disproportionate a return his kindness to me had been for mine to him, in lifting him up and saving him from a kicking horse on the way to Beaucaire. The whole scene at once started up before me—our family party in the wagon—the girls’ blooming faces and gay dresses—the crowded road—the music—the bustle. Then my thoughts flew on to what followed—the humors of the fair—the crowded table at my uncle’s—my betrothal to Madeleine. What a different future then seemed to lie before us to what awaited us now! Where was she? Should we meet soon? Might we not be separated for ever? I cannot tell how many thoughts like these passed through my mind as I limped after Antoine, who was himself somewhat awkward in his gait, like many of the silk-weavers from sitting so constantly at the loom.

Thus we passed through some of the by-ways of Montauban, and entered a small house.

CHAPTER X.

“My native land, good-night”

The room we entered was destitute of furniture and blackened with smoke. Heaps of broken fragments impeded our entrance and lay on the floor. A man sitting on the ground was restlessly taking up one piece after another, and laying them down again, muttering to himself, without noticing us.

“I know not why they should have done so,” he said hurriedly; “the poor chairs and tables could not hurt. And, after all, when they hung me up I gave in, and kissed the cross made by their swords; and they knocked me about after that. If that was justice, I don’t know what justice is. They hurt my wife, too, or she would not have shrieked out so. And her word always had been—‘Hold out; pain may be borne; and they dare not kill us!’ But when she saw them tie me up, she cried out, ‘Oh, Pierre, Pierre, give in—give in!’ So what was I to do? Answer me that.”

“This poor fellow has lost his senses,” said Antoine, softly. “Wait here a minute. I will soon return.”

I stood where I was. It seemed to me from the charred remains that the furniture had been just broken up and then partially burnt. There was a great beam across the



ceiling, with large iron hooks on which to hang bacon, onions, and such-like. From one of these hooks dangled a strong chain.

“They drew me up with that,” said he, turning his dull eyes on me, and the next instant looking away. “They passed the chain under one of my armpits, and so suspended me; and then beat me. I was not going to stand that, you know. My wife ran away, calling on me to give in; so what could I do? Could I help it? Am I a renegade?”



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I said, "Let us remember David's words—'Have mercy on me, O Lord, for my sin is great.' He did not say, 'for my sin is little—a very little one—the first I ever sinned;' but 'my sin is great;' and therefore have mercy on me. Say it after me. 'Have mercy on me, for my sin is great.'"

—"For my sin is great," repeated he, melting into tears. And again and again he repeated, weeping, "For my sin is great—my sin is great. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for my sin is great."

"He also hath forgiven the wickedness of thy sin," said I. "Let us turn unto the Lord, for he will heal us, and not be angry with us for ever."

Antoine drew me away. We left the poor man in tears, and went into the yard, where stood a cart, with a sorry horse in it, and a heap of loose fagots and pieces of broken furniture beside it.

"Get you in here, sir, and lie down," said he. "I will pile the wood over you as lightly as I can."

I did as he desired. He bestowed the wood over me as carefully as he could, and then led the horse out.

"Whither away?" said somebody, passing.

"To dispose of this rubbish," said he, carelessly. "Poor Pierre's chattels have been reduced to mere firewood. If a trifle can be got for them, it may buy him bread."

I thought of the two messengers to King David, whom a woman concealed in a well at Bahurim, spreading a covering over the well's mouth, and spreading ground corn thereon. I was startled when the man said,

"I have a mind to buy it of you: it will do to heat my oven."

"But this load is engaged already," said Antoine.

"Why did you not say so at first? You said you were going to see if you could get a trifle for it."

"I confess I expressed myself badly. My poor brother's sad state has bewildered me. Go you, and look in on him, and see what a pitiable object he is."

"Well, I think I will. What is the value of this load, as it stands?"

Antoine seemed so disposed to haggle for it that I confess I quaked; however, he set such a high value on it that the other demurred.



Happily we got out of the town without further molestation. I was very much cramped, but that was no matter. The church-bells began to ring; and Antoine said, in a low voice, "How pitiable are the poor people who are now going to vespers on compulsion! Where will all this end? Can it be that he who now goeth forth weeping, and bearing good seed, shall return again in joy, bringing his sheaves with him?"

I said, "The Lord's hand is not straitened, that he cannot save. What is impossible with man is possible with God."

"Oh that we may live to see it, sir."

We came up with a wagon, with the driver of which Antoine fell into conversation for some time, but what they said I could not well hear. At length we reached the water-side, at a landing-place where a boat laden with kitchen stuff was awaiting us. Here Antoine saw me safely placed in charge of the boatman, who bade me never fear, for he would safely carry me to Bordeaux. We pushed off: the moon shone cold and bright; the air on the river felt fresh and chill. The boatman threw a warm covering on me, bade me sleep, and began a monotonous boat-song. I soon slept.



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When I awoke it was late in the morning, for the bright October sun overhead was making the rapid Garonne quiver in a sheen of golden light. I found we had made good progress, and were not many hours from our destination. I found it inexpressibly pleasant to float down that bright river, as it carried me to new scenes, which love, hope, and inexperience painted in pleasing colors. My feet were sufficiently painful for me to be glad to lie idly among the piles of cabbages and while the time in day-dreams. Aged confessors might go forth sighing, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" but to the young and buoyant, change of occupation and foreign travel have great allurements, even when rudely come by.

The boatman seemed an honest poor fellow. Sometimes he exchanged greetings and jokes with other boatmen; sometimes he sang snatches of plaintive songs, such as

"N'erount tres freres
N'erount tres freres
N'haut qu'une soeur a marida:"

for his mother was from Languedoc. At other times he talked to me quietly.

"Yours seems a contented, merry life, said I.

"Well, I make it so," said he. "Where is the good of picking up troubles? they come sure enough. Once I was foolish enough to think 'What a poor lot is this, to be pulling a market-boat up and down stream, with greens for the seafaring men, while others go riding on horseback or in carriages, wear fine clothes, feast every day, and go to theatres at night.' But when the dragoons came I was thankful to be what I was. Did you hear what happened to Collette at our place? Collette was the prettiest girl of our village, and a good girl, but a thought too vain. Perhaps it is too much to expect a woman not to be vain when she is pretty, but all are not. Collette's skin was like lilies and roses. When the dragoons were let loose on us they burnt her father's furniture, and beat him within an inch of his life. They asked Collette if she would go to mass: she said, 'I will not.' They pulled her hair, beat her, pinched her, but she only said the more, 'I will not.' Then a dragoon said, 'This girl is too pert, her conceit must be lowered a little.' And he took a comb off her toilette, and drew it down her face two or three times, quite hard, till it was scratched and scored all over. Conceive how the poor thing was cut up! She burst into tears, and said, 'Take me to a convent; I don't care where I go now, so that I am not seen. I shall never be worth looking at again.'"

"But what an unworthy motive for an unworthy act!" cried I.

"But only think how she was goaded to it!" said he. "Women think so much of their looks. I am told the dragoons have tried that trick with many ladies of quality."

"If they deserved the name of men they would be ashamed of it."



“Well, I think so too; but see how they treat the men! Have you seen a chain of galley-slaves on their way to Marseilles? Certainly no treatment can be too bad for the infamous, but that nobles and gentlemen should be fettered along with felons, forgers, murderers, and such-like—ah, 'tis too bad!”[1]...

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[Footnote 1: See “Autobiography of a French Protestant.” Religious Tract Society. A thrilling narrative, of which the Quarterly Review says:—“The facts are more interesting than fiction, and the incidents not less strange.”]

“But now we come to Bordeaux,” said he, at length; and in fact, the increase of traffic on the water was sufficient of itself to tell us that we were approaching an important commercial city, while in the distance were seen the masts of ships of many nations. Nearer at hand the richly-wooded heights were studded with the country seats of opulent merchants, many of whom either were Huguenots or had made their fortunes by Huguenots. It was to be supposed, therefore, that we had many friends here; and, indeed, many were favoring our escape as much as they could without compromising themselves; but such jealous watch was being kept on the port that this was extremely difficult. Soon my companion ran his boat in between two others similarly laden—as far as vegetables when, that is, for I know not they held any fugitives; and a great war of words ensued, in which it was difficult to know whether they were really quarrelling or not.

At length I got ashore, and found my way to the counting-house of my father’s correspondent, Monsieur Bort. He was a very business-looking man, with a short, hard, dry way of speaking. I found him immersed in his books. Directly he saw me, he said, abruptly.

“You are young Bonneval. You come too late. The others are gone.”

“Oh” And I dropped into a seat, quite stunned by this reverse.

“Mais que voulez-vous?” said he. “They could not wait. The opportunity would have been lost.”

“Are they really off, and safe?”

“Off they are, but whether safe—.” He shrugged his shoulders and raised his eyebrows. However, seeing my chagrin, he added, “I imagine they are in the river Thames by this time.”

“Do you mean they are ascending the river to London?”

“Precisely. It may not be so, but we may hope the best. And you?”—eyeing me inquiringly.

“What am I to do, sir? Did my father leave me no word of direction?”

“He left you his blessing, and bade you be a good boy, and submit yourself to my direction.”



“That I will gladly do, if you will direct me.”

“Well, I am pledged to do the best I can for you. But, unhappily, the surveillance is now so strict that I know not how to smuggle you on board.”

“In a box—in a cask,” said I, desperately.

“Have you really courage to be packed in that manner?”

“Yes, if there is no alternative.”

“Come, you are un brave garçon! I respect you for your resolution. There is a vessel of mine being loaded now, and if you will really go on board in such a way as you propose I think we can manage it, and your durance will not last more than a few hours. You will be a Regulus without the nails.”



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Smiling grimly at this allusion, he went out, and left me to meditate on what lay before me. It was not pleasant, certainly; but then the incentive was so great!—to join all whom I held dear, in a free land! The light affliction would be but for a moment.

Monsieur Bort returned. “All is arranged,” said he complacently. “I have taken the porter who will roll you into the secret. He promises to be as careful of you as he can. An officer on board is likewise in my confidence: he engages you shall be released as soon as the vessel is fairly under weigh. So take heart; it will be but a short trial compared with what many Huguenots are put to. Take this money and these papers—”

After some business directions he accompanied me to the warehouse, where the cask awaited me, with some hay to soften my journey in it.

“You are a pipe of Bordeaux, going as a present to my particular friend in London,” said he, smiling. “Now, behave yourself as a good pipe of wine should; and don’t cry out even if you are hurt. See, there are some air-holes. You won’t stifle.”

“They are very small—”

“How can that be helped? Who would have doors and windows in a wine-cask? You will get on board alive, will be released when well to sea, and must not mind a little discomfort.”

We shook hands, and I stepped in and settled myself as well as I could, with my mouth close to one of the air-holes; and the cask was closed upon me. The next minute I was rolled slowly off; and a most odd sensation it was! I advise you to try it, if you would like something perfectly new; but have bigger air-holes if you can; and even then let your experiment be short.

I verily believe the porter did his best for me; but how slowly he rolled: and even then what bumps and jolts I had when we came to uneven ground! Now and then he stopped, to wipe his face and rest, seemingly—then on we trundled again. Meanwhile I was getting exceedingly hot; all the blood in my body seemed mounting into my head: and unpleasant ideas of smothering obtruded themselves. The noises around me told me we were on the wharf; then the jolting and bumping became worse than before: I fancied I could tell we passed up a sloping plank and were on shipboard. Then, without the least warning, I was rolled over and over, and then set upon my head! but a loud cry outside drowned a smothered cry within; and I was placed in a horizontal position again, with feelings impossible to describe.

I think I became sleepy after that; or else in a painless state of insensibility. When I woke I was numb all over, and had to rub my dazzled eyes as the bright daylight broke in on them.



“He seems to like his quarters so well as to have no mind to turn out,” said a rough voice.

“He wants assistance,” said some one, in a kinder tone; and a handsome, frank-looking man laid hold of my arm, and helped me to rise. Above me were the sails and cordage of a ship; all around me the sparkling blue waves, leaping in freedom. I clasped my hands, and raised them to heaven.



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“You do well to give thanks where thanks are due,” said the mate. “Now come into the cabin.”

Seeing me stagger, he took me by the arm, and kindly assisted me into the presence of the captain, saying, “Here is one of the noble army of martyrs.”

The captain gave me a most kind reception, made me dine with him, and asked me a great many questions. He then told me many moving stories of other Huguenots who had escaped or tried to escape to England; and he related such instances of the kindness of the English to the fugitives that my heart warmed towards them with gratitude and hope.

After this I suffered much from seasickness, and lay two or three days in my cot, where we were buffeted of the winds, and tossed. We were chased by a strange ship, and had to put on all the sail we could to escape being overhauled; and this led to our being driven out of our course; so that, what with one thing and another, we did not reach Gravesend till the 8th of November. Then the captain went ashore with his ship’s papers, and, after transacting business, started for London, and took me with him.

What a day it was for forming one’s first impressions of that much-longed-for capital! There was a thick November fog, through which street-lamps sent an imperfect light; and shops were lighted up with candles. Vehicles ran against one another in the streets, in spite of link-boys darting between the horses, fearless of danger, and scattering sparks from their fiery torches. The noise, the unknown language, the strange streets and lanes bewildered me. The captain called a hackney-coach, and in this we made our way to Fenchurch street, where lived his shipping agent, Mr. Smith. We went upstairs to his counting-house, and found him talking to some one, who turned round as we entered.

I exclaimed “Oh, my father!” and precipitated myself into his arms. He embraced me with transport.

“Where is my mother? Where is Madeline?”

“Safe and well, at the country-house of our esteemed friend Mr. Smith. Thither I will speedily take you, my dear boy. I came here to gather tidings of you.”

“How long it seems since we lost sight of one another!”

“Long, indeed! And how much we have to tell each other! But we are in smooth water now. In this free, happy land people are no longer persecuted for their faith. We must begin the world again, my son; but what does that signify? You have youth and energy; I have experience and patience.”



The captain and Mr. Smith looked on with sympathy at our mutual felicitations. Soon I was with my father in a stage-coach on our way to Walthamstow. There, in an old-fashioned red-brick mansion, I found my mother, brothers and sisters, my Madeleine, and Gabrielle. What joy! What affection!



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In short, we were all, without one exception, among the four hundred thousand persons who forsook France rather than renounce their faith. Of that number, a very great many perished of famine, hardships, and fatigue; but we were among the many who safely reached this hospitable country and commenced life anew. Many of us settled without the city walls in the open ground of Spital Fields, which we gradually covered with houses and silk-factories. Here we spoke our own language, sang our own songs, had our own places of worship, and built our dwellings in the old French style, with porticoes and seats at the doors, where our old men sat and smoked on summer evenings, and conversed with one another in their own tongue.

At first our starving refugees were relieved by a Parliamentary grant of L15,000 a year; but, God prospering our industry our trade went on steadily increasing till that, now, in 1713, three hundred thousand of us are maintained by it in England. And many others of us in friendly countries abroad, where we have been driven. Prosperity to those among whom we have settled has followed. The native land that cast us forth has been impoverished. Happy are the people whom the Lord hath blessed. Yea, happy are they who have the Lord for their God.

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