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# PAUL FITZ-HENRY;

OR,

# A FEW WEEKS IN PARIS.

By HENRY JOHN THORNTON.

# PAUL FITZ-HENRY;

OR,

# A FEW WEEKS IN PARIS.

A NARRATIVE.

BY HENRY JOHN THORNTON,

AUTHOR OF "POETICAL SKETCHES," &c.

"I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me."

BYRON.

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# DEDICATION

TO

## MONSIEUR PAUL B * * *

My Dear Paul,

In the following pages I have endeavoured to pourtray the scenes and characteristics of your native city, and though you may indulge in a smile at the weakness of the attempt, yet I know your disposition too well to fear any other indication of your criticism.

The characters and adventures are those of every-day life, such as might be met with by any sojourner in Paris, and some of which occurred to myself, though I disclaim all personalities in my brief delineation of scene and character. My sketches may assimilate with much that I saw and heard in Paris, but they are not exact in their application to any person or incident in particular.

In dedicating this simple narrative to you I would evince my gratitude for the friendship and attention which you bestowed upon me during my stay in Paris. To me it will recall the many happy hours that we passed together, when, surrounded by the bright and joyous scenes through which we wandered, we experienced the enjoyment of social intercourse, and exchanged those feelings and opinions which were happily so in unison and so sincere.

The simplicity of the style in which my narrative is written may be objectionable to those who are accustomed to the elevated diction of more gifted authors, but I would not attempt in this my first essay in prose more than I thought I could accomplish; my readers must therefore expect but little, and generously forgive if they find that little expressed inelegantly.

When apart from your young compeers, and in the quietude of your college, these pages may remind you of the absent, for in them you may retrace much that we have shared together; in them you may recall the sentiments which awoke the ardent feelings of your nature, and revealed those innate qualities of the heart which are so valued and appreciated by, my dear Paul,

Your sincere friend,

HENRY JOHN THORNTON.

*London*,

*June*, 1846.

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# PAUL FITZ-HENRY;

OR,

# A FEW WEEKS IN PARIS.

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## CHAPTER I.

Introduction—The Journey—Hôtel des Tuileries—Gardens of the Tuileries—Place de la Concorde—New Associates.

It was early in the spring of 1840 that Paul Fitz-Henry quitted England for the first time. The vessel which bore him from his native land glided swiftly over the waters of the English channel, and, in a comparatively short space of time, he found himself on the sunny shores of France. The happy effect produced by a change of atmosphere and the excitement of the voyage was already perceptible in its operation; the natural seriousness of his disposition had given way to an exhilaration of spirits to which he had hitherto been a stranger, and he looked forward with an agreeable anticipation to the results which might be expected from a protracted sojourn in a country which possessed so many requisites for the renovation of health and spirits.

Since the death of his father, which had taken place a few months previous, Paul had felt lonely and dejected; with no other companion—a stranger to the advantages of social intercourse, and wholly unacquainted with the routine of active life, his days had glided imperceptibly away, and he had passed from youth to manhood without the usual change of feelings and ideas. He

still retained the inexperience of the world, and the freshness of heart, which had characterised him as a boy. The constitutional gaiety of his disposition had in part sunk beneath the pressure of circumstances, and the energies and decision of his mind had scarcely ever been called into action; yet he contained within him the germs of social sympathy and intellectual capacity, which tended greatly to counteract the morbid views of life and conventional prejudices which the misanthropic doctrine of his father was calculated to inspire. The old man had married late in life, and, upon the death of his wife, had retired to a secluded village in the north of England, and thus, apart from the world, had given up his thoughts and time to the education of his only child.

Reading had formed the chief amusement of the young Fitz-Henry; and though, through the medium of books, he became initiated in the great scheme of human speculations, yet his estimate of his fellow-beings was more in accordance with his own noble and ardent nature than with the stern reality; and when he had lost the only tie that he had ever known, and was thrown upon his own resources for thought and action, he became aware how wrong had been the system of education to which he had been subjected, and which had left him so isolated—so unable to cope with the busy duties which would now be required of him.

It was with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret that Fitz-Henry left the village in which he had passed so many years. He hastened to the metropolis—there to arrange his affairs, and to form his plans for the future. His cultivated mind and pecuniary independence made him a welcome addition in the society to which he had been introduced by the town connexions of his late father. He became captivated with the high tone of the circle in which he now moved, and he looked back with regret to the years which he had passed in seclusion; for he felt that the attributes of the mind and the affections of the heart were not bestowed upon us to be lost in misanthropy, but rather to be employed and called into existence for the advantage of our fellow-beings. The pleasure which he found from society deter-

mined him to fix his future residence in London; and he wisely considered that a few months passed on the Continent would be profitable to the furtherance of his plans, as well as beneficial to his health, which his late loss and anxiety had tended to impair.

Paul Fitz-Henry was now in his twenty-sixth year, though in appearance he was somewhat younger; his figure was slight and graceful, and his deep blue eyes accorded with the quietude of his manners. In disposition he was mild, yet ardent, and his imperfect knowledge of the world, and its usages, made him express his thoughts and opinions with a warmth and freedom unusual in general society, but which imparted a freshness and a charm to his conversation that gained him the friendship of those he met with; and even the most indifferent became attracted by its fascination.

Fitz-Henry was too impatient to reach Paris to remain long at Boulogne, and he proceeded by the first diligence that started after his arrival on the French coast. His father had been a great linguist, and Paul had profited under so good a master; he spoke the French language with fluency and ease, and enjoyed the conversation of his fellow-passengers through his long and somewhat tedious journey. The novelty of every thing he heard and saw kept him in a state of pleasurable excitement; all was so new, so strange, that he could scarcely believe a few hours had wrought so great a change. He was like a child in his bewilderment and wonder; he felt astonished when he heard mere children, and even they of the lowest class, speaking a language with which he had always associated study and refinement; and when he was addressed as a foreigner for the first time, he felt half inclined to assure the speaker that he was not one, forgetting what a metamorphosis a few hours had made in his identity.

On his arrival at Paris, he immediately proceeded to the hôtel des Tuileries, to which he had been recommended, both from its agreable locality, in the Rue de Rivoli, and also from the well-known good feeling and attention which Monsieur and Madame de Morgan ever displayed towards those who favoured them with

their patronage. Fitz-Henry had brought letters of introduction to various parties in Paris; but he anticipated much from the society which chance might bring him. He hoped those nobler and warmer feelings of his nature which had never been called forth in his native country might be awakened in the land of his partial adoption; for he knew the sociability and ardour of the Parisian character, and conjectured what such examples might have upon the dispositions of his own compatriots, who, like himself, had wandered to that city of pleasure and attractions. Yet he cared not whether the sympathies of his nature were awakened by the denizens of his own land or those of another clime; for he was too just, and his ideas were too liberal, to make any great distinction between them. He knew that his amount of pleasure and satisfaction would depend more upon the character and disposition of his associates than upon the circumstances of their birth or country.

A few hours after his arrival Fitz-Henry descended to the *table d'hôte.* He cast a scrutinizing glance upon those around him, and listened attentively to their conversation; for he was anxious to discover if any were likely to suit him as companions. He thought his penetration was sufficient, even upon so brief an examination, to see how far their dispositions and ideas assimilated with his own. Loquacity, or boisterous merriment, made no demand upon his attention, but a serious and retired deportment appealed at once to his feelings; for he knew that it was from such a character that sympathy and sincerity might be expected. He considered the former as calculated to be the companions of pleasure; the latter, as formed for the higher attributes of friendship.

There were at least thirty present, of various ages, and of different nations: amongst them a few English tradesmen, with their wives. The conversation of the former related chiefly to business, while that of the latter touched upon the fashions, and the difference between an English dinner and a French one. Then there were several young Englishmen, some of whom were

exceedingly loquacious,—boasting of their mad adventures, and planning fresh scenes of riot; others were silently enjoying the scene around them. Various were the languages that mingled in the general buzz of conversation, and the freedom of expression and cheerfulness of manner which prevailed contrasted pleasingly with the usual dullness of an English dinner.

Amongst those by whom he was surrounded there appeared but few who were likely to suit the somewhat judicious taste of Fitz-Henry; yet there was one who had in particular attracted his attention, from the great peculiarity of his appearance. This was a French youth of about eighteen; his features were regular and expressive, his manners refined and elegant. His figure was graceful, and his full dark eyes were shaded by long lashes, that imparted a softness to their expression. His hair was dark, and exceedingly long, falling, after the custom of the Parisian youths, from his clear and open brow, and clustered upon his shoulders; he spoke but little, and the deep tones of his voice accorded with the general melancholy cast of his features.

When the meal was over, and as the various parties were leaving the dining-room, Fitz-Henry cast a look of inquiry towards each, in the expectation that some one would address him; for he knew that his recent arrival was known to most of them, and thought his lonely position must be obvious to all. Yet each passed out, and his expectations were not realised; he felt lonely and disappointed, and after passing a few minutes in his chamber, he proceeded by himself to the gardens of the Tuileries.

Those who have not seen this beautiful enclosure on a summer's evening, when filled with company, in all the hilarity and animation of Parisian character, can form no idea of the cheerfulness of the scene; the deep and thick foliage of the trees, the splashing of the numerous fountains, the beautiful pieces of sculpture scattered around, the noble avenues of orange trees casting a delicious perfume on every breeze, the melody of martial music falling upon the ear, the light and fanciful dresses of the Parisian *eléyante*, the various foreign costumes met with

in every turn, the happy-looking features, the animated conversation, form altogether a combination of attractions, at once strange and delightful, and which can only be met with in a Parisian promenade.

But even this scene, gay and enchanting as it was, failed to erase the gloomy thoughts of Fitz-Henry; for the charm of companionship was wanting. He felt that amidst the crowd he was alone: no eyes glanced towards him in recognition—no lips expressed their welcome. Many by whom he was surrounded were from his own dear land; but they passed by, regardless of the claim of country—some even from his own hôtel; but they also were too intent upon other matters to heed the loneliness of their compatriot. Fitz-Henry felt the general characteristic of his countrymen, and was regretting its universality, when two young Englishmen approached him, and, by entering into conversation, caused him to retract his half-acknowledged opinion of their unsociability.

The penetrating observations of Fitz-Henry soon discovered the different characteristics of his companions. Their conversation was cheerful, but desultory. The elder of the two was by far the most talkative; but his remarks were free and, at times, coarse, while those of his companion were more refined and pleasing, though he occasionally indulged in a strain of satire almost severe. They both expressed a wish for Fitz-Henry to join them, to which he readily assented; they proposed a ramble in the Champs Elysées, and afterwards to visit the celebrated Circus of Franconi, which was situated in that locality.

Fitz-Henry found that his companions were both from London. George Stanley, the elder of the two, appeared about twenty-seven years of age; in statue he was tall and masculine, and ungraceful in his deportment. His features were strongly marked, and indicated a love of pleasure and sensuality; his hair was light and curling, and his low forehead indicated the absence of any great intellectual capacity. His disposition was candid, but it partook more of thoughtlessness than amiability. Free and

reckless, the world and its opinions he set at defiance when it was brought in opposion to his will; he spoke much, but his language marked his disregard of propriety and custom. He was intended for the medical profession, and had long been quite *au fait* to the scenes of fashionable dissipation.

His companion, Charles Arnold, was about five years his junior,—in person prepossessing, and in mind cultivated and intelligent. His conversation bore the stamp of shrewdness, tinctured with a sarcastic humour. He openly showed his contempt for the many mad adventures of his friend, in which he occasionally joined, rather from a love of change than from any pleasure in the participation. He wandered from one scene to another with a restlessness which indicated a mind at variance with each; yet the natural goodness of his disposition, and the cultivation of his mind, always pointed out to him that which ought to be admired and that which it was his duty to shun. He had long finished his education, but had no fixed plan as to his future vocation in life.

On their way to the Champs Elysées, Fitz-Henry and his companions passed through the Place de la Concorde, the most beautiful spot in Paris; indeed nothing can surpass the *coup d'œil* of this enchanting locality. In the centre stands the celebrated obelisk of Luxor, a magnificent specimen of Egyptian workmanship. In the square are eight pavilions, with allegorical figures, representing the eight principal towns of France. Around are several elegant columns, bearing lamps, surmounted by gilded globes. On one side are the splendid buildings of the Rue de Rivoli, with the magnificent church of the Madeline, opposite to which, and on the other side of the Place de la Concorde, is the bridge; the Chamber of Deputies, with other noble edifices that crowd upon the banks of the Seine, with the lofty dome of the Invalides beyond. On the east are the gardens of the Tuileries, with their groves, terraces, and statues; on the west are the spacious and beautiful avenues of the Champs Elysées, between the trees of which are seen its booths, temples, *cafés*, shows, and

fountains, extending to the lofty and noble arch of *L'étoile*, which issues in the distance.

Fitz-Henry was enchanted with the scene; as they proceeded nothing could exceed its gaiety. Long lines of carriages and equestrians were moving slowly on, and on each side of the avenue thousands of pedestrians wandered on the promenades, or strolled amongst the trees, under whose shadows games and sports of every description were now offering their attractions; bands of music were playing before the different *cafés*, and their tones blended with the splashing of the fountains and the voices of the showmen. Thus amused, our party slowly reached the light and elegant building in which feats of horsemanship nightly draw some hundreds of the pleasure-seeking Parisians, and greatly was Fitz-Henry pleased to see with what avidity they entered into the joyous scene—all, both young and old, sharing alike in the entertainment provided for them.

On their return they again stopped before one of the *cafés*; for the singers had not yet left it, and a crowd, composed chiefly of men and boys, was collected before the building. Fitz-Henry soon perceived that two other young Englishmen had joined their party, and were in conversation with Stanley; he remembered to have seen them at the *table d'hôte*, and was then annoyed at the rudeness of their manners. They were now asking Stanley to join them in a visit to a ball, which was held nightly at a *café* near the Champs Elysées, and which Fitz-Henry soon learned was more celebrated for the freedom it allowed than for its respectability—many of its visitors, both male and female, being of the most equivocal character.

Stanley required but little persuasion to induce him to join them; he only hesitated a moment upon finding Arnold would not accompany him. They appealed to Fitz-Henry, who at once declined joining them, pleading his having been travelling during the preceding night, and expressed his intention of returning to his hôtel with Arnold. They appeared disappointed, and, as they separated, one of the strangers exclaimed, in a sar-

castic tone,—"Farewell, holy St. Arnold; we will not unmask your failings to your new companion, who doubtless will profit greatly from your venerable ideas."

To this taunt Arnold replied only by a slight curl of his lips and an angry flash from his eye. He took the arm of Fitz-Henry, and proceeded some way in silence, but he soon regained his composure, and began a conversation with his companion.

"You are not an admirer of dancing, I conclude, Fitz-Henry? or is it in reality fatigue that prevented your joining Stanley and his companions to-night?"

"Certainly, I am just now unfit for the exercise," replied Fitz-Henry; yet I am rather partial to that amusement, though I confess under no circumstance would I have joined them. I should not enjoy the society of such as I might expect to meet there; in this respect I appear to differ from your friend Stanley, for he seemed to anticipate much pleasure from the night's adventure."

"My friend," said Arnold, laying great emphasis upon the sentence, "Stanley is my companion; I acknowledge no nearer connexion. We are distantly related, and were introduced to each other a few weeks only previous to our leaving England. We each of us intended to visit France, and, as neither had a companion, we agreed to journey together. Our dispositions are too dissimilar to admit of any other tie than that of *compagnon de voyage*; and, though I join in some of his adventures, I do not implicitly adhere to his opinions."

Fitz-Henry felt it would be unfair to prolong a topic which might be construed to a wish on his part to enter into the feelings subsisting between Arnold and his more immediate companion; he therefore changed the subject by inquiring respecting the inmates of their hôtel.

"My knowledge of them is rather imperfect," replied Arnold; "for, with the exception of Stanley, and the two who are gone with him to-night, I have scarcely spoken to any of them. Sampson and Bernard were, by chance, our companions on our way to Paris, which has instituted a sort of intimacy between us, or at

least on the part of Stanley; for they are not of a character likely to interest me. Evidently of no consequence at home, they are endeavouring, by bluster, and by an attempt at fashionable life, to make themselves considered to be somebody here; frivolous to a degree, and dissipated, without the good feeling or common sense which might palliate such a character. We have passed some hours together since our arrival in Paris, amidst scenes not exactly suited to my inclination; but, as Stanley felt disposed to join them, I, to oblige him, have occasionally participated in their exploits and amusements."

"But are there no others at our hôtel," demanded Fitz-Henry, "whose dispositions and tastes are more congenial with your own than those of Stanley's friends appear to be?"

"I know of no other English visitors who are likely to associate with me," replied Arnold; "and yet there are several at our hôtel. There are also many young foreigners; but I speak no language save my own, or, at least, not sufficiently to make myself companionable; yet I believe there are a few who speak the English language—Eugène, the young Frenchman, I know does."

"You allude to the melancholy, yet interesting-looking youth, who sat opposite to me at the *table d'hôte*," remarked Fitz-Henry. "There is something peculiar in his appearance; and, in spite of his sad looks and great taciturnity, he is one whom I should consider an acquisition as a companion. We are all more or less governed by external appearances, and there is something in the expression of his features that pleases me."

"I agree with you there," replied Arnold; "yet I expect you will find it difficult to obtain the companionship of Eugène. He associates with no one at the hôtel, and appears to shun the English in particular; though Madame de Morgan says he speaks well of them, and resides at her hôtel almost purposely to enjoy English society; but I suspect he find those of our countrymen now there too cold, or too gay, to suit his warm, and somewhat staid disposition."

"And have you made no advances to obtain his confidence?" demanded Fitz-Henry.

"Oh yes! I have conversed with him more than once," said Arnold, "and found him amiable and polite; yet still he appears to shun me. This I in part attribute to my being so frequently seen by him with Bernard and Sampson, both of whom must be greatly objectionable to him from their rude, not to say insolent conduct towards him; you may therefore be more successful."

"After your failure, I scarcely think I ought to attempt it," replied Fitz-Henry, smiling. "I fancy we must leave Monsieur Eugène to his exclusiveness, or endeavour to reclaim our countrymen so as to make them more worthy of his attention."

Arnold expressed his delight in having met one whose ideas appeared to assimilate so greatly with his own as did those of Fitz-Henry. They returned to their hôtel, and in the apartment of the latter enjoyed a long and social exchange of sentiments; and ere they retired for the night, each had becomé fully acquainted with the character and disposition of his new companion; for, with the candour of a youthful and generous mind, each had unreservedly expressed the various feelings of his nature, and in this brief space of time achieved the confidence of years..

## CHAPTER II.

### Early Promenade—Père la Chaise—The Plot—Mysterious Visitor.

It was at rather an early hour on the following morning that Fitz-Henry descended from his chamber, and proceeded to the gardens of the Tuileries. The weather was exceedingly fine; the sun shone in all its splendour, and the cool shade of the trees, and the newly-watered paths, added to the freshness of the air, which was pregnant with the sweet perfume of the various shrubs and flowers scattered around. The Parisians are generally early risers, and there were already many persons in the gardens—some strolling leisurely on the walks, others lounging on the seats dispersed beneath the trees, and occupied in reading or conversation. Several respectable-looking females were at work, some sewing, some embroidering, while some dozens of little ones sported amongst the trees, in all the mad mirth of happy youth, with their light dresses and long hair floating on the breeze. All around seemed the scene of contentment and perfect ease, which so often meets the eye in Paris, and seldom fails to impart some portion of its happiness.

Fitz-Henry proceeded to the beautiful terrace which overlooks the Seine, and enjoyed the prospect it afforded of the noble quays, with their long range of palaces and public buildings. There is a cheerfulness in the very promenades of Paris which is scarcely met with elsewhere; no matter whether you are surrounded by the happy-looking Parisians or not—the very trees and statues appear to meet you with a smile, and the clear and sunny atmosphere breathes the very spirit of hilarity.

Fitz-Henry had been walking some little time, when, turning suddenly round, he came in contact with two young ladies, who were following very near upon him. From the suddenness of the event he could scarcely stammer out an apology; but their easy and courteous bearing soon reassured him, and he hesitated not

to enter freely into conversation with them, expatiating upon the beauty of the Paris promenades in general, and the one on which they were in particular. Had it been in England Fitz-Henry would not have ventured upon such an abrupt acquaintance, but on the Continent he knew it was sanctioned by custom, and was not therefore surprised at his position when he found himself walking by their side as much at ease as if he had known them for weeks.

The elder of the two ladies, who appeared about twenty, was English, and strikingly beautiful. Her full black eye sparkled with vivacity, and the merry tones of her sweet voice fell pleasantly upon the ear; her figure displayed a perfect symmetry, and her finely-chiselled features bore the impress of amiability and animation. Her companion, who was French, was some few years her junior, and, although exceedingly good-looking, could not boast of the dazzling beauty of the fair Englishwoman. In cheerfulness their similarity was more apparent, and Fitz-Henry was captivated by the ease and charm of their conversation. Their language was free, yet elegant; and there was a dignity throughout which imposed respect, and prevented any uncourteous familiarity; had not the good sense and refinement of Fitz-Henry been sufficient to prevent his attempting it. Greatly as he had enjoyed their society, and much as he wished to prolong the interview which chance had given him, he did not attempt to intrude longer upon them, when, upon reaching the gate opposite the Rue de Castiglion, they politely bade him good morning, and, without seeking to discover their names, he left them with the footman who was waiting at the gate, and returned to his hôtel.

Fitz-Henry found a large party seated at the breakfast-table; amongst others were Arnold, Stanley, Bernard, and Sampson. Arnold had seen Fitz-Henry in the gardens, and congratulated him upon the success of his early promenade; Stanley looked pale and unwell, but, as usual, he was most animated and loud in his conversation. During the breakfast it was agreed that they should visit the cemetery of Père la Chaise, and Fitz-Henry con-

sented to accompany them. They engaged the two *fiacres* which were stationed in the yard of the hôtel, and were soon after put down at the place of their destination.

It is not under the glare of a noon-tide's side, nor in the society of the frivolous and unthinking, that this resting-place of the dead should be visited. They had not proceeded far through its labyrinths and shaded paths ere Fitz-Henry felt how greatly the society in which he was placed was at variance with the scene. The loud and boisterous conversation of his companions broke on the stillness which pervaded the spot, and destroyed the soft associations which a scene so sacred should naturally inspire. The remains of the departed lay scattered around them, some with their resting-place marked by a simple cross in wood, others honoured with a tomb of marble; for some had died poor and unknown, save to the remembering heart of affection, while others had been snatched from their wealth, or had shone brightly in the annals of their country's history. The weeping willow, the carefully-guarded flower, the sculptured marble, the humble sod, are passed by indifferently by the many; yet where is the spot in which the once-breathing clay reposes but over which some hearts can ponder, some eye can shed the tear of memory?—not one grave but what contains some buried affection—some broken hope. Many of the tombs evinced the feeling and wealth of the survivors by the various and rich ornaments which they contained; splendid vases, richly-chased candlesticks, magnificent crosses, natural or artificial flowers, immortal wreaths, and other emblems of the Roman faith, were to be seen through the grated doors which protected them.

Our party wandered from spot to spot, visiting the celebrated tomb of Abelard and Heloisa, and those of Calmer, Cuvier, Talma, General Foy, Marshal Ney, and numerous others, interesting from the fame of those they contained; but the sensitive mind of Fitz-Henry was continually shocked by the rude merriment of Stanley and his two companions as they gazed into the different tombs, and he kept as much as possible with Arnold,

whose good feeling would not allow him to join in a conduct so unsuitable.

They had reached a monument situated in the most retired part of the cemetery. It was a plain structure, and the only light admitted was from its grated door. Bernard was soon gazing into its sacred interior, and his exclamation of surprise and unfeeling remarks drew the attention of his companions. Fitz-Henry involuntarily pushed him aside, to ascertain the cause of his strange conduct, and, to his astonishment and mortification, beheld Eugène.

The interior of the tomb was ornamented with an altar, upon which were two lighted candles, surrounded by vases, containing freshly-gathered flowers; and a crucifix was suspended above them. Before the altar was a stool, upon which it was evident Eugène had been kneeling when he was so rudely interrupted. He was now gazing towards the door, and his youthful and expressive features bore the indication of intense feeling, while the proud curl of his lip and the angry glance of his dark eye marked the contempt excited by this unhallowed intrusion. Fitz-Henry was shocked at being thus associated in the mad conduct of his unfeeling companions, and he hesitated not loudly and energetically to express his disapprobation, and endeavoured to draw them from the spot, but in vain: they would remain, they said, and greet the resuscitation of the young saint. In vain Arnold added his entreaty to that of Fitz-Henry; their companions would not listen to reason, and the two friends walked disappointedly away.

"I see, Fitz-Henry," remarked Arnold, "your better feelings will not allow you to participate in this foolery. I, too, am ashamed to be associated in it—the more so, when it is directed against one whose amiable though reserved disposition might have spared his feelings this outrage. I cannot be surprised if in future Eugène avoids the English more than ever; for what feeling or common courtesy can he now give us the credit of possessing?"

Arnold was interrupted by Stanley and his companions, who had rejoined them, after having gratified their wishes.

"You are not pleased with us," remarked Stanley; "but you need not think so much about it: we were owing that young Frenchman a grudge, and could not resist so good an opportunity of paying him off. Would you believe it, he had the impudence to tell Madame de Morgan that I was not a proper companion for him, and that Bernard and Sampson were still less so, for she, seeing him so much alone, had suggested his cultivating our good graces. Poor fellow! no doubt he is immaculate himself—at all events he wishes to be thought so; but we have not done with him yet: we have got a scheme in view, which, if successful, will shake the high opinion in which he stands at the hôtel."

"Any other practical ill-feeling towards him," remarked Fitz-Henry, "may be applied with less atrociousness than insulting him at the tomb of those whose loss has doubtless caused him so much sorrow; it was heartless, to say the least of it, and certainly not calculated to raise our national character into respect."

"Nonsense, nonsense," replied Stanley; "I hate such mummery. Depend upon it, it is all sham and parade; but if I have offended you, I am sorry for it, for I have calculated upon making you my *compagnon de plaisir*, as an intermediate between these two mad fellows and my friend Arnold, who dares sometimes to dispute my authority."

"Most assuredly," replied Fitz-Henry, "you are not pursuing the right step to gain my esteem, and I fear you will find me more ready than Arnold to call your acts, if not your authority, in question. There is no inclination on my part to join in your foolish adventures, though in your more serious moments I may not be unwilling to become your companion."

Fitz-Henry would not express more fully his real feelings towards Stanley and his associates, because he thought by appearing to coincide even partially with them he should find out their scheme to annoy Eugène, and thus be able to prevent it. Nor was he mistaken: from their conversation he soon understood every particular respecting it; and much as he detested the feeling

which had called forth their inventive powers, he could but be surprised, and in part amused, at the depth of their ingenuity in devising so ridiculous yet well-conceived a plan. It was evident that envy had no small share in the dislike which was entertained by Stanley and his companions towards Eugène; they were annoyed at the high estimation in which the young Frenchman was held at the hôtel from his amiable disposition and strict regard of morality; and it was to displace that faith in his sincerity that the present scheme for annoyance was principally intended.

In his rambles through the gay scenes of Paris, Stanley had become acquainted with a French youth, whose name was Gustave; a thoughtless, handsome boy, whose lively wit and slim figure were well adapted for their plans. Disguised as a female, Gustave was to apply at the hôtel and inquire for Eugène, at a time when it was probable he would be from home. Upon being informed of his absence, the *seeming* lady was most loudly to express her surprise, protesting that she came by the appointment of Eugène himself, and making other insinuations discreditable to the good fame of Eugène; but should the young Frenchman be unexpectedly at home, and a meeting unavoidable, Gustave was, upon being admitted to his chamber, to profess great admiration for Eugène, and to keep him in conversation as long as possible, that Bernard, who was to remain in his own chamber, which adjoined that of Eugène, might have apparent cause for any statement he might choose to make respecting the interview.

Fitz-Henry knew too well the capabilities of the party for such a scheme not to feel assured that their wishes would be at least partially successful, unless some counterplot was devised to thwart them; and, as it was not to be put into execution until the following evening, he hoped to prevent the success of their malicious intentions without their being altogether aware of its failure; and it was the better to disguise his intentions that he entered more freely into their conversation, and laughed at language, which, under other circumstances, would have excited his unrestrained disgust. His *ruse* succeeded; they had not the

slightest idea that Fitz-Henry would act against them: they attributed his recent disapprobation of their conduct rather from the sacredness of the spot in which their folly had been shown than from any wish to screen Eugène; and all save Arnold thought he was in reality one of their *clique*. But the penetrating eye of the only reasonable being of the party could detect in the unusual loquacity of Fitz-Henry some hidden purpose; yet his good feeling and better judgment caused him to appear ignorant of that which he half suspected.

During the greater part of the following day, Arnold and Fitz-Henry remained together, visiting the churches, and other public buildings; and when they returned to their hôtel, towards evening, they found Stanley and his two friends had arrived there before them. After joining in the *table d'hôte*, they proceeded together to the Champs Elysées, on their way to the *café*, where they had appointed Gustave to meet them, and it was on this promenade that Fitz-Henry separated from his companions, refusing to accompany them to the *café* under the plea of a previous engagement, which they accepted without suspicion, knowing that a note from Captain St. John, to whom Fitz-Henry had brought a letter of introduction, had been delivered in the morning, and which Fitz-Henry, wishing to turn to his advantage in this affair, did not think proper to inform them was to join a dinner party at the Captain's hôtel on the following evening.

Having succeeded so far, Fitz-Henry proceeded immediately to his hôtel, and seeking Madame de Morgan, acquainted her with the whole affair; and, as he expected, gained her promise to assist him in preventing the annoyance intended to Eugène. Madame suggested that it would be better not to report Eugène as absent, as the *garçons* might hear the false statements which Gustave would be sure to make respecting him. It was therefore arranged that Madame de Morgan should manage to be in the *concièrge* when Gustave arrived, and send him to Fitz-Henry's chamber, who was to assume the name of Eugène, or not, as he

might think most judicious, and most likely to answer the end intended.

When in his chamber, Fitz-Henry reflected upon the course which he should pursue. At first he thought it would be better to make Gustave at once acquainted with his knowledge of the deception he was practising, and request his promise of secrecy as to the part he himself was taking; but then, the character of Gustave was wholly unknown to Fitz-Henry, and the boy might not scruple to break any promise that he made, and another plot would be formed against Eugène. Fitz-Henry therefore determined that Gustave should rejoin his companions under the impression that their plans had succeeded; and, having come to this conclusion, he waited for the arrival of his strange visitor.

Fitz-Henry listened attentively to every step that sounded upon the stairs. He heard some one enter the chamber occupied by Bernard and Sampson, and soon after a step approached, and some one knocked at his own door.

"*Entrez!*" exclaimed Fitz-Henry.

The door was immediately opened, and a young lady handsomely attired entered the apartment. Her appearance almost upset the gravity of Fitz-Henry; but with well-affected surprise he rose to receive his visitor, who had already moved to the most shaded part of the chamber, and at once commenced the purport of her visit.

"Doubtless, Monsieur Eugène, you are surprised at the intrusion of a stranger, and I fear will scarcely pardon my temerity in making it; yet, when I explain my motive for a conduct so at variance with etiquette, and even with prudence, you will, I trust, view it with some degree of leniency, if not with forgiveness—though I might incur the censure of others in acting thus freely and inconsiderately."

These words were spoken in the French language with a peculiar softness of tone, while the eyes of the speaker were cast down, as if conscious of the impropriety of the step which had been taken; indeed, so well was the character sustained, and so per-

fectly feminine was the graceful figure that stood before him, that Fitz-Henry would easily have been deceived had he not been already aware of the deception. A long veil in part concealed the features of the boy, and the thick and glossy hair which fell upon his shoulders corresponded well with the character he had assumed, and added greatly to the deception.

"Whatever may be the object of your visit, mademoiselle," replied Fitz-Henry, "I must consider it a fortunate one, since it has occasioned this introduction. Pray be seated, and I promise to listen most attentively to whatever you may be pleased to communicate."

"This kind reception, monsieur, is no more than I expected, from all that I had heard of your disposition, and from my own knowledge of your character; for I have seen and heard of you occasionally—no matter where, or when: it is sufficient to know that I have been impressed with a high estimate of your principles and gallantry, and it is to test these that you see me here."

"I know not what your words imply," observed Fitz-Henry, "but doubtless you will explain that which you expect of me; and my actions must then prove whether I am entitled to the high encomiums which you have been pleased to bestow upon me. I would not willingly forfeit the high opinion of so fair an advocate."

"I thank you for the compliment," was the reply; "but I fear my explanation will be attended with more difficulties than I anticipated. I thought you were a countryman of my own, and consequently better able to comprehend the feelings by which I have been actuated, and also those of another whose cause I am to advocate; but, from your pronunciation, I find you are not of France; and the customs and prejudices of your country may be at variance with that which is tolerated with us."

"You need fear no obstacle from that cause," answered Fitz-Henry; "I am sufficiently a citizen of the world to abjure all blind adherence to the customs and prejudices of any nation in particular. I am an Englishman, and though we have the credit

of being considered cool and calculating, yet I can enter fully into the ardent nature of the children of *là belle France*; and indeed I am bound to do this, having for a time, and from a strange whim, adopted your country as my own. I pass here for a Frenchman, and my imperfect pronunciation of the language is attributed to my having passed the greater portion of my life in England. With you I shall not attempt any deception, though I must request your secrecy as to my identity."

"And which I readily promise," returned the stranger, "for this will be a species of bond between us. Fortunately, I speak the English language sufficiently to be understood, and my claims may be more impressive from their being urged in your native tongue. Briefly, then, will I explain, that the cause of this intrusion is to demand your friendship for myself and your love for one who is worthy and desirous of obtaining it, who, from circumstances, is unable to plead for herself, but whose happiness is dependant upon the success of my advocacy; for, strange as it may appear, her affections are placed entirely upon you, although she has not been more than once in your society, and even on that occasion was scarcely noticed by you. She is unfortunately under the guardianship of one who treats her with sternness, and watches her with vigilance, and would force her to marry a man she hates—one wholly unworthy of her approbation, but from whom there is no escape unless you will generously assist her."

These last sentences were spoken in the English language, and the peculiar accent imparted an additional charm to the voice of the young Frenchman, who had evidently invented this tale to draw Fitz-Henry's attention as much as possible from the present, fearing a discovery of his identity should he demand the affection of Fitz-Henry for himself, as was intended by Stanley in the plan he proposed, but which Gustave, upon reflection, had thought it better to alter, not intending to mention to his associates his having done so.

"Will you favour me with the address of one who has so honoured me by her partiality?" demanded Fitz-Henry.

"At present I am not at liberty to do so," was the reply. "I was first to be assured of your willingness to accede to her wishes, and to express her gratitude should you do so—to-morrow you may hear more. I have now proceeded to the extent of my mission, and wait your answer."

"Let it be according to your wishes, then," answered Fitz-Henry; "I am ready to brave much for one who has so honoured me. Return, therefore, to my fair admirer, and say I only wait her summons to proceed to her assistance."

"Thanks, generous Eugène—I need no longer intrude myself upon you. You must not judge of us from this boldly-sought interview; much of happiness or misery was at stake, and I hesitated not to act. As to myself, I would rather rest upon the circumstances of our next meeting for your opinion upon me; for many reasons the present one must remain a secret."

Fitz-Henry could see that the boy was impatient to end the interview, brief as it had been, for it was evident he knew not how to proceed, or what to say, to bring about his departure; but his wishes were accelerated by Fitz-Henry himself, who was equally desirous of ending the meeting, fearing his own identity should be discovered by prolonging it: he therefore observed—

"I will not attempt to detain you, mademoiselle, knowing how embarrassing this interview must be to you, and the necessity for your speedy return to your fair friend, to whom I grant my love as freely as I bestow my friendship upon one who has so ably advocated her cause."

"Again I thank you, Eugène. Our next meeting may be under circumstances which I cannot now name; but you must not then refuse the claims which I may make upon your affections in whatever character I may have to urge them."

Fitz-Henry readily promised all that was desired by his strange visitor, and, as they approached the door, purposely whispered aloud some tender compliments in the French language, for he knew either Sampson or Bernard were in their chamber, and he thought that through the closed door of their

apartment, and in a language they did not understand, it would be difficult for them to distinguish his voice from Eugène's, and, by acting thus openly, he might lull any suspicion that might have been awakened.

When Fitz-Henry re-éntered his chamber he could but laugh heartily as he recalled the scene which had just been acted. He felt that he had kept up his part so well that Gustave had gone away fully impressed with the conviction that his identity had not been discovered, and that it was Eugène himself that he had so effectually imposed upon; while Fitz-Henry was equally assured that the boy would not hazard a second time the chance of a discovery, or repeat his visit under any other character than his proper one, which he evidently alluded to at the conclusion of his visit, intimating a wish legally to obtain the friendship of one upon whose credulity he now believed himself to be practising.

After waiting till he thought all were clearly off Fitz-Henry left his chamber, and proceeded for a stroll in the Champs Elyseés, wishing, if possible, not to re-enter his hôtel until after Stanley and his friends had returned to it, thus favouring the impression of his having passed the evening from home, which he knew would add greatly to the belief that it was Eugène himself who had received Gustave.

# CHAPTER III.

## Malignity—Reprehensible Liaison—Soirée—Unexpected Meeting.

It was at rather a late hour that Fitz-Henry returned to his chamber, and he was preparing to retire for the night when he was surprised by a visit from Arnold.

"I am rather a late visitor, Fitz-Henry," he observed, seating himself in one of the *fauteuils*; "but I found you had not gone to bed, and I wished to speak with you to-night. You heard yesterday of the very foolish plot they intended to play upon Eugène, and, I am sure, disapproved of it as much as I did. I joined them at the *café* this evening entirely from my anxiety to hear how far Gustave succeeded, and whether any other mode of annoyance was likely to be adopted. Gustave, whom you have not yet seen, is a wild and shrewd boy, singularly handsome, and well calculated to personate the character of a female. His rambling and joyous disposition leads him into any adventure from a sheer love of frolic; for I believe he possesses a good heart, and whatever he does in this affair is from no malicious intentions, but from a thoughtlessness excusable in one so young, for he is a mere boy. We have met him occasionally amidst scenes of riot and dissipation, but he appears to join in them rather from a love of excitement than from any depraved inclinations."

"But dow did he succeed?" demanded Fitz-Henry, rather impatiently; for he was anxious to hear Gustave's account of the interview, and whether the part he had himself acted was suspected.

"I confess I was wandering from the point," said Arnold; "but I will tell you. Gustave rejoined us at the Café des Champs, where he threw off the borrowed plumes which he had worn over his own; he then related his interview with Eugène, who, I was sorry to hear, he found at home. Eugène received him rather coolly at first, but soon became more agreeable, appearing to enjoy his supposed conquest—for throughout the whole scene the

deception of Gustave was not suspected, and he must have acted his part admirably. After an exchange of a few tender compliments, a second meeting was proposed by Eugène, in whom, I own, I am greatly disappointed, for, wild and thoughtless as Gustave is, I do not doubt his statement. But this assumed sanctity is not the only deception of Eugène, for you will be surprised to hear that he is not a Frenchman, as we all thought, but a countryman of our own: this Gustave found out by his pronunciation of the French language, or it is probable Eugène would have continued to enact the Parisian even before the boy."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Fitz-Henry, smiling; "but may not this young scapegrace have deceived you all in this affair?—are you sure that he saw Eugène?"

"Oh, there is no doubt of it," replied Arnold; "for Bernard was in his chamber, and heard them conversing together, though he could not exactly distinguish the words. He thought at first that Gustave had entered your chamber by mistake, but as you were from home, and Gustave actually saw Eugène, he must have been deceived from the proximity of the chambers."

"I suppose another plot will be devised, this having succeeded so well," observed Fitz-Henry.

"It is very probable," replied Arnold, "for I fear neither Stanley nor Bernard will remain satisfied. But it seems Eugène won greatly upon the good opinion of the volatile Gustave, for the boy says he will join in no other plot against him; indeed, I think he is really sorry in having taken so prominent a part in this ridiculous affair."

"The young mad-brain is better than I should have supposed him to be," remarked Fitz-Henry; "but, as in the case of Eugène, we must not trust entirely to appearances, I thought to have entered the lists as the champion of the supposed Frenchman; but, as he appears to have as many dark points as the generality of young men, I shall leave him to the tender mercies of Stanley and his companions. But how do they intend to turn this visit of Gustave to account against him?"

"Why, to-morrow morning they will all join Eugène at the breakfast-table, and Bernard is to commence the subject, which the others are to dwell upon so as to annoy Eugène as much as possible; and whatever my intentions were, I shall not now interrupt them, for I can better tolerate a professed rake, than a hypocritical saint. But I am keeping you from pleasing dreams, so adieu, *mon ami*; after all I suppose I shall have to be under the dreadful necessity of making a friend and confidant of you—that is, if you will consent to become my confessor."

"Oh! most willingly," replied Fitz-Henry, "but it must be with the proviso, that you enact the same venerable functions towards me, and, to commence, receive my confession of having this very night been guilty of deception, of having appropriated to my own use that which belongs to another; yet you must exonerate me, for I only borrowed the name of Eugène for a good purpose."

"The name of Eugène?"

"Exactly so," replied Fitz-Henry. "Wishing to prevent the insult intended him, I assumed his name, and received Gustave, thus deceiving the deceiver."

Arnold started with surprise; in a moment he saw through the whole plot, and congratulated Fitz-Henry upon the success of his scheme, promising to join him in any future plan to prevent annoyance to Eugène, and expressing his delight in not having been deceived as to the amiable character of the young Frenchman. Most readily did he promise to keep the secret with which Fitz-Henry had entrusted him, and after a brief consultation upon the part they should take on the following morning, the friends separated for the night.

Fitz-Henry was not sorry when he heard on the succeeding morning that Eugène intended to breakfast in his own apartment, and he smiled to himself when he descended and found Stanley and his associates waiting anxiously for the appearance of the young Frenchman, and their evident disappointment when they found he would not join them at the breakfast-table. Bernard could scarcely conceal his chagrin.

"I suppose, madame," said he, "that Monsieur Eugène has not recovered from the excitement occassioned by the visit that was paid him last evening, and, in faith, it is no wonder, considering the nature of it. I quite envied the young Frenchman, or Englishman, or whatever other countryman he may chance to be; for I believe he is no more a Parisian than I am, nor a bit more of a saint either, if I may judge by the looks of his visitors."

Madame de Morgan turned towards Fitz-Henry, evidently at a loss how to reply; but Fitz-Henry immediately addressed her in order to withdraw the attention of Bernard.

"I suppose, madame," he said, "you do not trouble yourself respecting the visitors of those who are at your hôtel, so long as you have no cause to doubt their propriety. I should imagine, had I a lady visitor, you would not think it necessary to make any observations upon it, especially to those whom it could not concern."

"Certainly not, Monsieur Fitz-Henry," replied Madame de Morgan; "for neither you nor Monsieur Eugène, would, I am sure, receive any visitor that could reflect discredit upon my hôtel; but," continued she, laughing, "if Monsieur Bernard was to receive here the lady with whom I saw him last week at Franconi's, I should think it proper to ask who she was."

"Done again, Bernard," exclaimed Stanley; "your fame has extended even to Paris. Give a dog a bad name—you know the rest. Even your most Platonic intercourse with the fair sex would be misconstrued into a guilty *liaison*, while such pretended saints as Eugène may run away with a man's wife, and it would be said that he was actuated by some noble principle; but so it ever was, and I suppose ever will be. Yes, such as you and myself must continue to be the victims of suspicion and prejudice, while our more cautious, but not less guilty neighbours, may continue their pranks with impunity."

"Nay, Stanley," observed Fitz-Henry, "experience must have taught you, that there is not much to complain of on the score

of prejudice. Society is too generally lenient in such matters, and too apt to fix the stigma upon the weaker and less guilty party. Had man to bear the odium which blights the character of an erring woman, we should not have to deplore so many lapses from the path of rectitude."

"Do, my dear fellow, give over sermonizing," said Stanley: "all the eloquence in the world would not persuade me that a little flirtation is sinful; if the girls will run into our arms they must not blame us for making the most of it. Why, nine out of every ten would be disappointed if you received them with sentimentality, instead of responding to their own warm feelings, and every young man of your acquaintance would think you a very stupid sort of fellow. No, no, Fitz-Henry, such ideas are not considered *à la mode* now—all stoicism in such cases is quite out of date in fashionable society."

"Your observations are too well supported by facts," replied Fitz-Henry, "yet, after all, such are not the sentiments of those whose good opinion we ought to value; and I believe there are many who join in the general indulgence, or rather indifference, more from a dislike to differ from the supposed opinions of those around them than from any innate conviction of the blamelessness of such a character. But enough of this, I can have no authority to question your actions or opinions, however strange and erroneous they may be."

After breakfast, Fitz-Henry, accompanied by Arnold, paid a visit to the Louvre, that palace of wonders and attractions, so rich in all that can delight the eye or captivate the mind; and doubly was it enjoyed by Fitz-Henry in the society of Arnold, who had gained so much upon his esteem, from the contrast which his manners and conversation bore to the rude and boisterous deportment of Stanley, and his still rougher companions. Arnold possessed a cultivated mind, though an eccentric disposition. When with Stanley and his associates he could give free license to his conversation, and a casual observer might have taken him to be a congenial spirit; but, away from such examples,

his manners became ardent and refined, his conversation intellectual and interesting.

As they afterwards rambled in the gardens of the Tuileries, Arnold informed Fitz-Henry of the intimacy which subsisted between Stanley and a young French girl who officiated in an establishment situated in the Rue de Rivoli, and which connexion he had endeavoured to prevent, knowing the base intentions of Stanley towards the beautiful and unsuspecting Julie. Indeed, the many altercations this affair had occasioned between them had tended greatly to impair the little feeling of respect which Arnold in reality entertained for Stanley.

"Thrown amidst such companions," continued Arnold, "you cannot wonder, Fitz-Henry, that I am happy when opportunity offers me the society of those more congenial in disposition to myself. I am not so fastidious as to object to mirth, or even to a little dissipation, when it is not carried to excess; but I do abhor a career of heartless depravity, and shrink from aiding the plans of seduction. Bernard and Sampson are continually boasting of their success in this way, and have so urged and flattered Stanley that he believes he is adding to his importance by overcoming a girl who has too little head, or too much heart, to withstand his blandishments, or to suspect his sincerity."

"But can you not reason Stanley out of such an erroneous and dangerous idea?" demanded Fitz-Henry, "can you not draw him from such bad examples? As his more immediate companion you should urge much to prevent such a stain upon his character."

"I fear there is no chance of my turning him," replied Arnold, "I have attempted it so often; besides, I confess, that I cannot patiently bear the ridicule of Sampson and Bernard, which I bring upon myself whenever they hear me advise Stanley; and when they are not present, Stanley is foolish enough to repeat my observations to them."

"Then I will make the attempt," said Fitz-Henry, "if only for the sake of poor Julie; I shall not care for the sarcasms of

Bernard or Sampson. But I see it is almost time for me to start for Captain St. John's hôtel. To-night I make my *début* into his family; I expect to meet rather a large party at dinner there, and am quite anxious to be introduced to his daughter, for I heard much in England respecting her beauty and accomplishments, with numerous other attractions."

"Success attend you," replied Arnold, as they separated; "but do not forget the cause of Julie in the interest excited by Miss St. John."

The apartments occupied by Captain St. John and his family were situated in the Faubourg St. Honoré, at which place Fitz-Henry arrived about six in the evening, and was immediately conducted to the *salon*, where he found a rather large party assembled. As soon as his name was announced Captain St. John came forward and welcomed him most warmly, expressing his pleasure in seeing him.

"You have only to forget," continued the captain, "that this is the first visit you have paid us, Fitz-Henry, and you will, I hope, find yourself quite at home here. In Paris persons soon become acquainted with each other, for we are not quite so reserved and ceremonious as on the other side of the channel. You will only meet a few of my most intimate friends this evening, to some of whom I must more especially introduce you, for their society may be both useful and agreeable to you as a stranger. But first let me introduce you to the mistress of the ceremonies, my daughter Edith, who no doubt is perplexing herself as to the cause of my detaining you; for all girls, you know, are impatient to add another beau to their list."

The captain led the way towards a sofa on which too young ladies were seated, in whom Fitz-Henry immediately recognised the fair strangers who had so greatly delighted him in the gardens of the Tuileries a few mornings before. A slight blush for a moment spread over the lovely features of Miss St. John as she rose to meet him, but she quickly recovered her composure, and exclaimed, in a gay tone—

"Indeed, papa, this introduction is unnecessary; I have already had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Fitz-Henry, and allow me to introduce him to you as the gentleman who joined us in the gardens the other morning, and of whom I gave a description, and who you were pleased to say was—"

"Come, come, girl," interrupted the captain, "no tales out of school, or I shall think proper to acquaint Fitz-Henry with what you and Marie said respecting him; but as Fitz-Henry has passed the ordeal of your criticism so well I may leave him to your charge, premising that I shall demand him again of you, as there are others to whom I wish to introduce him. You will find Edith a giddy girl, Fitz-Henry, but you must make allowance for her Parisian manners and half-military education: she is but little under the restriction of conventional rules and ceremonies."

Miss St. John introduced her fair companion Mademoiselle Marie, and Fitz-Henry felt proud of his position as he seated himself beside them. He was perfectly at his ease, for the free and easy tone of conversation in which Edith shone so conspicuously would soon have banished all restraint, had he felt any. But their accidental meeting in the gardens had been so unreserved that they were now as old acquaintances, and Fitz-Henry enjoyed the quick repartées and pungent conversation of his lively companions to the utmost.

Edith St. John was exceedingly beautiful; her large dark eyes sparkled with animation, and the lovely tints of her clear complexion varied with every emotion. Her long dark hair fell in waving tresses over a neck of perfect symmetry and whiteness; and her tall and graceful figure was seen to advantage in the plain but rich evening costume in which she was attired. Her young companion was much smaller in stature, and exceedingly fair; her light auburn hair was braided plainly over her forehead, and her slight figure made her appear more juvenile than she really was. Her full blue eyes betrayed a softness of expression at variance with the extreme animation of her manners. Towards Miss St. John she looked with a diffidence of one who

felt conscious of her own inferiority in intellectual acquirements, though the sincere affection that subsisted between them forbade any feeling of envy.

They were deeply engaged in conversation when the door was again opened, and the footman announced—

"Monsieur Eugène."

Fitz-Henry thought this was indeed to be an evening of surprise; the two beings who, from one circumstance or another, had for the last few days so greatly occupied his thoughts were now, as if by enchantment, ushered into his presence.

Eugène approached the sofa upon which they were seated, and, taking the hand of Miss St. John, inquired after her health in the tone of an old acquaintance. He had not observed Fitz-Henry, who felt a little confused as he recalled the adventure in the Cemetery of Père la Chaise, and he felt a glow overspread his face as Edith rose, and looking towards him, said—

"Allow me, Fitz-Henry, to introduce to you my redoubtable and romantic cousin, Eugène St. Foy."

Fitz-Henry, who had risen from his seat, observed the changing countenance of Eugène as his eye first fell upon him, and he saw the slight curl of the young Frenchman's lip as he replied to the introduction of his cousin.

"I believe this is not the first time that I have met Monsieur Fitz-Henry; though I was not aware that my uncle or yourself had the honour of his acquaintance."

"Come, come, Eugène," said Edith, "you must not meet our friend so coolly; we shall have Mr. Fitz-Henry return to England under the impression that Parisian society is very chilling. You were not wont, 'cousin mine,' to be so unfriendly—so formal. I have heard you complain of the want of a companion, and had promised to myself to engage Fitz-Henry for that enviable position."

"Excuse me, *ma belle cousine*," replied Eugène; "but I must protest against your kind intentions. Monsieur Fitz-Henry would doubtless be better pleased to select his own acquaintances, know-

ing the dispositions most calculated to assimilate with his own. Proud, as I must be, at having your recommendation, it would require some longer personal knowledge of each other ere we could enter into the bonds of fellowship with which your generous inclination would bind us: you know I have rather strange notions as to the selection of my companions."

"Monsieur Eugène is right," remarked Fitz-Henry; "and gratified as I am with the good opinion of Miss St. John, and happy as I might be in obtaining that of Monsieur Eugène, I feel it would be unfair to avail myself of such an introduction: we must leave it to time and circumstances to realise the wishes of our fair advocate."

"You are a couple of obstinate beings," said Edith, laughing; "and instead of obeying my commands without a question as to their propriety, as you were bound to do, you each of you start off, as if there were something terrible in submitting yourselves to my guidance; but I shall not give up my point so easily, I assure you."

"It is but seldom, my dear cousin, that I question your commands," replied Eugène, rather seriously; "nor would I ever do so from caprice. There are feelings and prejudices which should be consulted in the formation of intimacy, when we would wish that intimacy to verge into friendship; and I feel assured Monsieur Fitz-Henry can fully appreciate and apply my meaning. But, my fair cousin, you are making me forget my usual gallantry; I see other ladies to whom I have not spoken, and who are no doubt questioning my politeness."

Eugène walked to the opposite side of the *salon*, and dinner was almost immediately announced. Fitz-Henry had the honour of conducting Edith to the dining-room; nor did he a little regret when etiquette required the ladies to withdraw. He wished the captain had banished this absurd English custom, as he had done others; but it was the captain's hobby to relate some of his military adventures over his wine, and, as many of them were not exactly suited for female ears, he retained the custom of sitting

a short time after their departure. Being a stranger, Fitz-Henry was obliged to remain: and he envied Eugène, whose close connexion with the family allowed him almost immediately to rejoin the ladies.

When Fitz-Henry re-entered the *salon* Edith was seated at the piano, and Eugène standing beside her. They were singing one of those beautiful and thrilling gems from Norma, and the clear voice of Edith blended well with the deep and rich tones of Eugène. Fitz-Henry seated himself by Marie, who appeared more serious in her conversation when away from her merry companion. After the duet Edith approached them, and requested Fitz-Henry to lead Marie to the piano, and take part with her in the music, which Fitz-Henry was most ready to do; for, from some unaccountable cause, he wished Edith to see that he was himself a proficient in the art as well as Eugène, and equally capable of joining her in a duet, should she request it.

After passing a most agreeable evening, Fitz-Henry approached the captain to take leave of him, and found Eugène in conversation with his uncle; but the good-hearted host turned to bid farewell to his new guest, expressing the hope to see him soon again; then, turning to his nephew, he observed—

"By the by, Eugène, you are from the same hôtel I find, so you can accompany Fitz-Henry home, if only to take care of each other."

"I am sorry I cannot avail myself of the opportunity," replied Eugène, "and must beg Mr. Fitz-Henry to excuse me; for late as it is I shall have to take a rather circuitous route on my return. I have already bade farewell to my cousins, and must be off."

Eugène immediately departed, and the captain kept Fitz-Henry some little time in conversation ere he allowed him to seek Edith and Marie; but having at last bade them adieu, he also left the apartments of the captain to return to his own hôtel.

# CHAPTER IV.

## Champs Elysées—The Rencontre—Gratitude and Friendship—The Conquest.

THE night was remarkably fine; the moon shone in all its brilliancy, and the cool breeze was refreshing after the close atmosphere of the *salon*; indeed the balmy air and general stillness were so inviting that Fitz-Henry determined to return to his hôtel by the Champs Elysées, instead of the nearer way by the streets, and he turned his steps towards that locality.

Fitz-Henry had never been in the Champs Elysées at so late an hour, and he was astonished to find it so entirely deserted. The *cafés* were closed, and where, a few hours before, thousands had been lounging, engaged in merry converse or listening to the sounds of music, all was now still and lonely; not a sound broke upon the air, save the grating of a distant wheel, or the tramping of a horse, bearing some late traveller on the public road, which passes through the centre of the enclosure, and which, even in the light of day, is concealed by the numberless trees that intervene between it and the path on which Fitz-Henry was walking.

Fitz-Henry had been told the danger there was in passing through the Champs Elysées at a very late hour; but he had smiled at the idea of robbery or assassination in a spot so immediately within the votex of a densely-populated neighbourhood. But he had visited the locality only when it was crowded by the happy throng; or when, returning from the circus, it was still tenanted by the numerous stragglers who wandered here or there amongst the trees, or congregated before any *café* which might still be open; now, as he walked silently along, and witnessed the utter desertion and loneliness that surrounded him, he thought such things might be possible, though his mind was too much occupied in recalling the events of the evening to dwell upon the

subject. He was thinking of Edith, of her beauty and accomplishments, her merry and amiable disposition; and then he thought of Eugène, of his serious yet graceful manners, his handsome and expressive features, and of his full and deep-toned voice, as he poured forth his enthusiasm in song; and again he wondered whether Eugène was dearer to Edith than as a cousin and friend; and he paused to ask himself why it was that he felt so interested on that point. He recalled the conduct of each towards himself; Edith had already treated him as an old acquaintance, with freedom and kindness, and he felt Eugène was fully justified in thus shunning his society, for how could he avoid associating him with the derogatory conduct of his foolish companions, which, to a mind so cultivated and serious as that of Eugène's, must have appeared doubly offensive? yet Fitz-Henry hoped much from time and circumstances, both in his advancement in the good opinion of the fair Edith and also in that of her melancholy yet agreeable cousin.

So deeply was the mind of Fitz-Henry occupied in thought that he did not perceive he was approaching two men who were standing beneath the trees till he was almost upon them. He started back with surprise, for there was something so suspicious in their appearance that excited a feeling of fear, and he would gladly have avoided them; but they were so immediately near him, that he thought it would be impossible for him either to advance or recede without bringing their attention upon him; yet so deeply were they engaged in a low and earnest conversation that it was evident they had not heard his approach, and for a few moments Fitz-Henry remained fixed to the spot, intently watching them. They soon moved from the spot they had occupied, and, by so doing, allowed Fitz-Henry the opportunity of concealing himself behind a tree, which he had scarcely done before they again turned and advanced towards him, so that he was able to overhear their conversation, which soon rivetted his attention.

"I tell you again, it will not do," observed one of the men; "to leave him under such circumstances would be madness. He

knows you, and, in spite of his oath to the contrary, we are not safe in allowing him to escape thus."

"Would you add the crime of murder to that of robbery?" replied the other. "Did not the youth swear if we spared his life he would not divulge my name after he was fool enough to let out that he knew me? We have got more cash than we expected, and, to tell the truth, I don't like to saddle my conscience with his death; besides, you are safe enough any how—he knows nothing about you, and what should we gain by his death?"

"Gain!" morosely observed the first speaker—"why, we should gain our lives, and I call that something: dead men, you know, tell no tales. Besides, if we can manage to dip him in the Seine, which is not so far off, we might get a few francs more by taking him to the Morgue. That would be finishing the job properly; his friends will be sure to seek him there."

The villains had fortunately passed Fitz-Henry without observing him, and he saw them stop a few paces further on, and again they appeared to dispute the subject, though he could not distinguish their words. A shudder crept over him as he thought of his proximity to the scene of meditated violence, and he watched them with breathless attention.

The result of the conference he conjectured to be fatal to their unfortunate victim, for they again passed him, and returned to the spot where he had first observed them. It would now have been easy for Fitz-Henry to have escaped unobserved by them, and for a moment a sense of his own danger suggested such a course; but the conviction of their horrible intentions flashed upon him, and his better feeling prompted him to attempt the rescue of the hapless being, whoever it might be, from a death so terrible. To seek for aid he knew would be vain, for the danger was immediate; a few moments, and it might be too late. Fitz-Henry thought of the feeble resistance he could offer, unarmed as he was, and again he wavered in his resolution; but again the feelings of humanity prevailed. His opponents would be two, but he knew such wretches are generally great cowards, and he

thought a firm resolution and his rather stout walking-stick might effect much. The fear of personal danger was in part overcome by the extreme excitement into which his position had thrown him—his resolution was taken.

Slowly and cautiously he followed the ruffians, gliding from tree to tree, still keeping himself concealed; soon he reached the spot where his utmost presence of mind and energy of action were to be tested. Firmly bound to a tree was the helpless object of their murderous intentions, his mouth covered with a handkerchief, which prevented any possibility of his making an alarm. His hat was laying on the ground, and his long black hair fell over his pallid brow; his eyes were fixed with a look of agony upon his assassins. Fitz-Henry gazed with a thrill of horror, for in the shrinking and hapless victim he beheld Eugène.

Fitz-Henry watched with painful intensity every movement—every look of the men; all idea of self was lost in the hope of saving the unfortunate Eugène, who was evidently expecting the dreadful fate which he was unable to avert. Large drops of perspiration stood upon his forehead, and his limbs shook as he leaned against the tree to which he was bound.

Immediately before the wretched youth the men again demurred. It was evident one still leaned to the side of mercy, but the other was not to be moved. Uttering an oath of impatience, he approached, and laid one hand on the shoulder of Eugène; in the other, which was upraised, he grasped the fatal knife, and was preparing to strike. Fitz-Henry saw the quivering frame of Eugène shrinking from the intended blow—hopelessly, helplessly—the dilated eye almost starting from its socket with the intensity of its gaze. It was a moment of agony, of fearful interest, of life and death; the brain of Fitz-Henry became confused; his eyes involuntarily closed to shut out the frightful scene, and for a moment he remained as helpless as the youth to save whose life he would most gladly risk his own; but it was only for a moment, the urgent claim upon his immediate action roused him to a sense of what was passing before him. With a cry of defiance

he rushed from his concealment, and in the next instant the murderous weapon of the assassin was flying in the air. A well-directed blow, given with the strength of desperation, had paralysed the upraised arm of the brutal ruffian, and it fell powerless by his side. His hold on Eugène was relinquished, and he turned fiercely upon Fitz-Henry; but a second blow, given quicker than thought, upon his forehead made him stagger; for a moment he was insensible.

"Courage, courage, dear Eugene! there is more help at hand; in a few moments you will be in safety."

Loudly did Fitz-Henry call for assistance; but his struggle was not yet over. While closing upon the savage whom he had partially overpowered, the other ruffian had approached him unperceived, and was preparing to stab him, when a stifled groan from Eugène caused Fitz-Henry to turn suddenly round, for he thought fresh danger menaced the unfortunate youth from the companion of his own opponent. So sudden was the movement that he dashed himself against the weapon, which entered his arm, and the warm blood flowed to his wrist.

Still the courage of Fitz-Henry did not forsake him; he placed himself in front of Eugène, without attempting to liberate him, for he knew to be off his guard, even for a moment, would be giving an advantage to his assailants which might prove fatal both to Eugène and himself. Fortunately it was his left arm which had been wounded, and as one of the ruffians again approached he dealt him a blow which sent him back with a face covered with blood; but the other came to his assistance, and again the stick of Fitz-Henry was called into requisition. Its length gave an advantage in keeping off the nearer approach of the men, and thus rendered their short weapons comparatively useless. But Fitz-Henry began to feel faint from the loss of blood and the violent exertion of the contest; the men became more desperate, for revenge was added to their thirst of plunder, and for the first time Fitz-Henry began to lose all hope of success. His own escape might still be possible, but he could not

leave Eugène thus to certain death. Loudly did he call for aid, but the men reckoned much on the lateness of the hour and the loneliness of the spot, and probably their almost certain chance of escape amongst the trees should any one approach. Every moment appeared an age of agony to Fitz-Henry as he gazed in each direction, and listened with breathless impatience whenever a moment's pause allowed him to do so; but it appeared to be in vain.

Moment after moment passed by, and still the fearful and unequal contest went on. Now the great bravery of Fitz-Henry gained him the advantage, and now the united attacks of the assassins, cowards as they evidently were, proved almost too much for the brave young Englishman, whose noble disregard of his own danger still urged him on to attempt the rescue of the helpless Engène. Again he listened, and a cry of joy escaped him, for the sound of voices was heard, the sound of approaching footsteps; and again Fitz-Henry called for assistance. The ruffians halted a moment, and then made one more desperate attack upon their antagonist; but the courage of Fitz-Henry was increased by the conviction of approaching aid, and again they were unsuccessful. Casting upon him a look of rage and disappointment, they escaped amongst the trees as three or four persons rushed to the spot. Eugène, with his brave defender, were saved.

For a few moments the excitement of Fitz-Henry was so great that he did not perceive who the party were that had so opportunely come to his assistance; but the anxious inquiries of Arnold recalled him to a sense of the scene around him.

"You are saved, Fitz-Henry! thank God, you are saved!" exclaimed the agitated Arnold, as he pressed the hand of his friend.

"Yes, Arnold; thank Heaven, and the timely aid of yourself, and your companions, I am safe, and also Eugène. A few moments more and it had been too late; yet I fought bravely, and had it not been for this wounded arm I think I should have succeeded even by myself, for the ruffians were cowards, and

shrunk from the application of my stout and firm stick. But where is Eugène?"

The inquiry was not repeated; Eugène had been released by Stanley, and in a few moments had thrown himself into the arms of his brave defender. Silent from the intensity of his emotion, a convulsive sob broke from his lips, and he became insensible.

It was with difficulty that Fitz-Henry could support the inanimate form of Eugène, for the loss of blood had rendered him exceedingly weak; but he was soon released of his burden by Stanley and Bernard, who supported Eugène, while Arnold assisted Fitz-Henry, whose coat was taken off, and a handkerchief bound tightly round his arm, which stayed the hæmorrage, though he became still more faint, and so weak, that he found himself quite unable to walk, even a few paces, and it was determined that two of them should go in search of some conveyance, while the other remained with Fitz-Henry and the still insensible Eugêne.

Anxious as they all were to receive some account relative to the extraordinary position in which they found Fitz-Henry, they kindly forbode to question him in his present weak and almost unconscious state. They waited anxiously and silently for the return of Sampson and his companion, and had soon the satisfaction of hearing the sound of approaching wheels. They had brought two *fiacres* which conveyed them to the Hôtel des Tuileries, where Eugène and Fitz-Henry received every attention from the good-hearted host and hostess. Madame bustled about to prepare their chamber; monsieur dispatched a *garçon* for a medical attendant, who promptly attended, and rendered his assistance to the two invalids.

Arnold remained with Fitz-Henry during the night. The wound in his arm was more extensive than was at first imagined, and required the greatest care and attention. Eugène had recovered from his state of insensibility, but was suffering from an utter prostration of the nervous system, which rendered him incapable of the least exertion, and would make any mental

excitement exceedingly dangerous. He was ordered to be kept as quiet as possible, and no one allowed to enter his chamber but those who attended upon him.

It was the fourth morning after the occurrence of his strange adventure that Fitz-Henry awoke rather later than usual. All was silent in his chamber, for even Arnold had not been to pay his accustomed early visit of inquiry. For some time he lay musing on all that had occured, till he was aroused by a slight sound near him, and, drawing aside the curtain, he beheld Eugène who was seated in *fauteuil* near the bed, and engaged in reading. The book was quickly thrown aside, and the ardent and grateful youth approached and pressed his lips upon the pallid brow of his deliverer. His features were pale, and the bright tear had started to his eye as in a faltering voice he poured forth the gratitude of his heart.

"Dear Fitz-Henry, I have much, very much to say; but your pallid looks tell me that I must not yet disturb you by a full avowal of my feelings. I owe to you my life—your noble, your generous conduct saved me from a death too horrible to think upon; and this sacrifice of self-preservation, this brave daring for my rescue, so immediately after my cold, my repulsive treatment towards you, doubles my gratitude and affection; for I am a strange, a wayward being, but one who is keenly sensible of all that I owe you. Hereafter I will explain the motives by which I have been actuated in my conduct towards you; at present, the more that I reflect upon the past, the more do my feelings overpower me."

"Do not overrate my heroism, dear Eugène," replied Fitz-Henry; "I did but what any other would have done under such circumstances, under the impressions of humanity. At a future period we will discuss the feelings which have influenced us both, for I also have much to explain, much to account for relative to my apparent participation in scenes of wild and heartless foolery; for the present let it suffice that we be friends—friends in the real acceptation of the term, for I feel that we can be so. But where

is Arnold; it has not been usual for him to delay his visit to so late an hour."

"Nor has he now," said Eugène. "We entered your chamber together, and finding you were still sleeping, I took my station by your bed-side, while Arnold descended to breakfast. He could appreciate the motive that made me wish to see you alone, to express my gratitude unrestrained; but tell me, dear Fitz-Henry, how is the wound you received in my defence? Oh! how earnestly have I wished for permission to see you! but till this morning my doctor would not consent to my doing so. Yes, I have indeed longed to see my brave defender, to be assured from himself that he is recovering from the effects of that dreadful encounter. Even now my blood turns cold when I recall the horrors of that moment."

"Do not think of it, Eugène; I am much better, and shall be able to leave my chamber in a day or two. But how are your uncle and cousin? I find they have made many inquiries respecting me, and understand the captain would have visited me had my doctor permitted it. What does he advise you in respect to this affair? One of the wretches, I think, was known to you?"

"Yes," replied Eugène, shuddering, "I recognised him as one of the men employed at the funeral of my dear father; but I took a solemn oath that, if I were spared, his name should remain a secret; and though many would think circumstances might justify me in breaking that oath, yet do I consider it most binding, for I made no stipulation as to the actual agent of my preservation. Besides, I had every reason to suppose he had himself no intention of murder; indeed, he pleaded for my life, and, but for his repugnance to assist in the fearful act, even you, my brave friend, would have come too late. It is more than probable that they have both left Paris ere this, and any pursuit would be useless. No one but you are aware that I could identify one of them. For my sake, Fitz-Henry, let that secret rest with you. The account which I have given of the affair to the police is sufficient to instigate an inquiry, which is now being made, but as yet

without success; and, I dare confess to you, that I am not sorry at this failure. Great as is the provocation, I could not bear that their deaths should be occasioned by my accusation against them. Oh! it would be a fearful thing for me to say I was the cause of that man's death; no matter how just the punishment—to me it would be dreadful. Every night I should see them in my dreams—my happiness would be gone for ever—I should think the reproachful eyes of those belonging to them were ever fixed upon me. I know these ideas are strange, but I cannot overcome the feeling— I cannot divest my mind of the anxiety which their apprehension would occasion me."

"You are not singular in this respect," remarked Fitz-Henry; "I have heard the same sentiments expressed by others, nor would my own feelings under such circumstances be very dissimilar; but I hear Arnold and Stanley. We will not continue the subject; such an avowal before Stanley would bring his ridicule upon us both, for his nature could not appreciate such forbearance."

For several succeeding days Fitz-Henry found himself progressing, though but slowly, towards recovery. The wound in his arm still occasionally caused him much pain; yet he was able to take his usual exercise, and, with Eugene, to call upon the captain and Miss St. John. With them he was considered quite a hero, and scarcely a person in his hôtel but had offered their congratulations upon his escape, and expressed their praise of his noble conduct.

Both Bernard and Sampson had treated the whole affair as an amusing adventure, without entering much into the danger and excitement experienced by those more immediately concerned; but Stanley had displayed more feeling than any gave him credit for possessing, though that feeling had gradually subsided into his usual state of indifference. Arnold had, from the first, been deeply affected at the hazardous position in which Fitz-Henry and Eugène had been placed, and redoubled his attentions to the former, seeking his society on every occasion, and apparently

regretted the tie which circumstances had formed between him and Stanley, which the latter, thoughtless and rambling as he was, showed no inclination to forfeit; on the contrary, he took every opportunity to draw Arnold into his amusements, and thus leaving Fitz-Henry to the undisturbed society of Eugène; for though Stanley occasionally invited Fitz-Henry to join them, yet, from one circumstance or another, Fitz-Henry generally found means to decline doing so without openly expressing his real motives for refusing.

Eugène and Fitz-Henry had become almost constant companions; the former had quite recovered from the rough treatment and excitement he had experienced, and Fitz-Henry found in him a most valuable associate. The more he studied the character of Eugène, and the better he became acquainted with his varied qualifications, the more he found to admire; the disinterestedness of his disposition, the enthusiasm of his mind, and the freshness of his feelings, threw a charm into his conversation and manners that was deeply interesting. His devotion to Fitz-Henry was unbounded; he considered that it was to him he owed his life, and his ardent and grateful nature never ceased to evince the deep obligation. The reserve which he evinced at first had gradually worn off, and he now revealed his thoughts, and expressed his attachments and dislikes, with a warmth and freedom that was as pleasing as original. He was a noble, a gifted being, uncorrupted by the examples of the world, and unshackled by its prejudices and its forms. The deep shade of melancholy which still stamped its impress upon his expressive features only tended to heighten his personal attractions and increased the admiration excited by his generous and cultivated mind.

There was still another conquest which the bravery of Fitz-Henry had achieved, but of which he was not yet aware. On the morning after his adventure there arrived at the Hôtel des Tuileries an English lady of fortune, who luxuriated in the cognomen of Miss Adelina Cecilia Montague. She was accompanied by a lady's maid of rather large dimensions, and a very small

page, whom she designated by the names of Amelia and Adolphus. The lady herself was a little masculine in her appearance, and certainly not very juvenile; but the heart which had withstood the frost of some forty winters was melted in sympathy towards her young countryman when she was told of his noble daring, and her feelings were still more subdued when, on ascending one morning to her chamber, she accidentally met Fitz-Henry on the stairs. His pale and handsome features, and the interesting appearance of his arm as it lay suspended in its sling, touched her sensitive and rather romantic disposition, and she became forthwith in love with the hero of the hôtel, and generously resolved to seek the first opportunity of making him acquainted with the high and enviable position in which the honour of her partiality would undoubtedly place him, for the recent death of her very old and somewhat particular father had left the fair Adelina Cecilia to the free control of her own unsophisticated will, a long wished-for result of which she was most anxious to avail herself.

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## CHAPTER V.

### Invitation—Introduction and Forgiveness—Eccentricity—The Café—Good and bad Principles exemplified.

ONE morning Fitz-Henry was quietly occupied in writing when the door of his apartment was suddenly opened, and without the usual ceremony of knocking, the page of Miss Montague made his appearance.

Master Adolphus, encased in his sky-blue livery, with bright buttons and pink facings, approached Fitz-Henry with a half-hesitating, half-skipping sort of step that made him appear as if ambitious of imitating the graceful antics of the monkey. One hand was raised to his forehead with a sort of military salutation,

and in the other he bore an elegantly-chased salver of burnished silver, on which was deposited a delicately-tinted scrap of paper, inscribed to Monsieur Paul Fitz-Henry, to whom it was presented in due form by this minute specimen of the human race.

Fitz-Henry could scarcely refrain from laughing outright as his eyes fell upon the obsequious page, whose curly head appeared to rival in circumference the knob of a good sized walking-stick, and whose chubby and rosy face bore the most comical expression into which it was possible to twist his infantine features. But Fitz-Henry was impatient to glance over the contents of the note which had been so strangely delivered, and withdrew his attention from the boy to fix it upon the following almost incomprehensible sentiments, written in a most elaborate style, and evidently the production of a female hand:—

"Mademoiselle Adelina Cecilia Montague, having been made acquainted with the heroic and magnanimous conduct of Monsieur Paul Fitz-Henry, wishes in person to express her high opinion of his bravery, being actuated by that generous feeling which such noble daring is calculated to inspire, and which all must experience who can justly appreciate the divine attributes of a great mind. Should the engagements of Monsieur Paul Fitz-Henry permit him to spare an hour this evening, Mademoiselle Adelina Cecilia Montague would feel proud of the honor of a visit from him in her apartments, No. 15, Hôtel des Tuileries."

Fitz-Henry, who was not conscious of having seen the fair Adelina, at once decided upon acceding to her wishes, for he pictured to himself a very young and a very romantic lady, and accordingly he began an answer in the affirmative, which he wished to correspond as much as possible with the flowery language of the fair one's invitation; but he was at a loss for words to express himself to his satisfaction, and had already made three or four vain attempts when he was interrupted by Master Adolphus, whose great propensity to keep moving had caused him to visit each accessible part of the chamber, and with a laudable curiosity to investigate every article it contained.

In the course of his migrations his young attention had been particularly attracted by a bust of Napoleon in plaster of Paris, which ornamented the mantel-piece, and of which he was endeavouring to take a nearer inspection, when it slipped from his tiny fingers and was broken in fragments on the floor.

Fitz-Henry thought it high time to dispatch this mischievous messenger ere further damage was sustained, and hastily sealing one of the discarded effusions of his brain, he delivered it to the boy, who appeared glad enough to escape from the scène of his destructive powers; and, with the salver under his arm and the note in his hand, he was soon heard jumping down two stairs at a time to the apartments of his mistress.

Adolphus had scarcely left the chamber as Eugène entered it, and was soon made acquainted with the new conquest of his friend, and of the intended visit in the evening; but unfortunately Eugène had seen Miss Montague, and had heard much of her eccentricities and romantic disposition, and the description he gave of her lessened greatly the anticipated pleasure of Fitz-Henry, though he could but join in the laugh at her expense.

The two friends were still laughing over Eugène's description of Miss Adelina, when Arnold entered the chamber accompanied by a youth whose figure and features Fitz-Henry immediately recognised as belonging to the *soi-disant* lady friend of Eugène, whose assumed character had caused so much amusement on their memorable interview.

"Will you allow me Fitz-Herny," said Arnold, "to introduce to you a young penitent, who is alike ambitious of receiving your pardon and obtaining your friendship. He is an untamed, yet not very ferocious biped, and has the vanity to ask that the invitation you gave to the fair unknown may be extended to him in his proper character, that of Monsieur Gustave Beaumont."

The features of the youth, who appeared scarcely fifteen years of age, were singularly beautiful, and his deep black eyes flashed with the animation of his buoyant spirit, while his slight and graceful figure displayed the greatest symmetry. His manners,

though tinctured with the freedom of boyhood, were yet modest and refined, and a deep blush overspread his features as he was introduced to Fitz-Henry.

"Can Monsieur Fitz-Henry forgive me for the plot which I was so foolish as to enter into against his friend? I will not screen myself by criminating others, but at once acknowledge my error, though I assure you I acted only from thoughtlessness. I had not—indeed, I could not—have any ill-feeling towards Monsieur Eugène, for he was entirely unknown to me, and," continued Gustave, smiling, "the practising of that deception before you, Fitz-Henry, was from your choosing to assume a character not your own; I may, therefore, hope for your forgiveness with confidence while I solicit that of Eugène."

During the introduction and speech of Gustave, Eugène had looked on in surprise; but Arnold now hastened to explain the affair to him, and related the plot which had been got up against him by Stanley and his companions, and the part which Fitz-Henry had acted on that occasion, and which Gustave had discovered on the night of the fearful adventure in the Champs Elysées, he being with Stanley and his friends at the time they came so opportunely to the rescue. Fitz-Henry, in his agitation, had not then observed Gustave, but his conduct on that occasion had entirely won the affections of the high-minded boy, who had from that moment so ardently wished for an introduction, and which Arnold had promised to procure him.

Fitz-Henry was indeed pleased with the noble candour of the boy, and most readily promised him both his friendship and forgiveness. "Indeed," he continued, "I am bound to do so, for I was also a party in this plot; nor must Eugène withhold his pardon from us, if only to sanction my unreasonable demands in thus asking fresh proofs of his gratitude for the good I have been able to do him. For my sake then, Eugène, you must extend your forgiveness to those who undoubtedly are less deserving than my friend Gustave."

"I must first plead guilty to having given some cause for the

ill opinion of you all," observed Eugène, rather seriously. "I had mistaken the character of at least some of you, and for their sakes am willing to forgive the rest; besides, I cannot feel angry at having new bonds added to the affection I already bear to Fitz-Henry. I can but recall with confusion my unkindness towards him, when he was so entitled to my warmest gratitude; the knowledge of this hoax only adds to the debt I owe him, and his wish would alone be sufficient to obtain my forgiveness for Stanley and his associates."

"I thank you both for my share of your forgiveness," said Gustave, "and promise for the future to be more cautious in my conduct. Never will I assume the *rôle* of demoiselle again, unless, indeed, Fitz-Henry wishes me to do so for his own especial amusement."

There was something so good-natured and mercurial in the disposition and manners of Gustave as at once to disarm the mind from every feeling of resentment which his wild pranks might bring against him. His spirit, buoyant to an extreme, broke forth in loquacious merriment and boyish frolic; yet there were moments when the rambling boy would converse seriously and intellectually, and never in his wildest flights of mirth did he betray the least ill-nature or unjust sarcasm. He spoke the English language with fluency, and appeared much pleased with his introduction to Fitz-Henry and Eugène, to whom he candidly acknowledged how little pleasure he found in the scenes of riot and excitement into which circumstances and his love of society had thrown him. Left entirely to his own resourses for amusement, he had unfortunately fallen amongst those whose manners were calculated to captivate so young a mind, and whose influence might prove dangerous, from his yielding and thoughtless disposition. He was now at that age when the character of his future life might be decided for good or bad, according to the example set him by those with whom he more immediately associated.

Fitz-Henry, after the departure of Gustave, accompanied Eugène to the Faubourg St. Honoré, where indeed he had become a fre-

quent guest, being attracted either by the hospitality of the captain or the fascination of Edith, though it must be confessed the latter was most apparently the cause, for her lively sallies of mirth and brilliant accomplishments had already made great havoc in the heart of Fitz-Henry; and so free and ardent were her words and actions towards him that he began to flatter himself the fair Edith was not wholly insensible to the feelings which he experienced for her, and which he was confident he betrayed in every word and action; and though he had occasionally cause to wish she was less free with other visitors of her father's, yet when he saw her bright smiles and heard her soft voice directed exclusively to himself, he forgot her evident proneness to flirtation, and felt there was something more than a common sympathy between them, and on this occasion he returned to his hôtel thinking much more of the pleasure he had just enjoyed in the conversation with Edith St. John, than of that he anticipated from his visit to Miss Montague.

After passing a few minutes at his toilet, Fitz-Henry descended to the apartments occupied by Miss Montague, being admitted by the page, who, with an air of extreme importance, conducted him to the opposite side of the ante-room, and having knocked for admission, resigned him to the care of the lady's-maid, who was looking as blooming as possible under a profusion of lace and pink ribbons, and whose tall figure was gaudily decorated with the cast-off finery of her mistress, to whom Fitz-Henry was now introduced.

The fair and pensive Adelina Cecilia was reclining languishingly upon a rich damask-covered couch, and rose ceremoniously to receive Fitz-Henry, who advanced towards her, and bowed to the large mass of satins and jewelry which covered the ample figure that stood before him. The strongly-marked features of Miss Montague, and her evident advance in the pilgrimage of life, contrasted strangely with the languid air and romantic girlishness which she endeavoured to assume.

"This is a pleasure, Mr. Fitz-Henry, which I have greatly

anticipated, and you will, I know, excuse the means by which I have obtained it: my position in society raises me above the restraints which it is necessary for the *canaille* to observe as much as my appreciation of a generous nature exalts my feelings above those of a common mind. Allow me to express my congratulations for your safety, and my praise for your noble contempt of danger; for I have heard the entire history of your daring adventure, and the subsequent *amitié* of Monsieur Eugène and yourself, and I feel proud to recognise in a compatriot those excellent qualities which tend so greatly to exalt our nature and to render us conspicuous amidst our compeers."

"The results of my adventure," observed Fitz-Henry, "have so abundantly repaid me, that I may consider it the most fortunate event of my life, even had it brought no other recompense than the honour of this introduction. Your generous sympathy evinces a disposition more in accordance with the ideal character of the poet's creation than with the selfish, unthinking crowd by whom we are surrounded. There are but few who would thus seek a stranger, actuated by so generous an impulse as that which warms the heart of Miss Montague."

"And but few whose actions, like those of Monsieur Fitz-Henry's, are calculated to inspire such feelings of respect and interest," remarked Miss Montague, as she gazed with apparent admiration on the handsome features of her visitor, who had wonderfully ingratiated himself into her good opinion by adopting the same romantic strain of conversation, and by the judicious application of a little flattery, to which Miss Adelina was remarkably accessible.

During the evening refreshments were brought in by the active Adolphus, who appeared ambitious of doing just honours to the hospitality of his mistress; and there were sundry little attacks of altercation between him and Amelia, who, not wishing to remain wholly in the background, and, as she feared, unobserved by Fitz-Henry, had made several attempts to gain attention by entering the room under some pretence or other, and

occasionally without any just pretence at all—having mistaken some other, and very remote sound, for a summons from her mistress; while the boy had more than once obtruded his curly head within the apartment, either to satisfy his infantine curiosity as to what was going on, or to see if his assistance was in any way required by his lady to promote the enjoyment of her guest.

So well did the pleasing manners of Fitz-Henry succeed that Miss Montague thought him the most agreeable of young men, and expressed the hope that he would repeat his visit, to which he readily consented, for her eccentricities greatly amused him; while Amelia expressed to herself the conviction that he was a most charming gentleman, and even the young Adolphus could but acknowledge that he was a real Englishman as he closed the door upon Fitz-Henry, who had slipped a franc into the little hand that was by accident held out as they parted.

After leaving the apartments of Miss Montague Fitz-Henry, accompanied by Eugène and Gustave, proceeded to the Champs Elysées. The weather was exceedingly fine, and there were a great many on the promenades, which increased the pleasure of their ramble. The animation of Gustave, and his caustic remarks upon the various strange characters whom they passed, raised the spirits of his two companions to a height almost equal to his own, so contagious and inspiring is the spirit of cheerfulness.

Being soon after joined by Arnold, they entered the *café*, in which a military band was still playing. They had scarcely seated themselves ere they observed Stanley, with his almost inseparable companions Bernard and Sampson, on the opposite side of the *salon*; with them was a young and beautiful girl, who Arnold informed Fitz-Henry was the *grisette* of whom he had spoken a few days previously. The gaily-dressed Julie appeared to be speaking with vivacity to Stanley, who, as well as his two companions, were evidently greatly excited by what they had been drinking, and were loud and boisterous in their manners and conversation.

Fitz-Henry and his friends felt no inclination to make their

presence known to the opposite party, and it was some little time before they were observed by Stanley, who, upon seeing them, immediately crossed the *salon*, and, after expressing his surprise at the unexpected meeting, asked Fitz-Henry to join his party to the Café des Champs, at which the ball of the evening was to be unusually splendid.

Fitz-Henry politely but firmly declined joining them.

"Really, Fitz-Henry," said Stanley, sarcastically, "you are quite a saint. What harm can there be in seeing a little of Parisian life? for it appears you consider it blamable, or you would not thus so repeatedly refuse to join us. I would not give a curse to be moping about as you are, day after day, without entering into the joys of love and wine—both of which you affect to shun. I am almost out of patience with such mock sanctity; for I must still believe that you can appreciate them both as well as the generality of other young men, and cannot give you credit for much candour in thus attempting to disguise it."

"Nay, excuse me, Stanley," replied Fitz-Henry, "if, in this instance, I refute the charge of deception. I do not affect those opinions which you appear to ridicule; in reality I feel them, and will never, from a fear of irony, conceal my distaste for the scenes and excesses which appear to amuse you. There is much, very much in Paris to amuse any reasonable person without resorting to such baneful excitements. I do not evince any dislike to pleasure; on the contrary I seek it ever: we only differ in our idea as to what constitutes pleasure, and in our means of obtaining it. No one enjoys more than I do the charm of female society, for the companionship of woman tends to refine our nature, and to harmonize our thoughts; nor am I, nor would I wish to be, invulnerable to the power of love. But surely you cannot assimilate that pure and elevating principle with the feeling you entertain for those you meet with at the Café des Champs—with that feeling to which I doubt not you allude? In the society of such I acknowledge I could find no pleasure: their degraded state might excite my pity, but their selfishness and vulgarity

would ensure my disgust. Neither do I derive any enjoyment in drowning my senses by the free use of wine, and thus unfitting myself for the society of those whose good opinion I value. Is it commendable to render useless the intellect, which alone raises us in the scale of creation, and marks the superiority of man above the animals which surround him?"

"All humbug," retorted Stanley; "do not suppose you are better thought of for entertaining such antiquated ideas, such Puritanical principles. I would not care for a friend who is always preaching lessons of morality. Give me a companion who can join me freely in my pleasures—my excesses, as you term them; who can drink a glass or two without staggering—enjoy a lark, and follow a pretty girl, nor scruple to reveal his feelings towards her."

"And give me the friend," said Fitz-Henry, "who can be cheerful without levity; who can enjoy the pleasures of life without entering into their excesses; who can be my companion in sorrow and sickness, as well as in joy and prosperity—one who would blush to boast of his connexion with the dissipated and unprincipled; who would be ashamed to speak of his triumph over her whom nature has made in her weakness to be our care and our pride. Yes, I should hold that man in utter detestation who could ruin the fair fame and trifle with the affections of the being whom it was intended he should protect!"

During the concluding sentences Fitz-Henry's eye glanced from Stanley to the unthinking Julie, who had remained on the opposite side of the *salon* with Bernard and Sampson. Stanley saw the allusion, and a flush of anger overspread his features as he replied:—

"I see your aim, Fitz-Henry, but I hold myself accountable to no one for my actions. You have shown me that my company is not agreeable to you, and I scorn to intrude myself where it is not so. Come, Arnold, you at least are not so scrupulous, and will not hesitate to join us. Let us leave those who consider our society so dangerous and objectionable; it may be possible to do

without their companionship, as I know it is to dispense with their preaching."

Arnold did not move or reply, and Stanley fixed upon him a look of surprise and anger as he spoke:—

"Are you, too, changed in your opinions—in your estimate of our pleasures, in which you have so freely entered? or are you shamed and schooled into submission to the proud will of one who, it appears, has usurped an authority over your inclinations, and would deprive you of your own free will? Is it because he disapproves of our amusements that you hesitate to join us? or do you fear any unreasonable demand upon your pocket?"

The bitter taunts of Stanley had wounded the self-pride of Arnold, and his eyes flashed as he replied:—

"My free will is under the control of no one, nor are my resources so low as to prevent my entering into any pleasure which it may suit my inclination to enjoy. I promised to join you this evening, and I never intended but to fulfil that promise, however much it may now be at variance with my wishes to do so. Your sarcastic remarks are not calculated to inspire any wish for your society. I do indeed approve of the determination and sentiments of Fitz-Henry, though I am acting thus against them; I more than ever value his friendship when it is contrasted with your scorn and indifference; yet my word has been given, and to-night, at least, it is unavoidable that I forsake his society for that into which I have promised to accompany you."

Bernard, who had just crossed the *salon*, appeared highly delighted at what he supposed to be the great influence of Stanley over the mind of Arnold, and enjoyed the idea of separating him from Fitz-Henry, and also in detaching Gustave from his new friend; for he felt sure that the boy would accompany Stanley and himself, and he called upon him to join them, but Gustave refused to do so.

"I have not promised to go with you," he observed, "and shall therefore remain here; nor shall the taunts and sarcasm of you all make me alter that intention."

"Oh, do not flatter yourself that we shall attempt to persuade you," said Stanley, evidently mortified at the refusal of Gustave. "A beardless boy in a round jacket would be an appendage to our party more cumbersome than agreeable. We would rather dispense with your society than have to render to your mother, or your nurse, an account of your conduct. You are much better under the guardianship of such specimens of holiness as those with whom we leave you."

Stanley, with his companions, almost immediately left the *café*, accompanied by the evidently reluctant Arnold, whose wounded pride had made him act in opposition to his better judgment and his wishes. Their departure was soon after followed by that of Fitz-Henry and his two friends, who again rambled in the Champs Elyseés.

Gustave related his first meeting with Stanley, which was at the Café des Champs. The free and easy manners of the young Englishman and his companions had attracted the attention of the boy, who took every opportunity to introduce himself into their society. At first his extreme youth caused them to receive him rather coolly; but finding he could enter into all their pleasures, and that he had plenty of money at his command, they yielded to his advances, and soon found the knowledge of his native language very useful to them, and he became their frequent companion. Yet, young as he was, Gustave possessed great firmness of mind, and a stern resolution, which caused him never to attempt any disguise of his feelings, or to act contrary to his inclinations, however strange and unaccountable they might be. Of his family he spoke but little. He had passed almost all his life with his mother in Geneva, and had arrived only a few weeks previous with her in Paris, where the affairs of his late father had called her. Confined to her hôtel by indisposition, Madame Beaumont had allowed her only son to seek his own amusements, having no connexion in Paris to whom she could intrust him, and depending upon the precepts of virtue which she had so strongly inculcated into his young mind, and the strong

principles of honour which she knew he possessed, and which she imagined would prevent his entering into any society which was calculated to injure his integrity. She thought not of the instability and irresolution of so young a mind.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### Sympathy—Indications of Love—Secret Adoration—Enthusiasm—Confidence.

On the following evening Fitz-Henry and Eugène attended a *soirée* given by Captain St. John. There was a large party, both French and English, that had assembled previous to the arrival of the friends, who were received by the Captain with his usual kindness; and Fitz-Henry fancied he could detect something more than her habitual courtesy in the manner of Edith as she held out her hand to welcome him, and in the soft tones of her voice as she observed—

"Ah! Fitz-Henry, you are here at last. Why will you retain your English custom of coming so late? Really I am half inclined to retract my promise to dance with you, and you may now attribute my doing so entirely to my compassion for your wounded state; knowing how difficult it would be for you to obtain a partner unless I set the example."

"Miss St. John would make me consider my injured arm a blessing," replied Fitz-Henry, smiling; "and I expect at your next *soirée* there will be a plurality of one-armed heroes, each desirous of obtaining the same enviable distinction which your kindness has awarded to me."

"Come, come, Fitz-Henry," observed Edith, "a truce to compliment, or I shall vote you a slave to conventional forms and flattery, which I am sure you are not in reality, or I should not thus honour you with my patronage. But *nous allons*—the set is

forming, and I commit myself to the guidance of your unslung arm."

Music, dancing, and song, enlivened by that animated conversation which characterises a Parisian *soirée*, filled up the amusements of the evening. Fitz-Henry had been singing with Edith, and resigned the instrument to Eugène, while he conducted his fair partner to a sofa, and seated himself between her and Marie. All appeared deeply attentive to the full and plaintive tones of the young Frenchman, whose whole soul was absorbed in the beautiful and melancholy air which he was singing.

"What a sad, yet sweet voice, is that of Eugène's!" observed Fitz-Henry to Edith, "and how much is it in unison with the general seriousness of his disposition! Surely your cousin must have some great cause for a dejection so unusual in one of his age. How often am I tempted, from the interest I feel for him, to inquire why it is that the gifts of nature which have been so lavishly bestowed upon him, and the smiles of fortune and sympathy, cannot awaken within him that cheerfulness which his amiable and affectionate disposition ought to command!"

"Poor Eugène!" replied Edith, sighing—"he is, indeed, a melancholy youth! yet how gifted—how calculated to enjoy the numerous blessings of life which he might command! The death of his father, with whom his whole life has been passed, caused him much sorrow; yet there are other circumstances connected with his history which, I fear, make a still deeper impression of sadness upon him. His disposition is tinged with too much enthusiasm, and the rigid principles instilled into his young mind by a confined and sombre education unfit him for the stern realities of life."

"But he is young," remarked Fitz-Henry, "and a more general intercourse with society may in part divert his mind from the evils attending such a system of education. In this respect our early days have been similar, and I also mourn the loss of a father, the only tie I then had on earth. This will make me still more sympathise with Eugène, and urge me to do all in my power

to dissipate his melancholy: perhaps, young as he is, an affair of the heart may have some share in causing his dejection."

"I never heard of Eugène's forming any attachment," said Edith; "nor have I ever heard him refer in any way to the subject of love. In friendship he is most enthusiastic, though, until circumstances brought him under such a great debt of gratitude to you, he associated in particular with no one, which I was not surprised at, although he was so frequently regretting his lonely position. His ideas as to the requisites of a companion are so much at variance with the general character of young men of the world that he could not be easily suited in that respect; his friendship for you is, I know, most sincere, independent of his gratitude, and he is every way worthy of possessing yours in return."

"And he has it," replied Fitz-Henry, with animation. "There is no one whom I esteem and value more as a friend than Eugène; indeed, had not his worth obtained him that place in my affection, your wish would have been sufficient to attach me to him; for in deserving and obtaining his friendship I may hope to claim a portion of yours. You are silent, Edith. Am I asking too much upon so short an acquaintance? Do you require a still further knowledge of my character ere you can award to me your friendship?"

A slight blush overspread the fair brow of Edith as she answered—"Our acquaintance has been of sufficient duration, Fitz-Henry, for you to claim my friendship, and we owe you too much for me to refuse it. It is not always that time is required to reveal the innate qualities of those around us—qualities which mark their eligibility to our esteem; and there are circumstances which may render the acquaintance even of a day more entitled to our friendship and esteem than we could justly bestow upon those whom we may have known for years."

"Thanks, Edith, for that candid avowal of the high opinion

a more ardent return to the feelings I entertain for you; but to do so just now would be to imply a discontent for that which you have already granted me; and I feel I ought not to demand more till you are made fully acquainted with my position in society, and my claims, to justify the presumption which the full avowal of my sentiments would evince: nor is this the place or the hour for such a declaration of my hopes and of my wishes."

For a few moments Edith appeared confused and surprised at the language of Fitz-Henry, whose eyes were so intently fixed upon her, as if reading a reply in her expressive features rather than expecting any verbal declaration of her sentiments. His penetrating glance could detect no indication of feelings inimical to his hopes, and his heart beat quick when he saw the bright smile that played upon her lips, and the affectionate expression that beamed in the eyes that were uplifted to his own, as she replied—

"You are right, Fitz-Henry; this not the place, nor the hour, to express thoughts and feelings which, however reciprocal they may be, require deliberation and privacy in revealing them. It is not when general attention and courtesy is demanded of us that we should indulge in a conversation so exclusively belonging to ourselves; and see," continued Edith, turning to Marie, who was seated sad and silent beside her—"here is one already entitled to condemn us for our rudeness and inattention. Why, my dear Marie, did you not remind us of our breach of politeness—our want of feeling, in allowing you to remain so long unnoticed, and that, too, when your unusual seriousness ought to have engaged our sympathy? But here comes Eugène. I must leave it to him to bring back those smiles which our rudeness has chased from your lips."

Marie was indeed sad and silent during the conversation of Edith and Fitz-Henry; yet, to a part of it, at least, she had not been inattentive. Had any one observed the colour that varied on her fair brow, or heard the half-suppressed sigh which escaped from her lips, when Edith refuted the supposition of Fitz-Henry that his friend was susceptible of love, they would have thought

the young girl had more interest in the feelings entertained by Eugène than her apparent indifference indicated; nor would that idea have been less had they marked the deep flush that succeeded the pallid hue of her half-averted face as Eugène approached, and entered into conversation with her, unconscious of the deep emotion he excited in her young heart, and ignorant of the impression which his affectionate and amiable deportment was making upon her affections.

Marie dwelt upon every word, and watched his every look; yet so skilfully were her own feelings concealed from observation, so thoroughly did her lively and apparently thoughtless manner mislead even the most intimate friends from the knowledge of what was passing within her heart, that her love for Eugène was not even suspected.

An orphan, and the ward of Captain St. John, Marie Darcier was the constant companion of Edith, who considered her as an adopted sister; as one who shared with her the intimacy and friendship of those connected with the family. Eugène himself considered her as a near relation, and, from his frequent visits, had become as much attached to her as to Edith, and was equally unreserved before her. Uninitiated in the mysteries of love himself, he understood not its indications in others, and had given way to the fresh and unrestrained feelings of his heart. He thought not of its dangerous influence over the mind of his young and sensitive companion; had he been aware of this he would have shrunk from inspiring those sentiments which he felt he could not return, for Eugène detested the conduct of those who, from a mere love of conquest, can disturb the happy tranquility of an innocent and yielding mind, by instilling the anxious solicitude of more ardent feelings; who, in the unfeeling and dangerous practice of flirtation, can sport with the affections and the hopes of the young and confiding being who has so trusted to the protestation of sincerity—the avowal of affection, that existeth not in the heart. Alas! that we should thus make a sport, a pastime, of the noblest attribute of our nature; that we should

draw from the sacred font of affection for the amusement of our vanity—the gratification of our pride, heedless of the lasting injury we may inflict upon the heart that beats with a sincerity to which our own is a stranger!

Fitz-Henry and Eugène returned to their hôtel, each satisfied with the enjoyment of the evening. The former, indeed, was much delighted, for he felt assured that he was not indifferent to Edith, and her amiable manner towards him had made a still deeper impression upon his mind. Yet his own happiness prevented not his sympathising with Eugène, whose seriousness had become still more perceptible after the excitement of the evening, and when they were seated together on the following morning Fitz-Henry could not forbear expressing his great regret at the melancholy of his young friend.

"You did not appear to enter fully into the enjoyment of last evening, dear Eugène; and yet you possess every requisite to participate in social intercourse—youth, fortune, health, and accomplishments: all of which are calculated to add to the pleasure of those around you. Why is it that your own heart participates not in the happiness you diffuse to others?"

"Alas!" replied Eugène, "all the appliances to happiness you mention avail not when the heart is sad. To see the happiness of those dear to me may increase my own, and for a time make me forget the past; yet busy memory will occasionally intrude even in such scenes of social pleasure as we enjoyed last evening, and the cloudless fate of others makes me feel doubly the dark shadows of my own."

"Eugène," said Fitz-Henry, taking the hand of his friend, "this sadness distresses me. Would that I had the authority of a long-tried friendship to inquire into the cause of your dejection! Even in our deepest sorrow there is some alleviation in the sympathy of a sincere friend; and such an one I feel that I am to you, though my sincerity is yet unwarranted by the test of time."

"Yet how strongly attested by proofs too conclusive to be doubted!" replied Eugène. "Yes, Fitz-Henry, I feel that I possess

your friendship, and that assurance breaks like a star on the dark clouds that envelope my life. From my earliest recollection friendship was my idol. In the calm and retired scenes of my native village I have pictured to myself the happiness of such companionship, and sighed that it was denied me. But my requisites to gain the friendship of my young compeers are few; a life passed in deep retirement, with the companionship of one whose stern maxims tinged my mind with a melancholy distrustfulness of life, checked the natural impulses of youth, and made me a gloomy misanthrope, even in my boyhood. In the gay metropolis of France, amongst the pleasure-seeking and light-hearted Parisians, how could I expect to find one who would solicit the friendship of the melancholy Eugène? and my own reserve and prejudices were insurmountable barriers to my seeking theirs. No wonder, then, that I found not the friend I sought—the acquisition to my happiness that I so much desired. Since my arrival in Paris the connexion of my uncle has brought me greatly amongst the English; their characteristics I found assimilated more with my own than did those of my compatriots. I found them more calculated to enter into my feelings—to participate in the melancholy of my disposition; and I feared not that they would shrink from the companionship of one who had not the gaiety of heart and freedom of expression which is so attractive to the French. It was under this impression that I took apartments here, knowing the Hôtel des Tuileries to be so frequented by the English, whose society it was now my wish to cultivate."

"And some sorry specimens of our countrymen you have met with," observed Fitz-Henry. "What must you have thought of us, Eugène, when subjected to the heartless buffoonery of Stanley and his companions? how have I blushed with shame to be associated by you in their mad adventures!—and yet circumstances justified such a conclusion."

"I confess in my associations I could not entirely separate you from them," replied Eugène; "and yet, had I reflected more,

there was nothing in your manners or appearance beyond the circumstance of your being with them which could justify such a supposition. Your conduct at the cemetery of Père la Chaise ought to have convinced me that you did not enter into their feelings; and since that time how completely have I been convinced of your utter detestation of such characters—of your noble nature, that has so generously forgiven my ungracious conduct towards you, and resented not my undisguised aversion to become your companion, even at the instigation of my uncle, and of Edith!"

"I had but little to forgive, Eugène, for I knew that you were justified in thinking me unworthy of your esteem; and your aversion to such a character as you had reason for supposing me to be only pointed out still more the similarity of our dispositions, and increased my wish to obtain your friendship. I do not fear that you will now consider me the friend or willing companion of such as Stanley; circumstances which were so much against me in the first instance have now aided me in my wishes, for we have become friends in the real acceptation of the term. And now, Eugène, let me claim the privilege of that friendship by receiving your confidence—by sharing in your sorrows as I participate in your pleasures."

"It shall be so," observed Eugène, solemnly. "Yes, Fitz-Henry, you are indeed worthy of the trust; to you will I confide my sorrows, for you can comprehend the feelings which might be ridiculed by the indifferent—you can appreciate the sensibility of a nature that shrinks from the association of guilt—the high principle of honour that bends with shame to know that those connected in the nearest bonds of kindred are unworthy even of respect. You will not with the world condemn a sadness which, in spite of wealth, youth, and health, still preys upon my mind; for you will fully understand its cause; a mother's guilt—a mark at which the finger of scorn may point—the dearest pride of my heart—a noble unsullied name debased, degraded—my young and ardent affections slighted—hopes crushed—feelings stifled, even in their first appeal for sympathy—"

For a moment Eugène remained silent, overcome by the deep emotion which the memory of the past had awakened. A blush of wounded pride mounted on his brow, and his voice trembled as he again spoke, and related his history to the silent and sympathizing friend who heard him.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### Eugène's History—Alienation—Sensitiveness—Actual and Imaginary Evils of Life.

"Monsieur St. Foy, my father," commenced Eugène, "independently of other property, possessed an estate and chateau in the department of Lozère, formerly part of the province of Languedoc. The situation was picturesque and retired, the old, and in part dilapidated building, being surrounded by an extensive park and forest, amidst whose wild and romantic glens reigned the very spirit of solitude.

"It was to this secluded spot that my father retired, after having passed some years in the bustle and gaiety of the world, being tired of its frivolities and satiated with its pleasures. His health, too, had become indifferent, and his mind turned with disgust from the scenes and amusements which had so long delighted him, and he sought in retirement that peace and quietude which his numerous engagements and connections denied him in society; he became serious and religious, and shunned the little recreation which his locality afforded him. Of his relations there were none to intrude upon his solitude; his parents had both died within the two preceding years, and their loss had tended greatly to alter the current of his thoughts and depress his spirits; for he had never, amidst all his gaiety, been wanting in his affection towards them. His only sister had married Captain St. John, and, with

her husband, resided entirely in England; consequently, my father remained alone in the seclusion of his old chateau.

Such was the position of my father when he received a visit from an old associate and college friend, Major Debas, who had recently been obliged, from ill health, to retire from the army. His circumstances were embarassed from improvidence, and my father had generously offered him and his only child an asylum in his chateau, till his affairs were settled, or some arrangement made for the future. The mind of Elénore Debas was inexperienced and uncultivated; she had lost her mother while yet a child, and her father, from circumstances, had been inattentive and careless of her education. She was now scarcely seventeen, and her cheerful and amiable disposition soon made her as great a favourite with my father as with her own, for her animation enlivened them both, and her affection was shared between them.

"About twelve months after his arrival at the Chateau St. Foy Major Debas died, his health having gradually declined; but his last moments were cheered by the conviction that his daughter would be provided for by the generous friend under whose protection he left her. Nor was he deceived; a few months after her father's death Elénore became Madame St. Foy; for my father thought this unsophisticated child of nature was a suitable companion in his retirement, and to instruct whom would form a pleasing occupation for his leisure hours. His own well-stored mind, added to the assistance of some of the first masters that Paris could produce, soon initiated Madame St. Foy into all the usual accomplishments of her sex, and the beautiful, yet unlearned girl, became a skilled and fascinating woman. Such was my mother.

"About four years after my birth, Captain St. John and his family arrived in Paris, where they intended to reside at least for some time, and my father, having business there, readily acceded to the wishes of his sister to join them, and to introduce his wife, whom they had not yet seen, leaving me under the

charge of an old domestic. They started for the gay metropolis, with the intention of returning within a month or five weeks to the Chateau St. Foy, there again to enjoy the tranquil happiness which they had so long experienced: but Fate ordained it to be otherwise.

"Having arrived in Paris, my father found himself surrounded by several of his old associates, from whom he had long been parted; he also contracted new intimacies amongst the friends of Captain St. John, who had formed an agreeable, though rather limited society, at his hôtel. This caused my father once more to enter into general society, which, with his numerous engagements of business and pleasure, protracted his stay in Paris far beyond the period he had intended, and still no time was fixed upon for their return to the country.

"My mother, whose beauty had attracted much attention and flattery, was enchanted with so gay and pleasing a life. She no longer expressed her anxiety to return to the infant she had left, but exerted all her influence over my father to prolong their stay. To this he reluctantly consented from time to time, from a desire to gratify her wishes, and also those of his sister and Captain St. John; besides, he thought by allowing my mother to remain amidst the gay scenes of Paris she would soon become satiated with its pleasures, and consequently more likely to appreciate the quietude of the country, than was he to snatch her at once from her enjoyments. Alas! he knew not the motive which urged her now so ardently to wish for the prolongation of her stay.

"Amongst the number of my father's associates was a Captain Monrose, a man of fair exterior, prepossessing manners, but of bad principle. His bland and inflated language soon made a deep impression upon the heart of my mother; his gaiety appeared doubly captivating when contrasted with the general seriousness of my father. Circumstances brought them frequently together, and the wretch succeeded but too well in withdrawing the wife of his friend from the path of rectitude. My unhappy father was soon made aware of the guilty *liason*, and, unsuspecting

its extent, gave immediate orders to leave Paris. But it was too late; the infatuation of my unfortunate and guilty mother aided the wishes of her seducer—on the night before they were to have started for the country she fled with him from the protection of her husband.

"My father was wounded—crushed. But he sought not to seek the guilty fugitives; he remembered his infant son, and for his sake he would not hazard his own life to revenge one so unworthy his affections. He retired to the Chateau St. Foy, accompanied by his sister and her family, who remained with him till the poignancy of his grief had abated ere they returned to their residence in Paris."

"Some years passed on, still no intelligence of my mother had been received, till one day the public papers announced the sudden death of Captain Monrose, which event had taken place at Brussels. This caused great anxiety in the mind of my father; for, in spite of her great provocation, he had never entirely conquered his affection for my mother. His feelings and his pride struggled for a time; but the former succeeded, and he resolved to bring back his erring wife to the home she had abandoned—the child she had forsaken. He communicated his wishes to Captain St. John, who kindly undertook to be the mediator in this affair, and, intrusted with the propositions of my father, he immediately proceeded to Brussels.

"As might be expected, my mother passed under the name of Monrose, having been generally introduced as the wife of her seducer, even amongst his own acquaintances. My uncle found her overwhelmed with grief and perplexity; for the funeral of Captain Monrose had taken place only on the day previous, and she appeared wholly incapable of arranging her affairs, or deciding for the future. She had been left sole executress, and the entire property of the defunct had been left to her and her infant son—the innocent witness of her shame.

"My mother listened to the generous propositions of my father, and appeared willing to concede to them; but when she found my

uncle would not hear of her retaining the child of Captain Monrose, she at once rejected the offer of reconciliation, declaring that she would never enter a home from which that child was excluded. In vain my uncle pleaded for her first-born—in vain he pointed out the impossibility of my father to receive under his roof the son of the man who had so greatly wronged him. No entreaty, no solicitation could prevail; my mother remained inflexible. She thanked Captain St. John for his kind solicitude, and expressed her intention to remove for ever from the land of her birth, and the friends whose kindness she could no longer receive. My uncle generously remained at Brussels, and assisted in arranging her affairs; and it was with a sad disappointment that he had to return unsuccessful in his mission, after having seen my mother depart for Italy, where she had decided upon residing, under the name of Monrose.

"My poor father, his heart wounded by the decision of my mother, and his pride insulted by her rejection of his offer, never wholly recovered his health or spirits. His only amusement was in superintending my education, and instilling into my mind the gloomy feelings of his own; he would never allow me to associate with those of my own age, fearing they would, in the thoughtlessness of youth, wound my sensibility by the relation of my mother's conduct. I was his only hope, his only tie on earth, and he could scarcely bear me from his presence, nor would he move from the Chateau St. Foy, but loved more than ever the solitude by which he was surrounded, dreading even the brief innovations of my uncle and his family, who occasionally came to visit us; but from this slight interruption on his seclusion he was relieved. My aunt died rather suddenly, and Captain St. John, inconsolable for her loss, and wishing to quit the scenes that so greatly reminded him of her whom he mourned, left Paris with his son and daughter, and once more returned to reside in England.

"Such were the scenes of gloom and loneliness amidst which my youth was passed; no wonder that they stamped the impres-

sion of melancholy upon my mind, and made me the cheerless being that I am. Every indication of hilarity, every youthful gaiety of heart, was crushed by the stern realities of sorrow by which I was surrounded; the seclusion and monotony of my life wearied and distressed me—though I had never known the joys of sympathy and society from which I was excluded. My days glided on, and I remarked not the declining state of my father's health, till it became too evident that it was sinking beyond the possibility of restoration and of hope.

"It was now that my father roused himself from the lethargy to which he had given way for years. He was aware of his danger, and for my sake endeavoured to prolong his life by seeking every possible advice. We immediately removed to Paris, and, in anticipation of the worst, Captain St. John was solicited to join us; for so totally inexperienced as I was in the affairs of the world and usages of society, my father feared to leave me alone, without a friend or counsellor to guide me in my bereavement.

"Alas! our anticipations were too soon to be realized. My uncle had scarcely arrived in Paris ere my father died, leaving me under his protection. I felt my loss acutely, for stern and sad as was the character of my father, he had ever been most kind and indulgent to me; none other had shared in my affections or engaged my thoughts. Since his departure from France the visits of my uncle to the Chateau St. Foy had been but few, and in no instance had he been accompanied by his children, though he had generously offered to bring his son occasionally to cheer me in my solitude; he had always been prevented by my father, who dreaded least the high-spirited boy, who was a few years my senior, should make me discontented with the seclusion in which it was his wish to keep me.

"On the last occasion my uncle was accompanied to Paris by Edith, and his ward, Marie Darcier; for he kindly intended to remain some time in France to arrange my affairs, and plan with me for the future, and consequently had brought his family to

reside with him, my cousin Albert excepted, he having previously left them for Italy, where my uncle had sent him, to avoid the dangerous connexion which he had formed in England.

"It was only a few days previous to his death that my father made me acquainted with the history of my mother's guilt. He had ever taught me to shrink from every indication of crime—to abhor every attempt at deception, and to consider honour and an unsullied name as alone deserving of respect, and worthy of obtaining the approbation of man. These lessons, so ardently inculcated, acted upon my mind and prejudices; I shrunk with anguish from the conviction that I was the child of one so lost to virtue, so opposed to every principle which I had been taught to revere. I felt as if every tongue would brand me with her guilt —every hand would point me out as connected with her shame. How have I wept over that tale!—how have I wept that I could no longer bless the name of that mother whom I had hitherto associated only with the virtuous! for though I had been told never to mention her name in the presence of my father, yet it was intimated that this prohibition was to spare the feelings which had been wounded by her death, and in my hours of solitude I have loved to dwell upon the memory of that mother who I supposed was no more. What now are my associations, the thoughts that remind me of her? I scarcely dare to think of them—scarcely dare ask myself whether she lives or not; for could I urge the ties of nature which she has so recklessly broken?—could I solicit that affection—that care, which she withdrew from me, to place undivided upon the offspring of guilt and shame?"

"Yet equally with yourself, Eugène, entitled to her affection and her care," observed Fitz-Henry; "nay, it is possible more so, from the very circumstance of its unhappy position. A mother's love is doubled for the innocent being who may have to suffer for errors committed by herself. She knows the proneness of the world to stigmatise the innocent when they are by birth so nearly allied to the guilty, and yet the good and the wise will never apply to him the odium which their disapprobation of his mo-

ther's conduct might urge them to apply to her; indeed, they would rather evince the more their sympathy and regard for one who, however wrongly those connected with him may have acted, is himself worthy of their esteem. But have no tidings been received of your mother since the death of Captain Monrose, and her departure for Italy?"

"Not any," replied Eugène; "at the time my father revealed the sad tale to me he knew not where she was, or, indeed, if she was living, and since his death no intelligence has been received either by my nncle or myself. Our supposition is that she is still residing in Italy, as the widow of Captain Monrose."

"And should she be so," remarked Fitz-Henry, "it is probable she is unacquainted with the death of your father, or surely she would seek a reconciliation with you; and should she ever do so, Eugène, you must not withhold it—you must forget the past—you must endeavour to regain that affection which circumstances have taken from you. It is for you to soothe the mind that is wounded by self-reproach—to supply that attention and respect which the world withholds, justly perhaps, but with you such a conduct of retribution would be wrong: you must alone remember that she is your mother."

"And would you, Fitz-Henry, have me seek the deserter of her husband—of her child—the offender of every sacred tie—the disowned of virtuous society—the scorner of plighted faith? Would you have me live in amity with the child of my father's greatest enemy? to witness daily her love for him—her indifference for me—to be treated perhaps coldly, contemptuously by both? No, no, Fitz-Henry, I cannot do this."

"Nor under such circumstances would I wish you," replied Fitz-Henry; "but you are anticipating the worst, and, I must think, the most improbable feature of the case. I will not attempt to exonerate your mother—the bonds of wife and mother are too sacred to be broken with impunity; yet she might plead her inexperience to withstand the temptations with which your father so unfortunately surrounded her. She may have passed

years in sorrow and repentance—she may have wished, prayed for the restoration of those duties which she had so heedlessly relinquished, yet shrunk from urging her claims, from a conviction that the sincerity of her repentance might be doubted. It is under this supposition, Eugène, that you should seek your mother. We are taught to forgive the repentant—how much more is that duty enforced when it applies to a parent and her child!"

"And yet, Fitz-Henry," observed Eugène, "I cannot promise to act upon your advice, because I feel I could not fulfil it; the lessons of my father—his examples—his sorrows—are all too fresh in my memory. I could not live with my mother even were she to solicit it, for I feel the ties which she has broken must sever us for ever; under no circumstance can I ever feel for her the affection of a son—I cannot love where I cannot esteem."

"Forgive me, Eugène," said Fitz-Henry, "for thus trespassing upon your feelings; I will no longer urge a duty which you may never be called upon to exercise. Enough for me to share your sorrows, and to endeavour to alleviate them—to point out to you the many blessings you possess, and to relieve your mind from dwelling too much upon the darker portion of your fate. We should not give way to a morbid view of life, or expect to be entirely exempt from trouble; believe me, there is generally more good than evil in the fate allotted us, though we are too apt to undervalue the one and overrate the other. Ought we not rather to evince our gratitude for the good we possess, by supporting our sorrows with resignation, than to express our discontent by magnifying the evils which it is our duty to bear with fortitude?"

"I acknowledge the justness of your observations," replied Eugène, "and feel how culpable I am in cherishing those feelings of despondency which have so blighted my happiness through life; but you must attribute it to the sombre nature of my education, and not to a naturally discontented disposition."

"And to such cause do I attribute it," said Fitz-Henry, "for I know you have had no opportunities of proving the evil

tendency and erroneous principles instilled by such an education. My own, like yours, was calculated to mislead my judgment, but fortunately, from much reading, I learned to discriminate between the actual and apparent evils attendant upon our pilgrimage through life, and soon found how many of our troubles are imaginary, and how greatly those which do assail us are exaggerated by a tendency to indulge their influence upon our mind. Did we but dwell equally upon the many blessings we possess, how much happier would the world appear! but we are imperfect—all of us, and it is only time and experience that can operate to improve us."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

**Errors of Youth—Its Candour—Commiseration—Avowal of Attachment—Flirtation inimical to Love.**

THE unreserved confidence which now subsisted between Eugène and Fitz-Henry caused them to derive more pleasure than ever from the society of each other, and not a day passed without a mutual exchange of sentiment and feeling. Both Arnold and Gustave were frequently their companions, though each of them occasionally passed their evenings with Stanley and his two associates, much to the regret of Fitz-Henry in respect to Gustave, for he felt great interest in the welfare of the volatile boy, and was fearful of the result which such examples might have upon him.

Fitz-Henry had incurred the dislike of both Bernard and Sampson from his opposition to their views, and his repeated refusal to join in their amusements; and they appeared to take a delight in withdrawing Gustave as much as possible from his society, merely to annoy him. They would appeal to the pride of the boy, and ridicule him upon his submission to the will of

Fitz-Henry, whom they represented as proud and overbearing in his manners, and most absurdly Puritanical in his ideas; and so far successful were they upon the excitable disposition of Gustave, that, to show them the independence of his will, he frequently joined in their dissipation without feeling any real pleasure in their society.

One morning Fitz-Henry had scarcely risen when Gustave entered his chamber. The appearance of the boy was pale and haggard, and it was evident he had been in tears. A change so great from his wild and cheerful manners astonished and alarmed Fitz-Henry, who anxiously inquired the cause of his early visit, and the reason of his great excitement and dejection.

"Oh! I fear you will so greatly blame me," said Gustave, scarcely able to command his feelings; "you will perhaps withdraw from me your friendship—your esteem; for I am indeed unworthy to possess them. Yet do not judge me too harshly, Fitz-Henry—do not reject my appeal to your affection—your generosity, for I know no other to whom I can apply—no other to whom I will confess my error; for who is there but you that will listen with sympathy to my confession? Last night—" and the boy held down his head as he spoke—"last night, Fitz-Henry, I passed in the society of those whom you have so often cautioned me to avoid,—wretches who took advantage of my inexperience, and lured me to join them at the fatal tables. Yes, half stupified by the wine they forced upon me, I sat there, a wretched and anxious gambler like themselves."

"And became the victim of their machinations," interrupted Fitz-Henry. "So young, Gustave—so very young—to be associated with such characters—alas! I fear—"

"Oh! do not condemn me," exclaimed Gustave, hastily; "do not condemn me unheard, Fitz-Henry; when I tell you all, you will pity me, indeed you will. You know not how long I have resisted the temptation—the plot that was laid to ensnare me; you know not how deep, how sincere is my repentance. Let my youth plead for me: I had no friend near to guide me,—all around

me applauded, urged me on. I became excited—maddened; my reason wandered, and I knew not what I did. I forgot all—the repeated caution that you had given me—the admonition—the prayers of my mother—my dear mother—I thought not of the anguish my conduct would occasion her."

The wretched boy pressed his head upon the table, and wept bitterly, while Fitz-Henry gazed in silent sorrow upon him, cursing the fiends who could thus blight the pure mind of one so young, could so prostrate his happiness, and change his animated spirits into sorrow and remorse. Deeply did Fitz-Henry sympathize in the wounded feelings of his young friend, for he knew the heart which now so passionately appealed to him was not naturally depraved; he knew that his assistance might yet arrest the progress of error, might save the heedless boy from future crime—from the gulph into which despair might plunge him. The heart of Fitz-Henry joined in the course which his judgment advised him to follow.

"Gustave, I do feel for you—pity you. You have come here to ask my assistance; your doing so shows that you have judged me rightly. But you must act candidly with me; you must disclose all your embarrassments, confess exactly the position in which you are placed."

The soothing voice of Fitz-Henry, and his affectionate manner, reassured the unhappy Gustave, who raised his head from the position in which his shame had placed it; and fixing his still moistened eyes upon his friend, who was seated beside him, he entered fully into the explanation of his affairs, confessing without reserve the errors of which he had been guilty.

"I will tell you all," he commenced, "I will tell you how I have been led on step by step, till last night, when, heated by wine, and excited by the taunts of those around me, I plunged into error. I have before told you of my introduction to Stanley and his friends—of my having no guide, save my own will and the repeated caution of my mother, to guard me amidst the pleasures and the temptations of Paris. In company with Bernard and

Sampson I had frequently visited the *salons* appropriated to gambling, yet had I never joined in the fatal game, though I had been solicited by them both to do so. Last night I came here with the intention of joining you or Eugène, but unfortunately you were both from home, as were also Arnold and Stanley. On my return through the Rue de Rivoli I met Bernard and Sampson, who prevailed upon me to accompany them to the Café des Champs, where they joined others that they knew. The *salon* was full, and the tables surrounded by many that we had previously met there. Both my companions soon commenced playing, and were unusually successful. They did not now ask me to join them, but urged me to drink with them upon their success, as did also others that I partially knew. I am generally very cautious in what I take, and strongly suspect that some of the party drugged the wine they gave me; why I know not, unless they were aware that I had frequently much money with me, and supposed I had the means of obtaining more, and consequently was a fit object for their plunder; the more especially so as my inexperience would render me an easy victim. They had marked my great aversion to play, and probably took this method to ensnare me; at least, such is my supposition—and they succeeded but too well. I was soon overcome, and, in a state of bewildered excitement, yielded to their solicitation, and joined them. It was a scene of confusion; I scarcely knew the objects by which I was surrounded. I lost all I had with me, and nearly three hundred francs besides."

"To Sampson and Bernard?" inquired Fitz-Henry.

"No, not to them," continued Gustave. "After their first run of luck they lost to a considerable amount, and are to return to the *café* this evening to discharge the debt, and I have promised to accompany them for the same purpose, yet without your assistance I shall be unable to pay what I am still owing unless I apply to my mother. Foolishly I gave her address, and if I release not my bond of payment to-night, to-morrow she will be applied to. Oh! what will be her surprise, her sorrow, to find

the amount she gave me only yesterday is lost, with more than double that sum—all gone in one night! Oh! Fitz-Henry, if you knew my mother—if you could see how she dotes upon me, you would enter into my anguish, my dread to wound her heart by revealing the position in which my folly has placed me—by telling her how madly I have slighted her advice—how greatly deceived her as to the real character of my companions! Dear, generous mother, if you could now see the sorrow, the remorse of your poor Gustave—but no, no, Fitz-Henry!" exclamed the wretched boy, starting wildly from his seat—"no! she must not know it! it would kill her, it would break her heart to hear that her only child—her only hope, had been so guilty!—a gambler—the associate of the heartless—the depraved—I cannot bear to think of it! Pity me, Fitz-Henry—snatch me from this gulph of misery, or I shall be driven to madness—to desperation!"

"Be calm, dear Gustave," observed Fitz-Henry, soothingly; "I have already promised to assist you, but you must command your feelings; it is only by a calm, dispassionate investigation into our difficulties that we can best overcome them. Your impetuous grief assures me that your heart is guiltless, therefore all may yet be well. The amount you have lost is nothing in comparison with the loss of principle that is still retained to you, and the deep remorse you now feel is the best guarantee for your future conduct. You have promised to return to the Café des Champs this evening; you must fulfill that promise, but you must not go alone, nor with your last night's companions: those who took advantage of your youth must see that you have at least one friend who is willing and able to resent any wrong which they may attempt to practise upon you. I will accompany you to-night, and your debt shall be paid by me; for, knowing as I do the temptation by which you have been assailed, and the sincerity of your repentance, I should myself be guilty did I not attempt to save you."

"Oh! Fitz-Henry, how can I repay you?—how shall I express my gratitude for your kindness—your liberality?"

"By proving my confidence in you is not misplaced—by shunning the scenes which have caused you this sorrow, and by following the advice which I shall give you. Your mother must be spared all knowledge of this sad affair. In the evening I shall expect you, and we will visit the Café des Champs together; this will allow you to avoid joining Bernard and Sampson, who will also, I conclude, be there."

"Yes," replied Gustave, "they have promised to meet the party with whom we were last evening; but you need not fear for me, Fitz-Henry. No power on earth shall tempt me to join them again; I have suffered too much already for me ever to subject myself to a repetition of the anguish I have felt. Last night, when I had partially recovered from the effects of what I had taken, and was aware of the position in which I was placed, I was almost driven to desperation. They were both alarmed at my violence, and supplied me with wine to drown my feelings. I took it madly—eagerly—for I could not support the agony of my mind. In a state of unconsciousness they brought me home with them, and in their chamber I have passed the night. On the return of my reason, I recalled all that I remembered to have passed. I knew not how to proceed till I thought of you, and at once I determined to seek your advice; for I felt assured you would assist me with it. I knew Bernard would prevent this, and therefore I sought you before they were awake. I dread returning to my hôtel, to meet the mild reproachful eye of my mother; but she may not have discovered my having passed the night from home. Pray Heaven she may not! for I cannot explain the real cause of my absence."

"Prevarication is wrong," observed Fitz-Henry; "but you must in this instance resort to it, to spare her feelings. It is yet early, and by returning immediately home you may possibly avoid any disclosure. Your mother may not have risen, and you could caution the domestics to be silent; yet in her presence you must command your feelings, and re-

extricate you from this unhappy position, and to prevent its repetition."

The mind of Gustave was rendered comparatively easy by the friendly words and proferred assistance of Fitz-Henry, to whom he again expressed his gratitude, and with the promise of returning early in the evening, he left the Hôtel des Tuileries before Sampson or Bernard were aware of his having left their chamber.

Fitz-Henry felt greatly for Gustave, and determined to assist him out of his present difficulties, hoping this would prove a sufficient warning for him in future, and show in its true light the evil consequence of associating with such disreputable characters. The unhappy boy had sought him in confidence and hope, and Fitz-Henry generously resolved that no one should know of this affair more than circumstances would oblige him to reveal; he was therefore silent upon the subject when he joined his friends at breakfast, nor did he mention it to Eugène, who came early into his chamber, having promised with him to pay an early visit to Captain St. John, and with whom he now proceeded to the Faubourg St. Honoré.

They found the captain was from home; but Edith and Marie were in the *salon*, and, as usual, appeared most happy to see them.

"I scarcely expected you so early," observed Edith; "and surely you must have had some secret intimation of my impatience to see you. But do not flatter yourselves; I see that it is necessary I should explain why it is that I was so anxious for your promised visit this morning, or you may in your egotism attribute it to other motives. I have received a most enchanting trio, and wanted you both to practice it with me, for I fancy we can manage it to perfection; and I do like to make a sensation, as you know. At present *ma belle Marie*, with the numerous portraits of my venerable ancestors, which decorate the *salon*, must form our auditory. On the next occasion I hope to shine before those more calculated to appreciate my musical ability; for Marie will of course confine her attention to your united attractions—mine

must be left to be applauded by the beaux whom I expect to-night."

The lively Edith was soon seated at the piano, and the trio was repeated several times, while the fair Marie listened attentively, though, it must be confessed, not impartially, to the music; for it was when the deep tones of Eugène were more prominent that her glistening eye and inattention to her embroidery showed how much her feelings were excited. She appeared scarcely able to breathe as her eyes were fixed upon the young and graceful vocalist, who was himself quite unconscious of the emotion which his voice had produced, and when, upon the conclusion of the trio, he approached her, he knew not how great was his own share in the admiration she expressed as, with a brow slightly flushed, and eyes cast down upon her embroidery, she answered him.

"You are both very apt pupils," exclaimed Edith, "and must promise to come this evening, to gain your reward. We expect a few friends, before whom we are to appear—you to delight the ladies, and I to captivate the rougher portion of our company, and soothe their rugged nature by the charm of music. You can, of course, have no other engagement to oppose my wishes?"

"None, I assure you, fair cousin," replied Eugène, smiling; "at least I have not—nor Fitz-Henry either, unless he has made an appointment during the night with some wandering fairy; for last evening we were planning a stroll in the Bois de Boulogne for to-night—a moonlight ramble; and as I joined him this morning before he left his chamber, I can answer that no engagement of 'mortal kind' will prevent his joining us."

"My friend is not exactly right in his calculation," said Fitz-Henry; "for without having had any communication with the land of spirits, I have entered into an engagement for this evening, and am sorry to be obliged to deprive myself of the pleasure you intended me. No slight cause should prevent my accepting your invitation."

Eugène looked surprised, and Edith displayed a slight shade of

"Some very secret appointment, Fitz-Henry, or your confidant Eugène would have been informed of it. An affair of the heart, doubtless—some Parisian *demoiselle*; but excuse me, I have no authority to question you, especially upon such a subject."

"As far as relates to the affairs of the heart, I give you full permission to question me," replied Fitz-Henry; "but I feel assured Edith cannot attribute my engagement to such a cause. Eugène was right in stating that last night I had no engagement; but it was previous to his early visit to me this morning that another had been to see me, and made the appointment for this evening. I did not acquaint him of this, because it would have been a breach of trust for me to have done so; and Eugène would, I am sure, justly blame me, did I abuse the confidence that had been placed in me by any one; and you, Edith, must acquit me of every wish to keep my engagements and sentiments from you when they apply to myself only. I am too apt to trouble you with a long detail of feelings and hopes relating to that somewhat unmanageable resident within me, called heart, but of whose sensations I feel you have a right to demand an account; at least, I would wish to invest you with that right."

Edith looked earnestly at Fitz-Henry as he spoke, and for a few moments remained silent, apparently in deep thought, while he watched her expressive countenance to read the impression which his words had made upon her. She evidently understood the feeling which had prompted his reply, for a slight blush overspread her features as he alluded to the right with which he wished to invest her; but she soon recovered her self-possession, and spoke rapidly and gaily in reply—

"Without relinquishing entirely those rights to which you allude, I will act most liberally towards you, Fitz-Henry, and even exonerate you from all errors of concealment committed and intended, and will allow you, *soi disant* knight of mine, to make any rendezvous you may choose, without making an inquiry as to its nature, or even expressing a wish to hear more than you feel disposed to communicate."

Edith approached her friend Marie, and the conversation became general; for they all avoided the subject that appeared to cause a slight confusion amongst them. After remaining some short time longer, Eugène and Fitz-Henry took their departure, and were soon after wandering through the shades of the Champs Elysées.

"Do you know, Fitz-Henry," observed Eugène, "that I suspect there is something more than common between you and Edith? You generally manage to have a *tête-à-tête* together, and, if I may judge from the looks of both, the subject is always most agreeable. Nay, do not blush, *mon ami*; my cousin is very attractive—amiable to a degree—beautiful, decidedly—and—"

"Will make a good wife," interrupted Fitz-Henry, laughing; "for so ends the sentence, according to custom."

"But custom is not always right in so ending it," said Eugène. "I was going to observe that Edith is cheerful, accomplished, of a good, though rather wild disposition; but—"

"Nay, no buts, Eugène, after such a catalogue of recommendations," exclaimed Fitz-Henry.

"But will not make a good wife," continued Eugène seriously. "I know your character, Fity-Henry; I know the character of my cousin. With all the host of attractions I have enumerated, Edith is not one calculated to make you happy. Your wife must be undeviating in her attention—unceasing in displaying her affection; for you possess a warmth of feeling—a sincerity—that will require such devotion in return for your own. Edith has been accustomed to flattery—has been brought up in the school of freedom; she is fond of admiration, and seeks it; she endeavours to captivate the mind, regardless of appealing to the heart. Beware, Fitz-Henry, that you do not mistake the nature of her feeling towards you."

"You are rather severe, Eugène," replied Fitz-Henry; "yet granting that Edith is fond of admiration, surely she possesses a heart capable of feeling and appreciating true affection—a heart that is worth some little trouble to conquer and reclaim. No one can more strongly deprecate a love of flirtation than myself, and

it has caused me great uneasiness to see it so conspicuous in your cousin; yet, with the refined mind and amiable disposition of Edith, she may be brought to see the folly—the heartlessness—of giving way to such a passion. I do not fear but, once brought to a right sense of nobler feelings, she can love earnestly and most devotedly."

"Ah! Fitz-Henry," observed Eugène, "I see, as usual, love causes a partial blindness. I know that a woman so passionately fond of admiration is not one that you would consider perfect. I confess my cousin possesses many good qualities calculated to gain the esteem and affection of those around her; but I must still fear her stability on the point of love. A sensitive mind like yours requires something more than the ordinary requisites in a wife, and it is only my anxiety for your happiness that has made me thus to speak of Edith. You know I have the greatest attachment for her, and it is only in the character of a wife that I question her power to confer happiness."

"My young monitor, I thank you," replied Fitz-Henry; "I thank you for your advice and caution, for I know the generous, the kind feeling that has urged you to give them; but you are a novice in the art of love—unskilled in the complicated machinery of a woman's mind. I cannot mistake the feelings of Edith—cannot believe that her attention to me proceeds from any other motive than that of affection; but I hope soon to place it beyond the possibility of doubt."

"By proposing for her to my uncle?" demanded Eugène.

"Such is my intention," replied Fitz-Henry; "but first I will be more explicit with Edith; I will ask to be admitted to her confidence, will investigate her thoughts and feelings in relation to myself; for it is by an intimacy so close, so endearing, that I may hope to discover her real character and disposition."

"And may success attend you, Fitz-Henry," observed Eugène. If you find in Edith the same sincerity that you possess yourself, you can but be happy—happy as I would wish you."

"Thanks, Eugène, for your good opinion of me; but I must

not arrogate too much upon your praise. You have told me that love is blind, and friendship is a feeling so nearly allied to it that it may partake of the same defect of vision: friends and lovers are both occasionally unreasonable, both subject to fits of prejudice and obstinacy in their opinions."

## CHAPTER IX.

### Café des Champs—Gambling—*Salle de Bal*—Heartless Depravity—Virtuous Indignation—The Grisette.

In the evening Eugène started for the hôtel of Captain St. John, and soon after his departure Gustave called for Fitz-Henry. The boy was pale and dejected, which he accounted for by stating that his mother had discovered his having passed the night from home, and had expressed much anxiety and sorrow on his account.

"Fearing to alarm her more," continued Gustave, "I resorted to a little deception, and told her that I had passed the night with you; that we had visited the theatre together, and the night being so tempestuous I had been prevailed upon to sleep at the Hôtel des Tuileries. This my mother believed, knowing me to be correct in respect to the weather; but she has expressed a wish to become acquainted with one who is so frequently my companion, and to satisfy her anxiety on that point, I have promised to-morrow evening to introduce you to her, if you will favour us with your company."

To this Fitz-Henry willingly consented, and they now proceeded to the Café des Champs, passing through the Champs Elysées on their way. On entering the gardens attached to the *café*, they saw several groups, of various ages, seated at the different tables, lounging idly, or partaking of refreshment; the greater part of them appeared to be artizans, or respectable tradesmen, many of whom were accompanied by their wives and children. At the end of the garden was a small open *salon*, in which the orchestra

was placed, and before which a few persons were enjoying the pleasures of the dance. Fitz-Henry was much struck with the ease, and even gracefulness, displayed by the young Parisians, those of the lowest class being as much *au fait* to the amusement as our most fashionable votaries of Terpsichore.

Gustave now led the way to a small and half-concealed door, which was situated immediately behind the orchestra, and having by some recognised sign gained admission, Fitz-Henry found himself in the *salon* appropriated to gambling.

The room was small, but brilliantly lighted; several mirrors, interspersed with crimson drapery, covered the walls, and concealed the doors and windows from those within, giving an air of seclusion and secrecy which accorded well with the nature of the pursuit of those who were there assembled. It was yet early, but there were already several persons seated at the tables, and their excited manner and anxious looks awakened the pity and interest of Eitz-Henry—pity for the degradation of human nature—for the hopeless youths whom he saw before him, victims of the heartless and designing; for boyhood and old age were here engaged together in the fatal game, and the starting eye, the haggard look, the restless frame, and the quivering lips, even in the youngest, told but too plainly the dreadful effects of that absorbing passion, and the intensity of its hold upon him.

Fitz-Henry turned with disgust from the sickening scene, and as his eyes fell upon the youthful and handsome features of his young companion, he felt thankful that he might be the means of snatching him from so degraded and abject a state. Gustave appeared to read his thoughts, for a deep blush overspread his features, as if ashamed to be associated with such as were now before them, and finding the party they expected had not yet arrived, he asked Fitz-Henry to return with him to the gardens.

When they had entered the *salon*, the evening was warm and fine; but a sudden shower had come on, and they found, upon returning to the garden, that it was almost deserted; a few persons only remaining in some of the more sheltered arbours.

the greater part of the company had retired, and which presented quite a different scene from the one they had quitted. Here were no anxious or careworn features—no stifled ejaculation or hurried reply; all was gaiety and pleasure; mirth and ease reigned around, and the *salon* was the scene of the greatest animation, the numerous dancers gliding from one part of it to the other. Large and elegant chandeliers were suspended from the richly-painted ceiling, and shed a dazzling light upon the fairy scene beneath, and which was reflected over and over again by the numerous and massive mirrors with which the walls of the *salon* were nearly covered, leaving but small space for the gilded columns and light blue drapery which were placed between them. Numerous seats, covered with the same rich damask, were placed by the elegant marble tables which were arranged on each side of the *salon*.

It was a strange and motley assemblage that had here collected together. Most of the male visitors were evidently above the lower stations of society, and the greater part of them were young, many mere boys, but whose appearance denoted the same love of pleasure and sensuality as marked the bearing of their elder associates. Some had assumed a dress fantastic and unique in its arrangement, partaking more of the character of a masquerade than of a habit of ordinary use, and in their language and actions availed themselves of the utmost license of freedom which the rules of the *café* allowed them. The females were almost without exception young and handsome, but of the most equivocal, or rather unequivocal character. Yet there might be seen amongst them the young and innocent being who had thoughtlessly accompanied some rash relative or lover to mingle in the merry dance, half unconscious of the dangers which surrounded her, and who appeared as a pleasing contrast to those who came there to drown their remorse and shame in the excitement of the moment, or, which was more frequently the case, to add to their own guilt and to ensnare others.

Fitz-Henry had not long gazed on the bewildering scene ere he saw Arnold, who was seated by himself on the opposite side of the *salon*, and whom the two friends immediately joined, much to his surprise, as he exclaimed—

"Is it possible, Fitz-Henry, that you have at last ventured into this magic, yet dangerous scene? What powerful spells have been employed to bring you here?"

"The spell of caprice, possibly," observed Fitz-Henry, smiling, as he seated himself beside Arnold, "or it may be a wish to find out the nature of those pleasures which you find so attractive. In either case you must bid me welcome, since you are so much more *au fait* to these scenes of fascination."

"Or rather," replied Arnold, "scenes of temptation, into which my love of adventure and want of resolution occasionally bring me, to witness rather than enjoy. I cannot, Fitz-Henry, offer so good and generous a cause for being here as I suspect you can. Nay, do not blush, Gustave; I have been fully informed of your last night's affair, and am happy that you have so willing and able a friend to assist you. Even from the account that Bernard gave me, I felt convinced that they only were to blame for the great indiscretion, and that you are more to be pitied than blamed; at all events, you possess more honour than either of them, from the circumstance of your being here. I am ashamed to say that they have no intention of paying the sums they have lost."

"But how can they avoid it?" demanded Gustave.

"By bidding adieu to Paris," replied Arnold. "They left the Hôtel des Tuileries this afternoon, and are now on their way to Rouen. Stanley went to see them off, and has promised to join me here; indeed, I expected him ere this, for it is past the time that he appointed; but I suppose he is gone to see Julie, the young Frenchwoman whom you saw with him the other evening. Poor girl! I fear she will trust him too far, for she loves him passionately, and, in spite of his free manners towards her, will not suspect the base intentions which he scarcely troubles himself to conceal from her."

"Yet surely, if his views were made known to her, she would shun his society?" observed Fitz-Henry.

"I fear not," replied Arnold; "for, to tell the truth, Julie is not a prude, but a young and thoughtless coquette, fond of dress and admiration, and proud of the attentions of such a dashing fellow as Stanley. Yet I believe the girl is innocent of any greater folly than that of flirtation. It is evident Stanley has a strong hold upon her affections, as well as having dazzled her mind by his blandishments and his presents; and though I condemn the levity of her conduct, yet I cannot but feel some pity for her in the dangerous position in which she is placed. She is very young, and appears to have no friend to protect or guide her."

While Arnold was yet speaking, Stanley and Julie entered the *salon*, and seated themselves by a table on the opposite side, having ordered some refreshment of the *garçon*. Stanley then looked round as if seeking Arnold, evidently not a little surprised at observing who were with him. For a moment a shade of displeasure passed over his countenance; but, quickly assuming a smile of recognition, he crossed over to them, and held out his hand to Fitz-Henry, as he said—

"Ah! Fitz-Henry, glad to see you here at last. I thought your sober and antique resolves were to be broken; some black-eyed *grisette*, or captivating *blonde*, I suspect, has brought you to this rendezvous. Well, be that as it may, I give you welcome with much pleasure, for in future you cannot reasonably be so severe upon me for the like transgression. Ah! youngster," continued he, turning to Gustave, "you here again? Do you intend to make another night of it? I thought you had seen sufficient to make you more guarded. You know I always cautioned you against gaming; yet I believe your companions were more in fault than you were. But never attempt it again, nor think of paying what you lost last night—they cannot make you!"

"But my honour compels me," said Gustave.

"Honour!" ejaculated Stanley, contemptuously—"honour! why who ever attends to such an antiquated counsellor? all very well

for a romance, but in active life, in every-day affairs, it is quite Utopian. Quote honour as much as you please, my boy, but never adhere to its dictates save when it suits your purpose to do so, or, depend upon it, you will never get on in the world. But, by the by, Gustave, I shall require your assistance in a little affair with Julie, so you had better not let her see you to-night. At present she knows so little of you that it would be easy to impose upon her in the character which you must assume, and in which you have before succeeded so well that I do not doubt of your success in the present instance. You will, I know, assist me?"

"I am not so sure of that," answered Gustave, evidently not in the least pleased at the free tone and allusions of Stanley. "At all events, I must know what it is you require of me before I can promise my assistance."

"Why, you must know," observed Stanley, "that Julie will not carry her love for me to the extent I wish; I must therefore resort to a little deception, to remove those scruples which now, whether real or affected, stand in opposition to my wishes."

"I begin to understand you," remarked Gustave; "but proceed in your explanation; I am impatient to hear what you propose for me to accomplish."

Stanley observed not the indication of contempt and anger in the features and tones of Gustave which was so visible to his companions; he therefore proceeded in the same free and easy style of speaking—

"Why, my plan is this. You must once more assume the *rôle* of *demoiselle*, and in that character I will introduce you to Julie as my sister, who has arrived unexpectedly in Paris, and, having heard of her brother's *penchant*, wishes to be introduced to her. The love which I really believe she has for me will make her seek the confidence of my supposed sister, and which you must turn to my account, by instilling into her mind more free and less scrupulous ideas. You will, of course, be our frequent companion, and will, by your presence, sanction her visiting those scenes which now I cannot prevail upon her to enter: thus, gradually

initiated into a laxity of feeling and principle, she will soon become less guarded in her manner towards me, and be placed in a position of insecurity from which she will not find it so easy to escape, and in which the caution she has hitherto observed will avail her but little. So you see, my young friend, what I expect from your assistance."

During this vile and heartless narration Gustave had watched intently the features of Stanley. His own fair and open brow was dyed with the deepest crimson, and his full black eyes sparkled with indignation. When it was finished, he started from his seat, and fixing a penetrating glance upon the now confused Stanley, spoke slowly, and with energy.

"Your *friend*, Stanley—your *friend?* Oh! do not degrade me with such a title! To my shame I must acknowledge that I have been your companion—have associated with you in scenes which I would gladly forget; but even then I was not your friend. What am I now—now when your real character is unmasked before me—now when you would dare to make me the pander to your vices—dare to propose it before those whose estimation I value? me, a mere boy, whose inexperience you would corrupt—whose innocence you would stain with guilt—heartless, brutal guilt; me, whom you dare to call your friend, yet whose conscience you would load with a lasting shame—counsel me to forfeit my honour—to forget the feelings of humanity, and all this to aid in the gratification of your vile passions! You do not know me, Stanley; you do not know that, young as I am, I can discriminate between folly and crime. With a boyish love of adventure, I have lent you my aid in what I considered a harmless hoax, but what part of my conduct—what act of indiscretion—ever gave you cause to consider me such a villain—so perfect a villain? for none other would be associated in a plot so monstrous."

Arnold and Fitz-Henry gazed with admiration on the proud and dilating figure of Gustave as he confronted Stanley, his young features betraying hatred and contempt, with his head

looked like some beautiful statue, firm and graceful in his attitude; never were the beauty of innocence and deformity of guilt more strongly pourtrayed. Stanley felt overwhelmed with shame and confusion at this forcible and unexpected opposition to his will; he hung down his head, and shrunk before the boy whom at any other time he would have considered too insignificant to excite any other feeling than that of perfect indifference.

"Stanley," said Arnold, in a tone which indicated his great displeasure, "I blush for your want of feeling, for your wickedness in thus attempting to draw an innocent youth into the participation of your crimes—your heartless and debasing crimes. I do abhor your vile intentions against the girl, and will, to the utmost, endeavour to protect her—to save her from the fate which you would bring upon her. You have gained her affections; are you not ashamed to take advantage of your position—to crush the heart that loves you—to destroy for ever the peace of one who confides in your honour—who trusts in your affection? Do you not shudder when planning her ruin by force—unmanly force? Do not attempt to shield your conduct under the usual plea that such acts are considered venial by the world, or glanced at with indifference. Do not urge, as you have done before, the freedom, the levity of Julie, as an excuse for your wishing to sink her still lower in the grade of society. That freedom towards you may spring from her affection; that levity is the necessary consequence of her imperfect education and an excitable disposition. These are excuses which you cannot urge to justify yourself. It is not affection—it is not ignorance that urges you on to an act so vile. You can reason, calculate upon the result, and yet shrink not from destroying one who loves you."

During the commencement of these observations made by Arnold, Stanley had remained silent and confused; but by degrees he recovered his usual great self-possession, and resumed his habitual indifference of manner, as he replied—

"You are rather severe, Arnold; but I suppose you consider me very guilty, and fully entitled to your censure. Yet, after all,

I cannot coincide with your opinions; I cannot see there is so much guilt as you attach to a *liaison* with such a girl as Julie, even though it is carried to the extent I meditated. A character like hers may be assailed with comparative impunity, because, entertaining no very correct principles herself, neither she nor the world in general ought to feel much surprise that her male associates are not more circumspect than herself, or that an impetuous lover should take advantage of her want of prudence. Did I not do so another might, and consequently she would still be in the same position, whether I acted the saint or not; but, in respect to Gustave, I admit that I was wrong, and promise never to attach him to my plans in future, be they what they may; neither will I attempt the plot against Julie which I meditated, for I see you all condemn it. Most certainly it was inconsiderate in me to fix upon one so young as Gustave to assist me; but I had not rightly understood his character, and did not imagine I was doing him much wrong in thus drawing upon his ingenuity."

"I am glad to hear you say so much," observed Fitz-Henry; "but surely, Stanley, in respect to Julie you cannot so far impose upon your own judgment as to stand exonerated to yourself by the arguments with which you would wish to avoid the censure of others—arguments so vain, so erroneous—as if the possession of lax principles by others could possibly justify our own, or their weakness authorise any attacks upon their honour or their virtue! It is not by such weak sophistry as this that you may hope to gain proselytes to your opinion; but I trust you see now the criminality of your conduct, and that you will no longer abuse the confidence that is placed in you."

"Time works wonders, you know," replied Stanley, "and even I may become different to what I am; at present I cannot expect you to place much faith in any promise of amendment which I might choose to make; but at all events I shall set an example of sobriety, and the rest of it, to-night; and, to convince you that I do so, I will introduce you to Julie, and you shall witness the propriety of my conduct towards her."

To this Fitz-Henry readily consented, for he thought in the course of conversation he might be able to apprize Julie of the real character of Stanley, and thus prevent her from placing too much confidence in his promises; and though Gustave felt great reluctance in remaining with Stanley, yet, as he could not leave Fitz-Henry, he tacitly agreed to the arrangement, and the whole party crossed the *salon* together. Fitz-Henry was much struck with the extreme vivacity of Julie, with the bold, yet beautiful contour of her features. He found her much better educated than he expected, though she evinced a disposition too volatile to promise much firmness or stability. She spoke the English language fluently, and was evidently proud of the attentions of Stanley, evincing in her manner towards him the powerful hold he had upon her affections. She was dressed gaily, and assumed all the airs of a Parisian coquette. She was young, and exceedingly beautiful, though her features were of that class which excites admiration rather than affection. Her long and jetty hair fell in waving tresses over her neck and shoulders, and partly shaded a brow flushed with excitement, and eyes that revealed the intensity of her feelings.

The conversation was kept up with great animation by the fascinating Julie, who seemed greatly pleased with this fresh introduction, and exerted herself to the utmost to obtain the approbation of Fitz-Henry, doubtless under the impression that he had great influence over the will of Stanley, who, on his part, appeared unusually thoughtful, and so watchful over all that passed that Fitz-Henry had no opportunity of giving Julie the caution he intended.

It was evident that Arnold did not place much faith in the apparent seriousness of Stanley, for he expressed his intention of remaining with him when Fitz-Henry and Gustave proceeded to the *salon* occupied by the gamblers.

They found the party had greatly increased since they had left the *salon*. Every table was now crowded, and several persons were standing in groups, watching the various players, and deeply

interested in the game. Amongst those who were looking on Gustave soon discovered the person to whom he was indebted, and having introduced him to Fitz-Henry, the affair was soon settled between them, evidently much to the satisfaction of the man, who had rather doubted the capability of his young creditor to pay him. Without any ceremony, he took the hand of Gustave as they were turning from him, and said—

"But surely you do not intend to leave us so suddenly; I expected you and your friend would join us at the tables, if only in revenge for the ill-luck of last night. Remember, fortune is changeable, and to-night you may be more successful; at all events, you must not be frightened away by one cloud of ill-luck.".

"My young friend is rather pleased than frightened by the events of last evening," observed Fitz-Henry. "Had he been what you term successful he might a second time have been tempted to join in a pursuit which his better judgment tells him is a wrong one. He is too young to cope with the experienced and enigmatical play of those he would have to contend with here."

The man immediately saw the opinion which Fitz-Henry had formed respecting him, and with a frown of anger turned from him to Gustave, demanding, in a surly tone, where his two English companions were, as part of their debt was owing to him.

"I am not answerable for either their conduct or their debts," answered Gustave firmly; "it is sufficient that I account for and discharge my own."

The man was about to reply; but Fitz-Henry motioned to Gustave to follow him, and they abruptly quitted the *salon*, glad to escape from the importunity of one who appeared so little scrupulous in his manner of addressing them.

# CHAPTER X.

## Solicitude—Inauguration, and Grand Military Procession—Ludicrous Predicament—Eve of the Fête—Impassioned Infatuation.

THE following day was the 27th of July, and the first of three *fête* days which are annually held in Paris, commemorative of the Revolution of 1830. High mass was celebrated in all the churches with great solemnity, and there was a stir and an agitation throughout Paris that indicated something more than usual was expected.

Fitz-Henry, accompanied by Eugène and Arnold, proceeded to the Church of St. Roch, in which the music of the morning was exceedingly fine; its magnificent organ pealing forth its deep volume of sound, and the blended voices of the numerous choristers filling the vaulted aisles of the sacred edifice. The service was solemn and impressive, appealing to the hearts of the numerous congregation who listened in silence to the prayers offered for the repose of the dead, given in all the splendour and enthusiasm of the Roman Catholic religion. Yet even the most zealous Protestant might have joined in the holy solemnity, for it was to the Father of all that these prayers of the heart were offered, differently, perhaps, to the way in which he would himself have offered them, yet the same holy and sacred feeling would influence both. No impious ridicule, no unjust remark or unhallowed feeling relative to the mystified and ceremonious worship which they beheld, was observable in the conduct of the two young Englishmen as they stood by their Catholic companion; each adhered to the religious precepts taught him by his fathers, and each felt the reverence and veneration due to the sublime principles of religion, in whatever form they might emanate from the human heart. It is only the irreligious and the ungenerous that can scoff at and turn into ridicule the modes of worship pursued by the followers of a faith that differs from their own.

On returning to his hôtel Fitz-Henry found Gustave, who had come to remind him of his promise to dine with them; but, as it was yet early in the afternoon, they took a long ramble before they proceeded to the hôtel of Madame Beaumont.

The *salon* into which Gustave introduced Fitz-Henry was large and elegantly furnished. As they entered Madame Beaumont rose from the couch on which she reclined, and hastened to meet the friend of her son, expressing in her sad yet handsome features the pleasure which this introduction afforded her. She appeared pale and dejected, and the low tones of her voice as she welcomed Fitz-Henry indicated the great debility of her constitution.

"I am, indeed, most happy to see you, Monsieur Fitz-Henry, for I am anxious to express my gratitude for your generous kindness towards my son. He has informed me of his great indiscretion, and the noble—the disinterested assistance you afforded him. I believe this to have been his first error, and, from the sincerity of his repentance, I may hope it will be his last. He is too young to cope with the temptations of the world, and I feel greatly for his isolated position. I tremble to reflect what might have been the result had he not possessed your friendship. Pecuniary aid I can repay; but the feeling which interested you in the welfare of a youth almost unknown to you, your generous aim to withdraw him from so dangerous a path, excite an obligation for which I can never be sufficiently grateful."

"I feel but too happy in having had the opportunity of evincing my interest in the welfare of Gustave," replied Fitz-Henry. "I saw from the first that his mind was uncontaminated by the scenes into which circumstances had unfortunately thrown him, and I should myself have been highly culpable had I not, in return for the confidence he placed in me, and the affection he displayed, endeavoured to warn him of his danger, and made an effort to remove him from it. No one is more open to conviction

fear, my dear madame, that he will ever give you much cause for unhappiness on his account."

"Your observations are most gratifying to my feelings," remarked Madame Beaumont, "and I hope Gustave will be worthy of your praise and good opinion, and always endeavour to obtain them. He is young, and at times thoughtless; but I trust the principles of religion and honour are too strongly impressed upon his mind to be easily forgotten. I regret deeply that I have no relation to whom I could intrust him; but we are singularly situated in that respect. The many years that I have passed out of my native country have broken the ties that once bound me to it, for my friends are dead, or removed, by circumstances, from Paris; consequently, we are here alone, as it were, in the world, which makes me feel doubly the value of such a friend and companion for my son as he has found in you."

Fitz-Henry remarked the deep emotion of Madame Beaumont as she alluded to the lonely position of herself and son, and the look of ardent affection which she cast upon Gustave, who, happy in the society of his friend, had resumed his usual gaiety of manner, though his own happiness never for a moment made him inattentive in promoting that of his mother. He appeared to watch her every movement—anticipate her every wish, and would frequently stop in the midst of his merry laugh and fix a look of interest upon her, if a sigh escaped, or a look of sadness overspread her features. This beautiful display of filial duty and affection raised the youth still higher in the estimation of Fitz-Henry, and he was most sincere in his promise to Madame Beaumont when he assured her he would, as much as possible, watch over his young friend during his own stay in Paris, and pass as much time in his society as circumstances would allow.

The evening passed agreeably to them all, and it was rather late when Fitz-Henry took his departure, highly pleased with his new friends, and the reception he had met with. Nor was their admiration of him less, for he stood high in the estimation of them both, and Madame Beaumont felt less anxiety on her son's account

now she was aware of the noble character of his new friend, to whose care she could so fearlessly trust him: she felt assured the ardent attachment of Gustave for Fitz-Henry would cause him to follow implicitly his example and advice.

The 28th of July, 1840, was a great day in Paris, for it was on this day that the grand inauguration of those who fell in the Revolution took place, the bodies having been disinterred from the numerous places where they had been promiscuously buried at the time. A splendid and gigantic car had been erected, in which the remains of upwards of three hundred unfortunate victims were placed, and carried in grand procession to the Place de la Bastile, there to be finally deposited beneath a beautiful column which had been erected to commemorate that fearful event, and which was on this melancholy occasion thrown open to the public for the first time.

From an early hour crowds were to be seen parading the streets leading towards that portion of the city through which the procession had to pass, while numerous detachments of troops moving to their different stations added to the bustle and confusion that reigned throughout Paris. On the Boulevards the shops were generally closed, and every available place and window was occupied by the expectant crowds that had flocked from every quarter to witness the splendid scene which had for weeks been anticipated by every one in or near the metropolis of France. The grand display of military parade, the solemn inauguration of their brave compatriots, who, after ten year's interment, were now taken from their scattered and unhallowed graves and honoured by a public and magnificent funeral, attended by the clergy, and followed by some thousands of the military, glittering in all the splendour of their uniforms, and surrounded by martial music—these conspired together to enhance the solemnity of the scene.

Fitz-Henry, accompanied by Eugène and Gustave, went first to see the car, which was placed near the palace of the Louvre, and opposite to the Church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, in which the

coffins had been placed, each containing the remains of several victims. The service for the dead was here performed, the entire front of the church being hung with black cloth, which extended for some way on each side. The car itself was most elegant, and of immense size, the lower part constructed like a hearse, over which was a sarcophagus, surmounted by several banners and plumes of white feathers, the whole covered by rich black velvet, decorated by silver ornaments, while the wheels, six in number, were massive, and richly emblazoned.

After some little time Fitz-Henry and his companions proceeded slowly towards the Boulevard des Italiens, for the crowd was immense, and in some places almost prevented their advancing. On their way they encountered between three and four hundred men and boys, who were walking in procession, their coats or hats decorated with the *immortelles*, and singing the "*Marseillaise.*" Amongst them were several English, whose republican feelings had led them to join in this ill-judged display, and who called upon Fitz-Henry to join them; but Eugène explained the danger of being associated with them, and turning into another street to avoid their observations, he and his two companions had just taken their station when the procession approached them.

It was entirely a military spectacle, but of the most grand and magnificent description. Numerous bodies of National and Municipal Guards led the procession, each headed by its respective band; then came six carriages, containing the priests engaged in the religious ceremony of the inauguration, followed by the stupendons car, drawn by twenty-four horses, richly caparisoned, and each led by a groom; this was followed by some thousands of the military, the artillery bringing their heavy pieces of cannon drawn by eight, and some by ten horses. It was a most imposing and animated scene as viewed from the elevated position in which Fitz-Henry and his friends were placed. As far as the eye could reach the lofty and magnificent buildings of the Boulevards were crowded by thousands, who from every window, balcony, and roof, were gazing on the moving mass below them, where

thousands of horse and foot soldiers were passing slowly on, to the sound of martial music, their various standards, decked with black crape, floating in the air, and towering above all, the splendid car, with its banners and plumes, appearing like some huge building, decorated with the emblems of war and of death, moving amidst the countless mass of human beings which had congregated to behold it.

Such was the immense length of the precession that it was several hours in passing, and the day was far advanced when Fitz-Henry and his companions made their way from the Boulevards toward the Rue de Rivoli. In passing the Place Vendôme they saw a large crowd assembled, and, upon inquiring the cause, they found that a lady had been thrown down by the pressure of the crowd, and though not much hurt, was nearly insensible from alarm.

They were in the act of passing on, when Fitz-Henry heard his own language spoken from the centre of the crowd. The voice of the speaker, in tones of altercation, was loud and shrill, and was immediately recognised as that of Master Adolphus, the redoubtable page of Miss Montague.

"Keep back, will you!" exclaimed the infuriated boy—"keep back, I tell you!—crowding like that! you'll kill my missus outright, you will. Goodness gracious! she'll be squeezed all to nothing—I know she will. There—there goes her bonnet, slap in the mud, all over squashed! Whatever shall I do? Amelia, why don't you come and help me to get missus up? I know she'll be trampled to a mummy, she will. These great stupids can't speak a word of plain English—no, not even so much as a baby, but stand grinning there, and don't help me at all like an Englishman would, mauling missus about like that, just as if she was nobody. Oh dear! oh dear!"

This boisterous and rambling appeal was sufficient to make Fitz-Henry aware of what was passing, and, assisted by Eugène and Gustave, he forced his way through the crowd, and proceeded to rescue the unfortunate Miss Montague from her rather ludicrous position.

In spite of his fears for the safety of Miss Montague, Fitz-Henry could scarcely forbear laughing to see the sad plight in which she was; her dress torn and soiled, her bonnet broken and trampled on the pavement, and her hair hanging wildly over her face as she rested, almost insensible, on the arms of a stout and ragged-looking fellow, who had just raised her from the gutter, which, as is frequently the case in Paris, was flowing rather copiously at the time. It appeared they were returning from the Boulevards, where, at the windows of a *café*, they had been stationed to witness the procession, and had scarcely reached the Place Vendôme when a sudden rush of the crowd had upset the equilibrium of both Miss Montague and Amelia, on whose arm she was leaning; and indeed the sad condition of the maid was almost equal to that of her mistress; for she, too, had been rumpled and crushed in the fray, and was now supported by a handsome young Parisian, in whose arms she had remained stationary during the struggle of Adolphus, apparently not altogether displeased with her situation. The unfortunate page was consequently left alone to fight the way for his lady, and right earnestly had the boy done his best to rescue her from the pollution of a contact so vile and disagreeable as that to which she was subjected. He had escaped the degradation of being flattened upon the pavement, or of being sent flying into the air, though he had challenged more than one of the crowd who, he thought, had handled his mistress rather too unceremoniously, and thus aroused his indignation; though, it must be confessed, neither his blows nor his tongue achieved much beside ridicule; for one was scarcely felt, and the other not the least understood, by those to whom they were so liberally applied.

No sooner was Fitz-Henry seen by Adolphus than he was almost dragged by the boy towards Miss Montague, who opened her half-closed eyes and uttered a scream of joy as she broke from her rather rough-looking supporter, and flew into the arms of her young countryman, who, to his shame be it spoken, appeared not half to appreciate the confiding trust of his lovely

burden as she hung so tenderly upon him, and whose sorrowful accents might have moved the most obdurate to a sense of pity.

"Oh! save me—save me, Fitz-Henry! from the pollution of these wretches—these vile *canaille!*—snatch me from this indelicate position—this terrible predicament, into which their unmannerly rushing and crowding have placed me! I am overwhelmed with shame and confusion to be seen in such a state—my dress in disorder—my head uncovered; and this amongst a set of men whose looks alarm me—whose touch thrills me with horror!"

And the trembling Adelina pressed her face upon the bosom of Fitz-Henry, as if to shut out the terrible scene which had so greatly offended her delicate imagination, and from which she had been so unexpectedly rescued by the one to whom of all others she most wished to be indebted for her safety, and by whom she was now placed gently in the *fiacre* which had been procured, together with her maid and Adolphus, who had strict injunctions to support their almost inanimate mistress to the hôtel, while Fitz-Henry and his companions proposed following them on foot.

Madame Beaumont not being so well, Gustave had promised to return early to his hôtel, and, soon after his departure, Fitz-Henry accompanied Eugène to the Champs Elysées. It was a gay and bustling scene; the busy note of preparation was heard in every direction. Booths, stalls, shows, theatres, and numerous other erections, were springing up amongst the trees on each side of the grand avenue, and already the showmen were bawling forth the various attractions of their respective exhibitions, before which crowds of persons had congregated, listening to the barbarous music which filled the air. Others were seen before the booths appropriated to dancing, where much better music was heard, and more order observed.

It was before one of these booths that Eugène and Fitz-Henry were stationed, watching the graceful votaries of Terpsichore, and listening to the well-selected musicians. The company appeared

more select than in many of the other booths; respectable tradesmen, with their wives and children, were joining in the merry dance, or, seated on the numerous benches, were conversing cheerfully as they gazed on the stirring scene. Wreaths of natural and artificial flowers festooned the interior of the booth, and numerous lights, glimmering through coloured shades, cast their fantastic shadows upon the happy-looking throng which had assembled within its magic inclosure; indeed, so delighted was Fitz-Henry with the scene, that he proposed entering to participate in its enjoyment, to which Eugène readily assented, and they were soon after both engaged in the waltz, as merry as the merriest of them all.

It was while thus engaged that Fitz-Henry observed Arnold, who was dancing with Julie. Her young and beautiful features were radiant with mirth and the bloom which exercise had produced, while her full dark eye actually sparkled with animation. Her bonnet had been thrown off, and her long hair fell carelessly over her shoulders, which imparted an additional charm to her appearance, and, with her youth, and apparently unprotected position, interested Fitz-Henry more than ever in her welfare, and made him still more anxious to guard her against the sophistry of Stanley; and it was this feeling that made him seat himself by her side, when, upon the commencement of the next dance, he found her comparatively alone, both Arnold and Eugène having engaged other partners.

Fitz-Henry soon found from Julie that Stanley had appointed to meet her at the booth in which they were, and that she was impatient for his arrival, it being already beyond the time he had stated to meet her. From her language it was easy for Fitz-Henry to discover how deeply her affections were engrossed by Stanley, and what faith she placed upon his promises, and he felt a reluctance in destroying the pleasing illusion of the young girl; but he felt she ought to be apprised of the danger she incurred in placing too much confidence in the protestations of one whose want of principle had become so notorious. But he found the

love and confidence of Julie were too deeply rooted for her to heed his admonitions, though she appeared grateful for the interest which he expressed in her welfare.

"I give you my thanks, monsieur, for your kindness, but I cannot—I dare not think Stanley will deceive me. I give to him my whole heart, and with it my confidence, my love—that love which is so ardent, so passionate. No, no, Monsieur Fitz-Henry, Stanley does love me, he must love me—in gratitude, in honour, he is bound to do so, and I will trust him, in spite of all."

"Believe me, Julie," replied Fitz-Henry, "I would not caution you without a reason for doing so; I would not wantonly destroy your happy dream of love did I not fear that you would awake, when too late, to a sense of your danger. Urge Stanley to a more candid declaration of his intentions towards you; he cannot in justice evade the question; yet should he do so, should he ungenerously prevaricate, you must receive his vows with caution: you must not confide your happiness—your honour—to his keeping."

"Monsieur Fitz-Henry," observed Julie, and as she spoke her dark eye flashed with the passion which warmed her heart—"Monsieur Fitz-Henry, I cannot school my love to such a deliberate proceeding; I cannot so calculate upon my feelings—cannot bring my heart to yield partially to his affections: wholly, entirely, irrevocably, my love is his. I am poor; he sought me in my low occupation; he considered me worthy of enjoying his society. He flattered me with his attention, his love—me, on whom the eye of affection had never shone—me, whose life passed on, unheeded and uncared for. During the long, dull day I have thought only of him; every night my dreams have been of him, till my love became a phrensy—a madness. My mind became intoxicated with the transports which his love inspired, and to all I boasted of his confidence. Without that love I should die now; I could not return again into that listless state of

not think of it. All my life I have been seeking something to love, and the education which, from circumstances, has been bestowed upon me, only taught me the more the happiness of being loved. Do not—oh! do not destroy the happy vision, delusive though it may be. I will, for I fear I must, in spite of all, exist upon his love; yes, even if I knew that a few brief days of such exquisite delight would cost me my life—nay, I had almost said my honour. But no; Stanley will not take advantage of my love for him; he will not so abuse his power; and again I fearlessly repeat that I will trust him."

"Alas! I fear you will too far," remarked Fitz-Henry, almost involuntarily.

"It may be so!" exclaimed Julie, passionately—"it may be so, and still I will not—I cannot restrain my love. My father was from the East, and I inherit his intensity of feeling—his ardency of passion. Throughout my life I have been actuated by the impulse of the moment; my nature is impetuous and wayward, extreme in love and in hate. I cannot subdue my feelings to acts of caution and forbearance; every circumstance of my life has had its influence to counteract such tenets. Taken from my humble parents in my infancy, and adopted by one whose alternate fits of tyranny and fondness made me feel the dependence of my position, I became unfeeling and capricious. My affections were not demanded; I could not love the parents whose selfishness had sent me from them—I could not respect one whose conduct towards me was so fluctuating and unjust: one moment considered as her adopted daughter, the next as her degraded menial. She died when in a fit of anger against me, and left me penniless. The same pride which had kept me from my parents in my prosperity prevented my applying to them in adversity. I was friendless and alone; yet my firmness of mind did not forsake me. I yielded to necessity; but my feelings and my pride remained unchanged in the humble capacity to which my wants had driven me: I retained the recollection of the past. I could not intimately associate with those amongst whom I was thrown, for

their minds did not assimilate with mine; they were accustomed to the station in which they were placed, but I was unfitted for the drudgery of business, and shrunk from the connexion in which it placed me. Such was my position when chance directed Stanley towards me. His kindness awoke in my heart feelings unknown before; he spoke to me of love—of affection—sentiments to which I had been a stranger. His language, his station, contrasted with those of the persons by whom I was surrounded, and I was proud of his attention—flattered by his presence. My wild and volatile disposition was subdued by excess of love—by adoration. Now tell me, Fitz-Henry—tell me, now that I have acquainted you with all—can you expect me to follow the cool, the calculating maxims you would teach me?"

"Indeed, I fear not, Julie," replied Fitz-Henry; "and yet reason would dictate such caution. But enough of this; you know my sentiments, and I will no longer distress your feelings with my fears. Never may your devotedness be repaid by treachery; and be assured the little influence which I possess over Stanley shall be exerted in your cause. We must teach him in honour to reciprocate the love you bear him, for he must not, he ought not to trifle with your feelings."

Julie again thanked Fitz-Henry for the interest which he expressed for her, and was still speaking when a tumult was observed at the entrance of the booth. Loud tones of altercation were heard between the proprietors and a party of young men, who wanted to gain admission, but who had been refused, from their evident state of great excitement; indeed, some of them were so intoxicated that they were wholly unconscious of the threats of their opposers or the language which they were themselves making use of.

The quick eye of Julie soon discovered Stanley amongst the group, and in an instant she darted towards him, followed by Arnold, who had also recognised his relative amongst the most violent of the party. Their intercession, with a few remarks from Eugène, who, with Fitz-Henry, had approached them, pre-

vailed upon the proprietors of the booth to allow Stanley to join his friends, while the remainder of the turbulent party were dismissed.

The heated and excited appearance of Stanley bore strong indications of the fray in which he had been engaged. His clothes soiled and torn, his hair hanging wildly over his eyes, his scarcely intelligible articulation, were all disgusting in the extreme. Both Julie and Arnold were evidently ashamed to see him in such a helpless and degraded state. His loud bluster was now succeeded by a state of stupor, and as he lay stretched upon one of the benches, muttering the most profane language, and making sundry but vain attempts to rise, he looked more akin to the brute creation than to a being of reason and intellect. Even the strong love of Julie could scarcely reconcile her to his abject state as she bent over him, while Arnold openly expressed his disgust, though his humanity urged him to assist the anxious girl in keeping the degraded object of her affections on the bench on which, in a state of insensibility, he had fallen.

Both Arnold and Julie expressed their intention to remain with Stanley, at least until he had partially recovered from his stupor; while Eugène and Fitz-Henry, finding they could not assist them, returned to their hôtel, glad to escape from the scene; for nothing is more disgusting to a sensitive mind than to see a fellow-being under the degrading influence of drink; to mark the absence of all decency—the utter prostration of intellect—the conflict between the wandering reason of man and the propensities of the brute. Affection, friendship—nay, even love itself, shrinks with a feeling of horror and repugnance from a sight so contemptible and humiliating.

# CHAPTER XI.

## The Fête—Indiscretion—The Summons.

It was a fine and delightful morning that ushered in the 29th of July, 1840, the grand Parisian *fête*—the last and most joyous of the "three days;" a day so earnestly anticipated by the pleasure-seeking denizens of Paris—a day devoted to mirth and festivity. On this occasion the preceding day had been unusually solemn, from the mournful ceremony of the inauguration, and the light-hearted Parisians awoke on this eventful morning to shake off their transitory gloom, and to enter freely into the various scenes of rational enjoyment which had been prepared for them.

Gustave had arrived early at the Hôtel des Tuileries, and after breakfast accompanied Eugène and Fitz-Henry in their rambles through the scenes of gaiety and preparation, leaving Arnold still in bed, for he was tired, and rather unwell, from having passed nearly the whole of the previous night with Stanley, who had been unable to return to his hôtel before the morning had far advanced.

The gardens of the Tuileries were already occupied by many thousands; in every direction they were completing the arrangements for the concert and illumination. In the Champs Elysées all was noise and bustle; the numerous shows were arranged in one line, which extended some distance, while many of them had commenced offering their wondrous attraction of giants, dwarfs, horsemanship, rope-dancing, juggling, and every other possible and impossible variety of feat and deformity; and as the day advanced so did the *fête* progress, until it reached its grand climax of mirth and attraction, and the Champs Elysées appeared in reality the Elysian fields of happiness and contentment; for,

found one care-worn or gloomy brow—and most certainly not among the Parisians themselves would such an one one have been found, for all, from the youngest to the oldest, gave themselves up entirely to the enjoyment of the moment.

To those who have not witnessed a *fête* in Paris any description would convey but a feeble idea of the bright reality. Scattered in every direction among the trees were hundreds of booths, stalls, shows, mimic theatres, orchestras, with games and sports of every description, many of them purely French. There was throwing balls, shooting at targets, or at revolving images, glasses, &c., *rouge et noir* tables, lectures on every science, punch and judy, swinging boats, dancing dogs, itinerant musicians, tumblers, preachers, and singers, producing every unearthly sound, and dressed in fantastic costumes; the stalls and booths, decorated with flowers and banners of every shade and colour, presenting a *tout ensemble* at once curious and astonishing.

In a large square, or open space, situated in the centre of the Champs Elysées, two handsome theatres were erected, in which alternately the battles of France were represented during the day, gratuitously to the public, for the stage was open to the crowd that was stationed before it. The mimic armies of France were of course always victorious; but the scenic effect was good, and the dresses splendid, while the continued firing of the combatants caused great excitement among the immense mass of human beings who moved from one theatre to the other. Fitz-Henry was much pleased with this rather national amusement, which Eugène explained fully to him. At each corner of this space was an elegant orchestra, in which four bands relieved each other during the day, and before which a merry group of dancers might be seen, entering with all the spirit of the French character into the cheerful exercise. In the centre of this space was placed a pole of great height, on the top of which were suspended the prizes for those who could ascend the slippery goal. This caused a fund of amusement to the crowd, whose shouts followed each successful attempt, which were answered by the fortunate candidate, who,

from his elevated position, elicited loud peals of laughter by his various antics and grotesque movements and grimaces, such as few but a mercurial Frenchman would give or none so fully as a French crowd appreciate.

Arnold now joined Fitz-Henry and his companions. He had just parted from Stanley, who had accidentally met some English friends, with whom he intended to pass the day. In the evening he had promised to meet Julie, for he wished to justify himself for his conduct of the preceding night, and to regain that place in her affections which he was fearful he had forfeited by his excesses. The whole party had wished Arnold to join them, but a few minutes conversation with these new friends of Stanley so far satisfied Arnold as to their character that he scrupled not to leave them, under the plea of having promised to join Fitz-Henry in the Champs Elysées.

On returning towards the Place de la Concorde, Fitz-Henry and his companions met Captain St. John, who was accompanied by Edith and Marie. Eugène introduccd them to Gustave and Arnold, and the whole party walked some short time together, ere they proceeded to the Faubourg St. Honoré; for the good-natured captain had insisted that they should all return with him to his hôtel, having, he said, provided an English dinner for the use of any one whom he might chance to meet with.

The captain seemed much pleased with Gustave, and entered fully into the joyous disposition of the youth; inquiring whether his family had been long in Paris, and with whom he was connected, and appearing to feel for the isolated position of Madame Beaumont and her son, when he was informed that they had no relations, or even friends, in France, although both Madame and the late Monsieur Beaumont were of that country. "We have resided many years in Geneva," continued Gustave, "and I suppose we shall return to Switzerland, when the business which brought my mother to Paris is settled."

After a rather hasty meal, Captain St. John took his party to the Tuileries gardens, having obtained tickets for admission to

the private seats immediately below the balcony on which the Royal Family were to appear, and in front of the grand orchestra, in which the musicians had already assembled. Strong barriers protected this part of the gardens from the crowd, and guards, both National and Municipal, paraded round this enclosure, to keep order, and to prevent any improper person from approaching too near the palace.

At length a low murmur, so peculiar to a French crowd, broke on the stillness which expectation had occasioned, and "*Vive le Roi!*" "*Vive la Reine!*" echoed from every part of the garden. Every eye was turned towards the balcony, on which appeared the King and Queen of the French, the Queen of Belgium, the Princess Clementina, the Duchess of Orleans, and the Princess Adelaide; on the balcony above them were the King of Belgium, the Duke of Orleans, and the young Dukes of Aumâle and Montpensier; while the other windows were occupied by the royal suites, and persons connected with the court of France. The band commenced with the *Marseillaise*, and during the evening continued to play the most popular airs, which were listened to with the most silent attention. Not a whisper was heard; every ear was attentive to the music—every tongue was still; though occasionally, as some more startling or sublime strain was finished, a loud murmur of "bravo! bravo!" echoed from the crowd. But gradually the scene was changed—daylight had faded away, and the orchestra was now surrounded by numerous lamps, the light diffused through beautifully painted globes, which had a soft and Oriental effect. Around and beyond, in every direction, lights of various shades and colours were springing up, as if by magic, till the palace and the gardens were all brilliantly illuminated, with the Champs Elysées beyond. The Royal Family now retired, the band playing the "*Parisienne*," amidst the shouts of the people; and in the next moment the congregated mass dispersed in every direction, wandering through the scenes of enchantment which now surrounded them.

Both Fitz-Henry and Arnold were astonished; they had never

imagined a scene so truly magical in its appearance. The fireworks had commenced; the terraces of the gardens were one mass of human beings, while the gardens, the Place de la Concorde, with every other spot where a sight could be obtained, were filled to excess; yet there was no crowding, no rude rushing, as in an English crowd. All moved slowly and regularly on, or stood quiet and stationary, and when, in passing through the gates, an unavoidable collision took place, the polite bow, the friendly smile, accompanied with "Pardon, monsieur," "Pardon, madame," fully reconciled every one to the momentary inconvenience which our party experienced in reaching the Place de la Concorde.

"Wonderful! enchanting!" exclaimed Fitz-Henry and Arnold, as they gazed around them. Yes, the scene was wonderful—was enchanting; before them, as they stood, were the gardens of the Tuileries, which they had just quitted. They were brilliantly illuminated; the fresh foliage of the lofty trees, the dazzling whiteness of the statues, the dashing spray of the numerous fountains, reflecting a thousand hues, all standing forward in the glare of light diffused from the numberless lamps placed amidst the trees, on the terraces, and in the avenues. Above them was the glittering, sparkling *feu d'artifice*, in every dazzling and brilliant device, shedding showers of variegated fire, or blazing in the air as revolving wheels, sending forth messengers of flame, which darted athwart the dim clouds of night, casting their glare over the countless thousands of upturned and happy faces that were watching their flight. On the opposite side was the long and noble avenue of the Champs Elysées, on each side of which a high scaffolding had been erected, covered with various coloured lamps, and from side to side ropes were crossed at intervals, from the centres of which immense chandeliers of variegated globes were suspended, forming one continued blaze of light as far as the eyes could reach, and bounded by the lofty arch of L'Etoile, which appeared like an enchanted castle in the air, to which the brilliant avenue conducted. Every stall, every booth, every show, every orchestra sent forth its lights, which glimmered and sparkled amidst the trees,

as if the starry canopy of heaven had fallen upon the earth, mistaking the unusual brilliancy for its own bright galaxy, and upon reascending each star had become entangled amidst the foliage of the trees from which it was now endeavouring to escape.

The Place de la Concorde appeared completely filled by the crowd, who waited, in breathless silence, every fresh explosion of the *feu d'artifice*, whose dazzling showers brought every one individually into notice. Occasionally a loud buzz of approbation marked an unusually fine display, and again all was silent, save the loud splashing of the two magnificent fountains which rose like pyramids in the centre of the crowd, sending their waters sparkling above them: all around was bright and beautiful, breathing happiness and hilarity, and well might the young and animated Englishmen exclaim—"wonderful! enchanting!"

But the night drew on, and the crowd began to separate. Captain St. John and the two young ladies entered a cóach, and were conveyed to their hôtel, leaving their untired friends to wander still longer amidst the attractive scene. Gustave also took his departure soon after, and as Fitz-Henry, Eugène, and Arnold, were following his example, they stopped for a few moments before one of the booths, where a large party of both French and English had assembled. Amongst them they saw Stanley, who was dancing with the infatuated Julie. She appeared perfectly reconciled to her unworthy companion, whose excited manners and freedom towards her were observable to all; yet the unguarded girl, heedless of the caution she had received, obviously courted rather than shunned the danger of his attention and his flattery. Not wishing to be observed by Stanley, Fitz-Henry and his companions quickly withdrew from the rather turbulent scene, and were soon after quietly settled in their respective chambers at the Hôtel des Tuileries.

It was at rather an early hour on the following morning that Arnold entered the chamber of Fitz-Henry. He appeared greatly excited, and immediately began to explain the cause of his being so.

"Stanley has just returned, after remaining from the hôtel during the night. He is now scarcely sober, and has been boasting of his conquest over the unfortunate Julie; indeed, his observations were so heartless and unprincipled, that I have avowed my intention of avoiding his society for the future. Every tie that united us is broken by his conduct—I cannot associate with such a character: the only feeling that I can now entertain towards him is unqualified contempt."

"I cannot disapprove of your determination," observed Fitz-Henry, "for Stanley is indeed unworthy of respect: inebriety and seduction are crimes that call for our detestation. Poor Julie! I foresaw the danger of her position, and cautioned her against it; but her thoughtlessness and infatuation have proved her ruin—have prevented her from viewing in their true light the flattery and mock affection that he displayed towards her. In my heart I pity her, for she was young, and apparently friendless. How different might have been her lot had she known the care and attention of a mother—had she never been subjected to the influence of the vain and heartless disposition of her misguided protectress! far—far better had it been had she shared the poverty of her parents. The superficial education which she has received, and the comparative affluence with which she was for a time surrounded, have unfitted her for the station in which she was placed. Her head is too weak, and her disposition too ardent, to cope with such a man as Stanley, and I am more sorry than surprised at the result of their connexion."

"Yet he may meet with his just retribution," said Arnold. "The passions of Julie are violent; with the levity of a Parisian *grisette* she possesses the revengeful feelings of an Indian, and Stanley must be cautious how he proceeds in this affair. I feel convinced Julie will never brook indifference after having given such proofs of her affection, or rather unrestrained passion; her hate would be as violent as has been her infatuation were he now to shun her, which I fear is too probable. I know not what would be the result, for he must not flatter himself that he will

escape with the same impunity as he has unfortunately done on similar occasions."

"May he now meet with all that his heartless conduct deserves!" exclaimed Fitz-Henry—"the hate and revenge of her whom he has so greatly wronged—the odium of those by whom he is surrounded! But the world looks too indifferently upon such matters; even those who would shrink from committing such a crime themselves partly encourage it in others by associating with them: they do not sufficiently express their detestation. How often is inebriety glossed over by attributing it to a spirit of social conviviality—to the warmth of an excitable temperament!—nay, it is frequently the boast of the foolish that they have so committed themselves; thus boasting of their own degradation from man to brute, and forgetting that drunkenness is the passport that gives admission to the land of crime. It is this disregard of his duties as a man that has led Stanley to the crime of seduction—to boast of his having ruined the hapless being who confided in his honour and his love. But enough of this; these bad acts of our acquaintances make us value still more the friendship of those who can fearlessly condemn such depravity—whose own pure minds are more worthy of our affection."

It was late before Arnold and Fitz-Henry descended to breakfast, where Eugène was waiting for them. They had agreed to visit Versailles together, and were just preparing to start when a note was brought to Fitz-Henry from Gustave, who was to have joined them. The contents greatly distressed them all, for Fitz-Henry read it aloud, knowing the interest they would feel for their young associate. The note ran thus:—

"Come to me, dear Fitz-Henry, for my mother is seriously ill. I was relating my introduction to Captain St. John to her this morning, when she fell suddenly on the floor insensible. She has just recovered her recollection, and wishes me to send for you; why, I know not, but come immediately to your unhappy friend,

"GUSTAVE."

All idea of visiting Versailles was abandoned, and having requested Eugène to meet him after his return, Fitz-Henry proceeded to the hôtel of Madame Beaumont.

## CHAPTER XII.

### Confession and Repentance—Important Disclosure—Impetuous Sorrow—Conflict between Pride and Feeling.

FITZ-HENRY was admitted to the *salon*, in which he found Gustave and his mother. The latter appeared greatly agitated, and Gustave himself was in a state of anxiety, for he was fearful that the excited feelings of his mother would tend to increase her indisposition, which had already made great inroads upon her constitution.

"This speedy compliance with my wishes," said Madame Beaumont, as she extended her hand to Fitz-Henry, "is another proof of your kindness. I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for the interest you take in our affairs. I wish to consult with you upon a matter of some moment; for, young as you are, to be intrusted with a subject so delicate and so sad, and short as has been our acquaintance, I feel assured the friendship you have shown for Gustave will entitle you to the confidence which I am about to place in you."

"Nor shall that confidence be misplaced," said Fitz-Henry. "My acquaintance with you and Gustave has, as you observe, been but short; yet it has been sufficient to excite in reality the interest I profess to feel, and, as far as my power extends, you may both command me."

Madame Beaumont again expressed her thanks, and, pressing her lips upon the brow of her son, she requested him to leave her with Fitz-Henry for a time, as she did not wish him to be present during the communication which she had to make to his friend.

To this Gustave readily consented, for he always paid implicit attention to the wishes of his mother, who, as soon as he had left the *salon*, commenced her conversation with Fitz-Henry.

"My son has informed me of his introduction to Captain St. John; are you, Fitz-Henry, acquainted with that family? or rather, I would ask, have you known them for any length of time?"

"I have not," replied Fitz-Henry, "for previous to my coming to Paris, a few weeks since, I did not know them even by name: I brought with me letters of introduction from a mutual friend."

"And are you also acquainted with the nephew of Captain St. John, Eugène St. Foy?" continued Madame Beaumont, greatly agitated, "and have lately saved his life?"

"Eugène is my dearest friend," said Fitz-Henry, warmly; "for though I have known him for so short a time, there is no one who possesses so great a share of my friendship. It was my happiness to render him assistance in the hour of danger, and this event draws still closer the bonds that unite us."

Madame Beaumont pressed her forehead upon her hand, and wept bitterly. For some moments she remained silent; but, raising her eyes slowly, she fixed them upon Fitz-Henry, as she asked:—

"And, doubtless, Eugène has made you acquainted with his history—the events that attended his early days?"

The extreme agitation of Madame Beaumont, and the strong resemblance which he now discovered between her and his friend, assured Fitz-Henry that in the sorrowful and still beautiful being before him he beheld the guilty mother of Eugène, and it was under this conviction that he answered in a tone of sadness—

"In sorrow and in confidence, I have been made acquainted with the early history of Eugène."

"And in what terms," exclaimed Madame Beaumont, almost breathlessly—"in what terms, Fitz-Henry, does he speak of that mother who so cruelly forsook him—who brought shame for affection—who made his young life sorrowful, and destroyed the happiness of his father? Tell me, Fitz-Henry—spare not my feelings, but tell me—what says Eugène of that mother?"

"I will not deceive you, dear madame," replied Fitz-Henry, "for it would be wrong in me to disguise the feelings of Eugène from one whom circumstances convince me is his mother. He has indeed been taught the value of virtue, the disgrace of crime —and has felt deeply the unfortunate events which have brought unhappiness to himself, and which embittered the life of that father whose memory he so greatly reveres."

"I see," exclaimed Madame Beaumont, with anguish—"I see, Eugène has been taught to curse his mother, to look upon the crime she committed as beyond the reach of pardon. Oh! Heaven! I am severely, yet justly punished. Yes, Fitz-Henry, I am indeed that guilty wife—that unfeeling mother! but condemn me not too harshly. Years of sorrow, of deep repentance, may plead for my errors, my infatuation. Oh! you might almost pity me; you know not the blandishments which seduced me. Young—ardent—with a mind stored only with superficial accomplishments—united to one who loved me indeed, but whose love was stern, whose disposition was gloomy, whose feelings accorded so little with my own, I became bewildered—intoxicated with the pleasures—the splendours by which I was so suddenly surrounded. Transported from the deep seclusion of the Chateau St. Foy to the dazzling scenes of Paris, the cheerful and glowing language which, for the first time, I heard addressed to myself, excited feelings of distaste for the kind, yet serious language of my husband. Step by step my affections became estranged from one who, to my perverted mind, appeared not to appreciate as he ought the love I bore him. Foolishly I considered the inflated and ardent language of passion more expressive of sincerity than the calm voice of innate affection. With none to guide me—none to advise; tempted on the one side with pleasure and adulation, chilled on the other by gloom and passionate attachment, I fled—less to enjoy the former than to avoid the latter. I became the victim of my folly ere I was fully conscious of the guilt which my flight had brought upon me."

"I do indeed pity—feel for you!" said Fitz-Henry, in a sad

tone, "for I can fully comprehend the position in which you were placed. The dereliction from the duties of wife and mother is justly a subject of grave censure; yet there are extenuating circumstances which should prevent us from condemning too severely the errors committed by our fellow-mortals, and for which there is pardon at a higher tribunal than that of man. We should remember that woman, in the weakness of her sex, is by habit and education little calculated to cope with the insidious temptations of the world, or the perfidious blandishments of man, when his power is directed to the accomplishment of his purpose. In such cases woman may be blamable, but doubly so the man who has sought the ruin of those whom it was intended by nature he should protect; who, by sophistry and deceit, would tempt the weakness and enslave the heart that had depended in confidence on his honour. I may appear young to offer such sage remarks, but it is our experience and knowledge of the world, rather than our years, by which man's age may be estimated."

"Your observations," replied Madame Beaumont, "only convince me the more that I was right in seeking your advice; for your experience will enable you to judge more rightly of my position, and to act more justly towards me. You have heard my unhappy history up to the time of my leaving my own peaceful, though somewhat gloomy home. We left Paris for Florence, where Gustave was born. Two years after that event the affairs of Captain Monrose called him to Brussels, where he died suddenly, leaving the greater part of his fortune to me and his son. Need I say that I had long repented of my error, and with bitter tears recalled the past? but could I seek forgiveness—could I return to the home of my husband with the child of shame—the innocent proof of my guilt? No, no, I felt that would be impossible. On the other hand, could I desert the hapless being who had no tie—no friend on earth but myself? I knew the disposition of St. Foy too well to expect from him any other feeling save that of generous forbearance; his love, his respect,

I knew would never again be mine, and my spirit could not brook indifference in the home where I had been so idolised. My resolution was taken; I determined for ever to forsake my country—to forfeit the ties which I had broken. I left Brussels, not for Italy, as I had stated to Captain St. John, but for Geneva, for I wished to remain unknown to all; and further to disguise my identity, I assumed the name of Beaumont instead of Monrose, by which I had for three years been known. I devoted myself wholly to the education of my son, who was early taught to respect the bonds which his unhappy mother had so recklessly broken—to respect the memory of his father as the departed husband of his mother."

"Then Gustave is not aware of his birth," observed Fitz-Henry.

"Oh no!" exclaimed Madame Beaumont, "and this ignorance is now one of the greatest causes of my unhappiness, for I dread the reproaches which I feel my due. The very lessons which I have taught him will now turn against me; his high sense of honour will make him miserable to hear that he is the child of shame—that the father whose memory he has been taught to respect acted a part so base. The conviction that we should never return to France, and possibly a feeling of shame, has always prevented my acquainting Gustave with the history of his birth. Some arrangement in the affairs of the late Captain Monrose has called me unexpectedly to Paris; still I did not fear detection. The agent employed was alone acquainted with my real circumstances, and, it is needless to say, he was bound to secrecy. Nor would I allow Gustave to be present during our interviews, or to accept from him the invitations which he kindly offered to introduce my son into his family, for I dreaded lest, in a moment of forgetfulness, the long-cherished secret should be revealed to him. I had only recently heard of my husband's death, and conjectured that Eugène resided with his uncle in England; for I was not aware till this morning that Captain St. John had again returned to reside in Paris. I then knew that Gustave's introduction to the family would render further con-

cealment impossible. The name of Eugène had been before mentioned to me by my son, but under such circumstances as to lead me from any suspicion of his being *the* Eugène who had such claims upon me as his mother. From Gustave's account I see Captain St. John is still the same good and generous person as I once knew him to be; Eugène, too, is all that a mother could desire. He may be kind to his young brother, though he may never forgive his unhappy mother. No, I must not—I cannot expect ever to possess the affection of Eugène; but, for Gustave's sake, you will, Fitz-Henry, make them acquainted with the ties which subsist between them. I feel that my health is declining; in a few months, perhaps weeks, I shall be beyond the reach of pity or forgiveness. It is my duty to make Gustave acquainted with his connexion with Eugène—to solicit for him the esteem and friendship of Captain St. John; and it is to effect this that I have sought your assistance. You are loved—esteemed by them all, and I know your generous nature; your friendship for Gustave will make you willing to promote his interest. To you I delegate the task of breaking to him the unhappy position in which he stands in relation to his birth The power that you possess over his feelings must be employed in my behalf; my hopes will rest upon you."

Madame Beaumont wept as she reclined her head upon the sofa on which she was seated. Fitz-Henry endeavoured to console her, as he answered mildly—

"Do not fear for the affection of Gustave, dear madame; he will recall only your love—your cares for him. He will love you only the more when he becomes aware how much you have suffered—how deeply repented; when he knows how greatly your future peace of mind will depend upon his affection. But is there not another to whom I may extend my office of mediator—is not Eugène included in your wishes of reconciliation?"

"Oh, yes—yes!" exclaimed Madame Beaumont, hastily; "yes, Fitz-Henry, if you think there is a hope—a chance of such happiness, as his forgiveness—to press to my heart my long-forsaken

boy—to hear his still remembered accents acknowledge me as his mother—to see him united to Gustave—to know that I possess the love—the forgiveness of them both—oh! this would indeed be happiness! This would almost make me forget the past, and with a ray of hope anticipate the future. Fitz-Henry, my happiness is in your hands; I cannot desire a better advocate, for you can sympathise with the unfortunate: your affection for my children has been too strongly tested for me to doubt its sincerity. Eugène may be proud of his young brother, noble-hearted—affectionate—innocent like himself; he will—he must acknowledge the tie. He cannot, when he knows Gustave thoroughly, fail to do so; he cannot towards him resent the wrongs which his guilty parents have brought upon his father and himself. Fitz-Henry, you must entreat him."

"Most gladly will I do so," replied Fitz-Henry, "nor need you fear for the result. Leave all to me; the influence which I possess over the minds of both shall be used in your cause, for, in promoting your happiness, I feel assured theirs will be augmented. But you are exhausted: I will not prolong this interview; you require rest and quietude after so much agitation. I will take Gustave with me, and make him acquainted with what has passed; I will introduce him to Eugène as his brother, and in the evening I will return with him, when I may hope to find you more composed, and better able to meet Gustave."

Madame Beaumont had sunk upon the sofa, and Fitz-Henry summoned her attendant, for he saw how much she was overpowered by her excitement; indeed, she was wholly unable to express her feelings of gratitude towards him. Silently he pressed her hand to his lips, and quited the *salon*, in search of Gustave, who had been waiting impatiently for a summons from Fitz-Henry or his mother.

"Your mother is better, dear Gustave," said Fitz-Henry, answering the anxious looks of his young friend; "but you cannot see her now; she requires rest, and I have promised to take you with me for the day, and in the evening, when we return, she

will be better able to see you. I have also much to explain relative to what has passed in this interview; but at present you must forbear to question me: in the evening, and in the quietude of my chamber, I will tell you all. A little fresh air will do you good, and I have promised to meet Eugène in the Champs Elysées; he is in some way connected with what I have to relate to you, and must be present during my explanation."

Gustave appeared surprised at this statement of Fitz-Henry, but restrained his impatience, and conversed on ordinary subjects with his friend as they proceeded to meet Eugène, who was at the spot appointed. He informed them that Arnold had started with some friends to Versailles, where they intended to pass the night. This was rather pleasing intelligence to Fitz-Henry, as he was now sure of not being interrupted in his interview with his two young friends, for there was no other person at the hôtel likely to break in upon them. He felt the importance of his mission, for he knew how many prejudices and strong feelings he had to overcome in the mind of Eugène, and how much opposition he might meet with from the high-spirited Gustave; yet he depended much upon the strong affection which he knew they both bore him, and the services which he had rendered to each. Still he felt deeply for the position in which they were placed, and wished the interview was over in which their passions and affections were to be tested. They dined together at the hôtel, and immediately after ascended to Fitz-Henry's apartment, each of the brothers anxious to hear the promised explanation; for during their walk Eugène had been informed that he was interested in the statement, and though he suspected some tidings of his mother were about to be revealed, yet, like Gustave, he had no suspicion of the connexion that subsisted between them. Silently they placed themselves upon the sofa, on each side of Fitz-Henry, who immediately commenced the important communication.

"Eugène, you have had some proofs of my sincerity; you have given me your confidence; you have confided to me your hopes—your fears—your most secret thoughts, and I am proud of the

trust, and ambitious of retaining it. Feeling thus, you may be assured no slight cause would make me assume the appearance of unkindness, or make me ask that of you which would argue a breach of trust on my part; but there are circumstances which render it imperative that your confidence should extend beyond myself. You must give me your permission, dear Eugène, to make Gustave acquainted with the particulars relative to your early life."

Eugène looked surprised, and a slight shade of displeasure passed over his features as his eyes glanced towards Gustave, who appeared almost as astonished as himself. Fitz-Henry saw the embarrassment of them both, and hastened to relieve them.

"It was not by the wish of Gustave that I have made this request; till this moment he knew not my intention of asking so strange and, apparently, so unreasonable a favour. No trivial matter would now make me urge it; but believe me, Engène, that statement is necessary to preface that which I have to relate to you both, for you are both connected, closely connected, with my statement."

"Yes, Fitz-Henry, your wishes shall be gratified," said Eugène, after a few moments hesitation. "I owe you too much, and my confidence in you is too great, for me to refuse you. I feel assured you would not unnecessarily wound me by a disclosure of my history, and I am also sure of obtaining the sympathy of Gustave. Tell him, Fitz-Henry, why it is that I possess not the same happy buoyancy of spirits as himself; tell him all that I have felt—those stern lessons of sorrow and of shame which have so changed my nature—turning the hilarity of youth to the gloominess of age. Reveal all, and spare not those who have, by their conduct, forfeited all claims of pity or forbearance."

Without heeding the conclusion of Eugène's observations, Fitz-Henry commenced the unhappy narrative, in which Gustave appeared deeply interested, though unconscious of the prominent

verted imagination, rather than to a depraved heart. He spoke of the stern lessons instilled into the mind of Eugène by his father; for he thought that statement would tend to justify the rigid principles entertained by his friend, which might otherwise be attributed to a natural coldness of disposition or hardness of heart. Gustave appeared to enter fully into all the sorrows of Eugène—all the troubles that had embittered his early life; for a tear dimmed his bright eye as he listened to Fitz-Henry, whose deep-toned voice and ardent feeling added a double impressiveness to the history he was relating.

When it was finished, Gustave took the hand of Eugène. The melancholy expression of his usually cheerful features evinced how great was his sympathy, and how sincere his expressions of friendship, as he observed—

"Dear Eugène, you have, indeed, had much to make you sorrowful. The recollection of your mother must cause you deep regret; for oh! you know not what it is to have a mother's love—a mother's confidence; one to whom you may confide your joys, your sorrows, and your thoughts—one who can listen to your tales of hope, and smile in your hours of joy—one of whom you may be proud; yes, proud as I am of mine—so good, so kind. You must see my mother, Eugène, for she will join in sympathy for you—will, for my sake, extend her affection to you—make you almost forget the ties which in your own case have been broken."

Fitz-Henry trembled as he listened to the glowing language of Gustave, for he knew how soon that happy dream would be destroyed, and his voice faltered, as he said—

"Yes, Gustave, Eugène has felt much; but the errors of those most near to us must not occasion too great a mistrust in the happiness that is left to us. Both Eugène and you have been taught to abhor that which is wrong, but you have both also been taught the great virtue of forgiveness; and it is this lesson which you must now practice. Eugène must extend it to his mother if he finds her repentant, and seeking his forgiveness."

"Against my father's wrongs—my own!" exclaimed Eugène.

"Yes, Eugène," replied Fitz-Henry, calmly, "against all those provocations you should grant it, or where would be that forbearance which it is our duty to practice? where there are no real wrongs what virtue would there be in our forgiveness?"

"Oh! may I never be called upon to exercise that trial of my feeling!" said Eugène passionately.

"Not if a young and innocent brother were to plead for that mother?" observed Fitz-Henry, fixing his eyes upon Eugène; "one who has perhaps still more than yourself reason to deplore the unhappy circumstances of that mother's guilt? Would you add to the sorrows of his young and hitherto happy heart by rejecting his supplications—by withholding the only ray of hope that is left to cheer him?"

"But I have no brother—none save you, Fitz-Henry, the friend—the brother of my adoption. I wish no other; unless, indeed, Gustave will share in the ties that subsist between us. He is entitled to my affection; for, young as he is, he can reciprocate my feelings, can sympathise in my sorrows."

"And must continue to share them," interrupted Fitz-Henry. "Yes, Eugène, I will be the friend, the adopted brother of you both; but Gustave is your brother by the ties of nature: the same mother, guilty as she may have been, must be the bond between us."

Eugène and Gustave started from their seats in astonishment. Each gazed upon the features of the other—each remained silent, trembling with excitement, and waiting anxiously for the result of this strange and unexpected disclosure: each waited to hear if this relationship would be acknowledged by the other. Slowly Eugène re-seated himself; not a word was spoken to his brother. He pressed his forehead upon the sofa in silence; yet his emotion was extreme. Gustave remained standing, his face and forehead suffused with the blush of wounded pride—of agonised feeling. His eyes dilated, his breast heaved, and his young features bore the impression of mingled sorrow and pride; and his voice trembled

as he expressed; in a slow and earnest tone, the excited feelings of his heart.

"Eugène acknowledges not the tie; he disdains to think of me as his brother. I will not blame him; the son of the man who has so greatly wronged him can have no claims upon his affections. He must detest the child of guilt and shame; for he can reflect with pride upon the memory of his father. He may be happy—yes, happy in comparison with me; friendless—without a name; father—mother—both guilty—disgraced. Oh! is it possible? is this my mother, my kind, my affectionate mother—a breaker of the ties of God and man—an adultress? No, no, it cannot be! Recall your words, Fitz-Henry; say that it was in jest that you accused my mother. I will forgive you; indeed I will. I will forget the anguish that your words have occasioned me. Deprive me not of that mother whom I so greatly loved; tell me not that she is unworthy even of my esteem. It was my only tie on earth; do not break it; do not cast me on the world alone—ashamed—afraid to acknowledge from whom I have my being. I cannot bear it: I was so happy—so joyous! Speak, Fitz-Henry! tell Eugène that I am not his brother—that I am not the son of him who acted so like a villain. Tell him this, that he may not be ashamed to look upon me as his friend. Do not remain silent—both so silent. Evince not so suddenly that I am friendless."

The excited feelings of Gustave were too much for him to bear. He turned red and pale by turns—the tear started from his eye; yet pride curled his young lip, and his voice faltered as he proceeded, now in tones of wounded pride, and now in accents of the deepest anguish. At last he threw himself frantically on the ground, while Fitz-Henry remained overwhelmed with sorrow to see his violence and deep emotion—to hear the stifled sobbing of Eugène, who still concealed his features on the sofa, but spoke not. Fitz-Henry had expected that they would both feel greatly the explanation he had to make, for he knew the enthusiasm of Eugène, and the wild and uncontrolled passions of Gustave; but he was not prepared for such strong emotions, and the violence of

Gustave alarmed him. He raised him from the floor, and placed him on the sofa, with his head resting on his breast. As he supported him the paroxysm of grief had passed, and Gustave wept as he listened to the soothing voice of Fitz-Henry.

"Gustave, this must not be—you must command your feelings; you must not say that you are friendless, because you know that you are not so. You know my feelings towards you, and you have not yet proved that the kindness of others is less sincere. You must not so soon expect Eugène to banish the feelings of years—you must trust in his affectionate disposition; but you must leave it to time to accomplish all that we wish. You must not judge harshly of your mother; you must remember her sorrow and repentance: her happiness—her very life—may depend upon you. You have felt her love—you have experienced her ceaseless care. Whatever may have been her errors, it is not from you that she ought to experience unkindness."

"Why," said Gustave, abstractedly—"why has she instilled into my mind the strong precepts of virtue—the deep abhorrence of vice? Why, if she wished to retain my affection—why, if I am to be branded as the child of shame? How can I now fill that station in society which it was my boast—my pride—to occupy? Every eye will disdain me, every hand will point me out as one to be avoided; for who that is virtuous and noble will associate with one so intimately, so closely connected with the guilty?"

"Oh! many—many, dear Gustave," exclaimed Eugène, rising hastily, and taking the hand of his brother. "Oh! do not despair; your opinions are those which I entertained for years; but they are erroneous—I now feel that they are so. We are, indeed, the children of a guilty mother—one who forsook her duties to God and man to follow a wretch—a villain."

"Oh! stop, stop, Eugène!" interrupted Gustave, impetuously, "stop! in pity to me. He was my father; on his death bed he pressed me to his heart; in his last moments he provided for my welfare. I knew him only a kind, a tender father, and, child as

I was, I wept at his death, and have respected his memory. Do not teach me to hate it; I cannot so suddenly change the feelings of years. My mother, too! in the wild emotion of the moment I have almost cursed her. I was half mad; I knew not what I said —what I did. My patient, my sorrowing mother—who has so loved, so guarded me! no, no, I cannot, I will not so outrage my feelings. Speak not of my father, Eugène; for my sake, speak not of him. Even if forsaken by the world, let us cling together; we may still be happy in the love of our repentant mother. Let us unite in making her forget the past."

"Gustave," replied Eugène, in a slow and sad tone, "this cannot be; I cannot, under such circumstances, anticipate the future. We may be all that you wish to each other; we may even enjoy the respect and affection of others, yet we cannot be completely happy—we must still feel the errors of her who gave us birth. Would that we could forget that we ever had a mother! Let us endeavour, as far as possible, to do so. I am wealthy; my home is yours—henceforth let us live together, happy in ourselves, happy in the friendship of the good and just; those who, like Fitz-Henry, can spurn the cold maxims of the world, and fear not to show their sympathy towards the innocent children of the outcast!"

"And leave my mother!" exclaimed Gustave, fixing a look of deep sorrow and astonishment upon his brother, "leave my unhappy—my affectionate mother! No, Eugène, never—never! You do not know me—you do not rightly estimate my feelings, or you would not so advise me. I would be grateful for your sympathy—happy in your affection; I would cling to you through life; I would devote my every thought—every energy to promote your happiness. In my affection and my devotedness I would endeavour to make you forget the past—forget the wrongs which you have suffered from my father; but I cannot, I will not abandon my mother. Oh! do not ask it, dear Eugène; do not make me think so badly of your nature. I would be proud of my brother; I would have him my example—my confidant; let us

unite in making more happy the declining life of our mother. Fitz-Henry has taught us that we ought to do so. We owe him much; let us evince our gratitude in being obedient to his wishes. Our mother acted wrongly; but she has suffered much—repented deeply. I feel she will not long be with us; let her die happy, in the possession of our forgiveness—our affection. Promise this, dear Eugène—promise this, or, greatly as it would wound me, I must forget that I have a brother!"

"Noble-minded boy!" said Fitz-Henry, as he gazed with admiration on the expressive features of his young friend—"noble, dear Gustave. You have, indeed, proved yourself all that I thought you to be; you have taught your brother a lesson that he may be proud to follow. Yes, Eugène, you must, you will fulfil the hopes—the wishes of your brother—the wishes of us all."

"Oh! that I could!" interrupted Eugène, "that I could follow the noble, generous example of Gustave! but I feel I cannot; it would be hypocrisy for me to promise it under my present feelings. I have not the ties which bind him to his mother. From his infancy he has been her care—her only thought; her whole affection has been, and may still be placed on him, while me she has abandoned—forgotten."

"No, Eugène," observed Fitz-Henry, "say not forgotten; your mother thinks of you with affection—she has never ceased to think of you, and long ere this would she have sought your forgiveness; but she knew not of your father's death, and she remembered his stern and resolute disposition. She knew that he would never receive Gustave, and you cannot blame her for not forsaking him who had no other protector or friend on earth. Look at him, Eugène—is he one whom a mother could forsake—could cast friendless on the world? Do not reject her prayer now that she would repay you for the past; let her not sink into the grave without some effort on your part to make her less unhappy. For your brother's sake—for your own—let me entreat you to this act of duty. Spare yourself the deep remorse that may be yours hereafter when it will be too late to accede to the wishes

of your brother—the prayers of your mother. I say not this without ground for my fears; the health of your mother is rapidly declining: ere she is gone let her receive your forgiveness—your love; this night let her receive it."

"Not now," said Eugène; "I feel that I cannot see my mother now—I cannot now act as you would wish me. Bear with me awhile, and I may become all that you wish; but I require a brief time to forget the lessons I have been taught—the feelings I have entertained for years. I will not make an offer of my affections until I can do so with sincerity. I must reflect upon all that has just passed; at present it bewilders me as a troubled dream. Tell my mother this, Fitz-Henry—tell her to expect much from me; that I acknowledge Gustave as my brother—that I forgive her. To-morrow I may see her—now I cannot trust my feelings to do so."

Eugène pressed the hand of his brother and his friend, and, without speaking another word, retired to his own apartment.

For some little time Gustave remained silent; but his tearful eye and agitated frame showed how much the conduct and hasty departure of Eugène had wounded him. His young and sensitive heart felt deeply this rejection of his hopes—his wishes, and it required all the eloquence of Fitz-Henry to convince him, even partially, that Eugène was not the cold and unforgiving being that he now appeared, or that his affection might be expected for the future. But Fitz-Henry knew the heart of Eugène, and felt his present conduct proceeded from strong excitement and a high principle of honour, which would not allow him to express sentiments which he did not feel, or promise that which he was not sure of ever being able to perform. All this he endeavoured to instil into the mind of Gustave as they proceeded towards the hôtel of Madame St. Foy.

As they entered the *salon* Gustave flew into the arms of his mother, who was anxiously waiting his return. In the wildness and ardour of his affection he kissed her hands, her forehead, and her lips—in silence, indeed, but this appeal was more eloquent

than words, and a ray of love and hope beamed in the eyes of the fond mother as she pressed the warm-hearted boy to her heart; but suddenly she turned to Fitz-Henry, and inquired for Eugène.

"Dear madame," answered Fitz-Henry, "to-night you must not expect Eugène; the surprise was too great—too much for his sensitive nature—his wild enthusiasm. He has sent his forgiveness; he has expressed his affection for his brother, and soon you may expect to see him."

"I see what your generous nature would conceal," replied Madame St. Foy; "he acknowledges his brother—as, indeed, who would not be proud to do so?—but he remembers that his mother has wronged him: *her* he hesitates to forgive." And Madame St. Foy wept as she pressed Gustave more fondly to her heart.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### Prejudice and Duty—Jealousy—Admonition urged by Affection—The Contract.

At an early hour on the following morning the *garçon* entered the chamber of Fitz-Henry, bringing a note from Eugène, who, it appeared, had already started for Versailles, leaving this written intimation of his intentions, which Fitz-Henry read with anxiety; for he knew the ardent and melancholy temperament of the young Frenchman, and he feared the result of his thus flying into solitude to indulge the sad reflections which the events of the preceding evening would naturally inspire. The note was as follows:—

"When you receive this I shall be on my way to Versailles. I cannot meet you nor Gustave while thus undecided in my conduct. All night have I been endeavouring to bring my mind to accede to your wishes, but I feel I cannot; I must have time to reflect—

induce me to a reconciliation with my mother; I would, as far as possible, banish from my mind all recollections that are calculated to oppose your proposition. Forgive me, Fitz-Henry! pity this struggle between my feelings and my duty—for my duty I know is to act as you would wish me; yet I cannot—I will not offer my affection till I can do so in sincerity. I cannot bear your censure—I cannot forfeit your esteem; yet my actions must plead against me. When you see Gustave tell him to think of me as his brother, for I hope soon to prove that I am one—soon to convince you that I am not wholly unworthy of your affection."

Fitz-Henry sat some time musing upon the contents of the note. He scarcely knew how to act. His feelings prompted him to proceed immediately to Versailles, and, if possible, to reason with Eugène upon thus flying from his friends, and indulging in his melancholy feelings by himself; but then he knew not the address of his young friend, and he thought it were better could he consult with Captain St. John upon the subject ere he sought Eugène. He therefore determined to wait till the following morning, as he knew both the captain and Edith would not be at home until the evening, when they expected a few friends, to meet whom both he and Eugène had been invited.

During the morning Fitz-Henry visited Madame St. Foy, as he had promised, and explained, as favourably as possible, the absence of Eugène, endeavouring to convince them that the step he had taken was most judicious under the present excited state of his feelings, and that he doubted not Eugène would soon return, and in his affectionate conduct realise all their hopes and wishes. In this view of the case Fitz-Henry partly succeeded with Madame St. Foy; but Gustave felt acutely the conduct of Eugène. His young and rather hasty disposition could not enter into all the feelings which had actuated his brother, and he attributed his departure to a proud and cold feeling towards his mother and himself rather than to an honest candour which prevented Eugène from expressing that which his heart told him he could not feel.

In the evening Fitz-Henry proceeded to the Faubourg St. Honoré, and was met in the afternoon by Captain St. John, who, as he shook him warmly by the hand, expressed his wish for a few moment's conversation before they entered the *salon*, and, leading the way to his study, he was followed by Fitz-Henry, whose heart beat high with anticipation, for he thought his love for Edith had been discovered by her father, who now intended to question him upon the subject; but he was soon relieved from his apprehension on this point, for the captain immediately explained his object for asking this interview.

"On our return from St. Germain's this afternoon, I found a note from Eugène, explaining what took place last evening, and asking my advice. Your generous and friendly conduct in this affair cannot but meet with my approbation, and makes me anxious to consult with you upon the subject. I esteemed greatly the father of Eugène, and resented the wrongs which he sustained; but it was on him who corrupted the hitherto pure mind of Madame St. Foy, rather than on her, that my resentment fell. At his death Monrose made the only atonement in his power by making her independent of the world and of the husband whom she had forsaken. It is evident that Madame St. Foy has long repented—has suffered much; and to forgive her would now be a duty. Eugène must be taught this. To-morrow you must see him, and, if possible, persuade him to see his mother. He must forget her errors. He will, or I greatly mistake his disposition; he will, if only for the sake of his young and innocent brother. Gustave is a fine—a noble boy! and the first moment I saw him his likeness to Eugène and to Madame St. Foy, as I remembered her, struck me most forcibly."

Fitz-Henry readily agreed with the views of Captain St. John, and explained more fully the situation of Madame St. Foy, and the delicate state of her health, which awoke the good feeling and sympathy of the captain.

"Poor thing! poor thing!" said he thoughtfully, "she has suffered quite enough; we must not add to her troubles. You

must tell her, Fitz-Henry, that if she will receive us, Edith and I will call and see her; tell her that we will forget the past, and busy ourselves only in arranging for the future. Our united forces will overcome the scruples of Eugène, or I have no faith in my generalship. But come, we must join the company in the *salon*, or I shall have that mad-cap Edith wondering at my absence, and possibly running away from our friends to seek me, though, by the by, she has got one of her English beaux to detain her, Mr. Marshall, to whom I must introduce you. You have often heard us mention his name, with that of his cousin, Mr. Blagrove, an old suitor of Edith's—though I scarcely know which was the most favoured of the two; for that giddy, romping girl of mine bestowed her smiles and frowns upon them both up to the time of our leaving England, and then bade them adieu with as much coolness as an icicle. Mr. Marshall has followed us rather unexpectedly *en route* for Switzerland, where he is going to pass some months."

Fitz-Henry *had* often heard both of Mr. Marshall and his cousin; for Edith, when in a capricious humour, had occasionally teased him by relating their attentions to her, and not a little exaggerated her feelings towards them; more especially Mr. Blagrove, whose offer, she would intimate, was still unrejected, while the evident intention of Mr. Marshall to propose was only withheld until her views respecting his cousin were decided upon. This inconsiderate and idle tone of conversation had greatly annoyed Fitz-Henry at the time, though he did not place much confidence in her avowal; for, thoughtless as Edith was, he did not believe she would so sport with the feelings of the heart; yet he condemned the love of flirtation which he knew had actuated her conduct towards them, and the feeling which made her thus endeavour to annoy the pure affection which he himself felt for her, and of which she must have been conscious at the time, although she pretended not to be so. Impressed with these ideas, no wonder that Fitz-Henry felt a slight twitch at his heart as he followed Captain St. John to the *salon*, yet he would not acknowledge, even to himself, that it was jealousy; but, had any casual observer seen

the quick glance of his eye and the heightened colour of his complexion when, upon entering the *salon*, he beheld the very close proximity of Mr. Marshall and Edith, he might possibly have guessed that a feeling very like that of jealousy occasioned the rather nervous excitement under which he appeared to labour.

Captain St. John, with a blindness peculiar to fathers under such circumstances, saw nothing of the confusion of Fitz-Henry as he led him towards Edith, or of the embarrassment of his daughter herself in being thus surprised in her very familiar *tête-à-tête* with Mr. Marshall, whom she left to be introduced by her father, turning herself to another part of the *salon*, after a rather hasty greeting to Fitz-Henry.

"Mr. Fitz-Henry, Mr. Marshall—Mr. Marshall, Mr. Fitz-Henry," said the captain, as he brought the young men together. "I am not quite *au fait* to the ceremony of introduction; but doubtless two such fashionable young fellows as you are will comprehend all that ought to be said upon such occasions, and excuse the master of the ceremonies."

Fitz-Henry smiled, but bowed coolly to Mr. Marshall, who returned the salute more cordially, observing, in a friendly and gay tone—

"My good friend Captain St. John cannot give me a greater gratification than this introduction, in whatever manner he may have performed the office. I shall be happy and proud to make the acquaintance of Mr. Fitz-Henry, of whom I have already heard so much, both from my gallant friend and also from Edith, whose opinions I have long been accustomed to revere, and whose commands in this instance I am unusually ready to obey."

Courtesy demanded a gracious reply to the friendly greeting of Mr. Marshall, but, as Fitz-Henry uttered it, he could not but recall all that Edith had stated respecting him, and he fancied, for the first time, that something more than a common feeling had sub-

throughout the evening he thought he could detect a mutual understanding between them; that the features of Edith became more animated when she was in conversation with Mr. Marshall, and that the eyes of the new candidate for his acquaintance were too frequently fixed upon her whose love he had flattered himself was exclusively his own. Filled by these rather unreasonable ideas Fitz-Henry became gloomy and reserved; he thought himself wronged by Edith, who, though she never expressed her love for him, had, by her manner, justified the supposition that his feelings were reciprocated. He received her observations with coolness, and frequently during the evening his features expressed a feeling of reproach as their eyes met. He appeared to shrink from the mirth around him, and confined himself as much as possible to the society of Marie, whose melancholy deportment better suited his present disposition.

The once gay and merry Marie had become serious, and even sad; a change which her friends attributed to the delicate state of her health, without once suspecting the cause of that indisposition. A slight blush overspread the pale features of the young girl as Fitz-Henry spoke of the unhappy position of Eugène, nor could she wholly conceal the bright tear that stole from beneath the long lashes which shaded her pensive eye, and which awoke the sympathy of Fitz-Henry; although his attention was so frequently withdrawn from her, as his restless glances followed the movements of Edith, who appeared almost to shun him.

Once during the evening Edith had approached Fitz-Henry, for the purpose of asking him to join her in a duet, but he had declined, offering but a weak excuse for refusing, and expressing even that in tones serious and almost stern. For a moment Edith looked earnestly at him, and a shade of disappointment and anger overspread her features; but it was quickly succeeded by a more cheerful expression, and almost immediately after Fitz-Henry heard her merry laugh as she joined Mr. Marshall, who had accompanied her to the piano.

Fitz-Henry could scarcely command his feelings as he saw

Edith so cheerful, so contented with the indifference of his own conduct towards her. He recalled the character which Eugène had given of his cousin, and felt half convinced that it was a true one. He felt that there must be a change in her feelings and ideas ere she could fulfil with accuracy the duties constituting domestic happiness. He thought the consideration of Eugène's unhappy position might have made her more thoughtful, and the evident melancholy of her friend Marie elicited more attention from her, in fact, he thought Edith unjust and unfeeling, and, angry with himself for the love which, in spite of all, he still bore her, and offended with her, the evening passed sadly and disagreeably, and he felt relieved when the company began to separate, for he knew their departure would justify his own. He took a more than usual tender leave of Marie; he shook the captain warmly by the hand, and then he stood irresolute, pride and love contending within him. His eyes wandered round the *salon*, and his glance fell upon Edith. She was conversing with a lady who was seated beside her; almost involuntarily Fitz-Henry moved towards her, and their eyes met, but those of Edith were quickly averted, for at that moment Mr. Marshall appeared at her side, and, placing a chair near the sofa, seated himself beside her.

Fitz-Henry felt his face burn as he turned hastily away; yet courtesy demanded that he should make Edith aware of his departure. Concealing his emotions under the disguise of extreme hilarity, he hastily approached her, and bidding her a cool and hasty adieu, and bowing slightly to Mr. Marshall, he immediately quitted the *salon*; but scarcely had he entered the ante-room when he felt a hand placed upon his shoulder; he turned, and to his surprise, beheld Edith St. Johul

"Fitz-Henry," said she, in a low tone, "you must not leave me thus; if you value my good opinion, if you would not wish to be thought most uncourteous—most unkind, you must speak with me ere you leave this house. There are lights in my father's study; follow me there, for I must have an explanation of a conduct so strange—so unreasonable."

The features of Edith indicated how powerful was the excitement which had urged her thus to follow Fitz-Henry, and how deeply her feelings were interested in the explanation she demanded. Her brow was tinged with the deepest crimson, and her eyes betrayed an unusual brilliancy in their expression; her whole deportment was that of emotion and impatience, and they had scarcely entered the study ere she began.

"Fitz-Henry, your conduct this evening has surprised and pained me; it has been so unlike your usual free and friendly deportment towards me. Your sadness I may in part attribute to your sympathy in the troubles of Eugène; but there has been a sternness—almost a severity in your manner, that must be accounted for. I know you too well to attribute it to caprice. I feel that you are offended with me, but why, I know not. Is it that you consider I have been too cheerful, considering the sorrowful situation of your friend Eugène? Perhaps it is my nature to be so carried away by the impulse of the moment; yet do not believe me insensible to feeling—do not think, because, for the moment, I have appeared gay and happy, that I do not feel for my cousin. It would argue a hardness of heart, which, I trust, I do not possess, were I so indifferent to the sorrows of those so near and so dear to me as is Eugène. Come, come, Fitz-Henry, confess that you have acted wrongly—unkindly—in so judging me—in not evincing the friendship which has hitherto subsisted between us."

"It is my prizing so highly the kindness which you have hitherto bestowed upon me that has made me this evening so visibly distressed at the change," replied Fitz-Henry; "yet, Edith, I may feel flattered by your having observed my dejection, and I can estimate fully the generous impulse which has led you to inquire the cause of it. I confess that I was unjust enough to suppose that you were too happy in the society of others to pay any attention to my strange and wayward conduct, or to the troubles of Eugène."

"Nay, Fitz-Henry," said Edith, smiling, "this looks like

jealousy. Why should you imagine the friends by whom I was surrounded would so wholly engross my attention as to make me unmindful of your disquietude? Am I considered so devoted to society as to overlook individual friendship in my devotedness to the many?"

"Perhaps I alluded to one, and not the many," replied Fitz-Henry, hesitatingly; "Mr. Marshall appeared to demand your almost exclusive attention."

"I was not aware that my attention was so exclusively given to him, or to any other in particular," said Edith, blushing slightly; "but, if it were so, it would be but natural. You are aware that Mr. Marshall has known me long—that we are old friends, and I had much to hear from him—much to ask respecting persons and scenes which we know in common."

"Most assuredly, Edith; I am not surprised at your making such inquiries. You have told me before of the intimacy which subsisted between you and Mr. Marshall, and which ought to have prepared me for the evident pleasure you have evinced this evening in his society; yet I confess that I was foolish enough to consider your former description of that intimacy a little heightened by your pleasantry at the time; I now find that it was not so. Still I must think your exclusiveness towards him has been too marked to-night, considering how many others there were who had claims upon your attention."

Edith blushed still more deeply as she listened to Fitz-Henry, and a shade of displeasure was visible as she replied:—

"It may be so; but if I were wanting in courtesy to my guests a censure from my father would be more consistent. I am not accustomed to have my actions so scrutinised, nor has any other than my father the authority to question me upon such a subject. I acknowledge no other obedience than that which my duty imposes towards him."

"You mistake me, Edith," said Fitz-Henry, seriously—"you mistake the nature of my remarks. I do not censure—I do not question your conduct only to advise you as a friend—to point out

that which might make you appear less amiable in the eyes of others who do not thoroughly know you. You may possibly deem this presumption on my part, and, were you more indifferent to me, I might feel it so. You would not reply so unkindly did you appreciate fully the motives—the feelings by which I am actuated. I would have you appear always that which I know you to be. I would not have you subjected to the censorious remarks of those who do not rightly understand your character."

"And of what do you accuse me?" asked Edith, in a more conciliating tone.

"Accuse is too strong a term," replied Fitz-Henry; "I would merely point out that which, as a friend, I would have you avoid, for your sake, as well as for that of those whose happiness is connected with yours. In your manner towards Mr. Marshall to-night you have given cause for ungenerous remarks upon your conduct from some who, although partaking of your hospitality, are not in reality your friends—at least, according to my acceptation of the term; and when I hear your name associated with the dangerous folly of flirtation you must forgive me if I point out to you this defect in your character, and warn you of its baneful influence. I should be unworthy of that friendship which you have bestowed upon me did I not act candidly towards you in a subject of so much importance—did I not express my disapprobation of a conduct such as might be expected from a heart less pure—a mind less steady in its affections, than I know yours to be. You admit no authority but that of your father, and your duty obliges you to obey no other; but are the dictates—the admonitions of friendship—of affection, to be disregarded? Is a solicitation for your happiness—your fair fame, to be slighted because emanating from a heart whose interposition is not warranted by authority?"

"I trust I shall never be ungrateful for advice and caution when I know it is given in sincerity, with a wish to promote my happiness," observed Edith. "Come from whom it may, still I am not ready to admit that my conduct towards Mr. Marshall has

entitled me to the remarks and censure which have been made upon it by those from whom I might have expected more forbearance."

"It is possible," replied Fitz-Henry, "that they have not founded their observations upon this night only; for it is not the first time that I have heard you so spoken of, or I should not now think so seriously of it. You know not the pain it occasions me to hear even the suspicion of wrong breathed upon your name; you know not the extent of the interest that I feel in your happiness—the fear that it should be compromised by a passion so dangerous as that of flirtation. Oh! Edith! avoid it, as unworthy of your judgment—as foreign to the real nature of your disposition. Avoid it, as injurious to yourself, as objectionable to others. Yes, believe me, objectionable even to those on whom you bestow your smiles—those who so freely receive them; for they would be the first to condemn such conduct in those they really loved. They enter proudly and joyfully into the practice of flirtation because it flatters and amuses them; their vanity is pleased that a beautiful and accomplished woman should so freely bestow her attention upon them; but there is no heart—no sentiment of sincerity in such a *liaison*. They may bestow their gallantry—their admiration, in return; but their esteem—their affection, is reserved for her who possesses more stability of character—more purity of mind. A coquette may be their favourite companion in the hours of thoughtlessness and pleasure, but it is a rare occurrence that they make her the honoured mistress of their home and heart."

From the commencement of their interview Edith had listened with attention to the arguments advanced by Fitz-Henry, at first with a feeling of anger and wounded pride, but his slow and sorrowful tone evinced how deeply his feelings were engaged, and the look of affection with which he regarded her subdued every feeling of displeasure in her breast. Her better nature prevailed; her judgment pointed out the justness of his observations. She saw in him the firm yet ardent friend, and her conscience

acknowledged the cause she had given him for his censure. She could not mistake his motive—his sincerity; she could not doubt his sorrow in having thus to reprove her, for she saw the bright tear half starting from the eye that was fixed so tenderly upon her. She felt wounded and confused at having so justly deserved this admonition; she felt the right which he had to admonish her—a right founded on the nature of the intimacy which had subsisted between them; for her heart acknowledged what her lips refused to utter, that Fitz-Henry was the sole possessor of her affections; that she had tacitly admitted his right to guide and advise her, and her greatest sorrow now was that she had so tried the love which she knew he bore her. Her bosom heaved with emotion, her head reclined. She was unable longer to command her feelings, and, pressing her hand to her forehead, she could not restrain the tears which started from her eyes.

Fitz-Henry was greatly moved. He took her hand, and pressed it unresistedly to his lips, and his voice trembled as he spoke.

"Forgive me, dear Edith; forgive my causing you this sorrow. I knew your heart was not in the frivolity you assumed. I knew that you were not in reality the thoughtless being that you appeared. I wished you only to act so that others who knew you not so well might not consider you less amiable than I knew you to be. I had the authority of a friend to advise you; that title you have bestowed upon me. Oh! Edith, is there no nearer tie than that of friendship between us? No other has yet been avowed by either; yet I feel something more than friendship has urged me thus freely to speak to you. Would that I were assured my feelings were reciprocated! would that I were assured none other had a claim upon your affections! Yet why should I doubt it? There is a language more eloquent than words—an understanding more conclusive than verbal declamation. Have I misinterpreted this language of the heart? No, Edith, dear Edith; you must assure me that I have not. You know not how greatly my feelings have been wounded to-night, to find myself so neglected where my greatest happiness was

expected—to see another enjoying that place in your attention that has so frequently been my own, and which I was almost presumptuous enough to consider as my right."

Edith withdrew not the hand that was so warmly retained by Fitz-Henry. Slowly she raised her head, and, with a look of modest confusion, fixed her eyes upon the handsome and warm-hearted lover whose happiness was so blended with her own; for she loved him most sincerely, though, in her thoughtlessness, she had so deeply wounded his feelings. A disposition too much given to a love of admiration, and a foolish wish to excite his jealousy, in order to prove the power she possessed over his heart, had led her to adopt a conduct so at variance with honour and good feeling; and greatly now did she repent her rashness.

"Fitz-Henry, it is for me to ask forgiveness; I have acted madly—heartlessly. Justly have you pointed out my errors—justly have you condemned them. I admit your right to do so; yes, I acknowledge the tacit, yet firm bond that subsists between us." And Edith cast her eyes upon the floor as she admitted it.

"You must guide my inexperience—you must continue thus nobly and generously to point out all that is blamable in my character. I have had no guide—no will, save my own, to regulate my actions; for my indulgent father could see no faults in his giddy Edith. I feel the motive by which you have been actuated, and my future conduct shall evince my wish to profit by your advice."

"I do not doubt it, dear Edith," said Fitz-Henry, as he pressed the blushing girl to his breast; "I do not fear but that my—yes, *my* Edith—will become all that her friends wish her to be. Yes, Edith, I love you deeply—ardently; but it is not by words that I would express that love. I will not think so meanly of your understanding as to apply to you the flattery and adulation which so frequently supply the place of true affection. Say that you will blend your fate with mine, and my constant endeavours through life to promote your happiness will attest my gratitude

began so inauspiciously, will be the happiest of my life. Give me your approbation to demand this hand of your father, and to-morrow I will know my doom. I have experienced his kindness, and do not fear the result of my application to him. He has not known me long, but he is fully acquainted with my circumstances and connexions, and I can trust greatly to his noble and generous disposition. Say, dearest Edith, may I hope?"

Edith spoke not, but the sweet smile that beamed on her lovely features as she reclined her head, half concealing her fair forehead, on the breast of Fitz-Henry, convinced him that his suit was granted; and when, a few minutes after, she raised her eyes to his, the warm kiss of young love that was impressed upon her lips told that Edith St. John and Paul Fitz-Henry were bound together by a contract that might not rashly be broken by either.

Fortunately neither time nor place would admit of a very lengthened *tête-à-tête*, or we know not how long the little study of Captain St. John might have been occupied by the lovers, or for what length of time Edith would have forgotten the attention that was expected from her by the visitors who had not yet departed, and whose claims were not now advocated by Fitz-Henry, who, strange to say, even approved of the exclusiveness which he had been condemning in her conduct. The voice of her father aroused Edith from her dream of happiness, and, breaking from Fitz-Henry, she flew to the door, followed by her lover, whose purpose she appeared to understand, for she hastily exclaimed, as she turned towards him—

"Not to-night, dear Paul!—do not speak with him to-night;" and in the next moment Edith had joined her father.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### The Consent—Bois de Boulogne—Perfidy—Love, Hatred, and Revenge.

It was yet early on the following morning when Fitz-Henry was seen bending his steps towards the Faubourg St. Honoré, for he was fearful lest Captain St. John should have departed for St. Denis, where he was engaged for the day; but Fitz-Henry arrived in time, and was immediately shown into the study where, on the preceding evening, he had declared his love for Edith. Her place was now occupied by her father, who welcomed Fitz-Henry with his usual kindness, and asked the cause of his rather early visit, intimating that he had come just in time to catch him at home, as he would already have started had not Edith delayed the breakfast to an unusually late hour.

"However," continued the captain, smiling, "I have revenged myself by giving her a lecture upon punctuality: nothing like 'military time,' you know. But I suppose you are off to Versailles. Is there any thing you wish to inquire of me respecting Eugène before you start?"

Fitz-Henry replied in the negative, and proceeded at once to state the object of his visit, expressing his love for Edith, and revealing his exact position as to circumstances and connexion, which, indeed, was already known to the captain, but which was now more minutely explained by the young and, on this occasion, eloquent pleader, who apparently entirely engrossed the attention of his hearer; for Captain St. John listened most attentively, and, to judge by the expression of his features, with great pleasure and satisfaction. When Fitz-Henry had finished he took his hand, and pressed it rather warmly, as he answered—

"I confess, Fitz-Henry, I am not altogether unprepared for this declaration; for, in spite of your reserve, and in spite of the sly and apparently indifferent manner of Edith, I have suspected that there was something more than common between you. Had

I objected to the very probable result of what I observed you may be sure I should have taken care to prevent it. This may express my answer. I never flatter any one, but, from what I have seen of you, I consider you every way worthy of Edith. She is rather a giddy, rambling sort of girl, as indulged daughters generally are; especially when left early without a mother, and under the tuition of a rough, unceremonious soldier like myself. Yet I think her heart is good and her disposition firm and affectionate, though given to flirt a little; but that, you know, is the case with most young girls, and may be corrected with a few gentle admonitions. She has been a good and dutiful daughter, and consequently you may expect much from her as a wife. She may have had her way a little too much, but she has sense enough to know that, when married, her husband's wishes are to be consulted as well as her own. I cannot place her under the charge of one better qualified than yourself to teach her what is right, and what is most conducive to her happiness. I esteem and respect you greatly, Fitz-Henry, for your actions have spoken highly both for your head and heart, and I shall be happy to receive you henceforth as the intended husband of my daughter."

Fitz-Henry expressed again and again his gratitude to the captain, who, wisely thinking that a part of the young man's ecstacies might be better displayed in another quarter, rose to depart, having, as he said, already long passed the time which he had fixed upon to set out.

"Yet I must confess," continued he, smiling, "the time has not been passed unprofitably, since it has added such a member to my family. But you had better explain yourself to Edith, who is, I believe, alone in the *salon*, for poor Marie is not so well this morning; but Edith has spirits sufficient for us all. By the by, I half suspect the sly monkey purposely kept me out of my breakfast so long that I might not start before you came. Well, well, I must forgive her; yet there is nothing like military discipline. Punctuality is my motto—but I am breaking it myself; so farewell. You can spare me just now, no doubt."

The good-hearted old captain departed, and Fitz-Henry made his way to the *salon*, where he found Edith alone, and of course very much surprised at seeing him so early, wondering what motive could have brought him at so unreasonable an hour, having, by some unaccountable freak of memory, entirely forgotten all that had passed on the preceding evening, and which Fitz-Henry could only recall by repeating some of the scenes, and making another and still warmer impression upon her lips; yet, after all, Fitz-Henry must have been a great blunderer in his explanation, or Edith unusually dull in her comprehension, for a full hour had elapsed ere a satisfactory elucidation was given, or Fitz-Henry could depart on his mission to Versailles.

Fitz-Henry almost forgot his own happiness when he saw the pale and melancholy features of Eugène. Every argument which affection could urge was employed to raise the drooping spirits of his friend. Eugène smiled as he listened to the glowing language of Fitz-Henry when painting his own happy position with Edith; but a shade of sadness overspread his features when he heard him refer to Madame St. Foy, and urge his return to Paris.

"In a few days I will return as you wish me," he observed, "because I feel that I shall then be able to meet my mother in affection and sincerity. I long again to see Gustave; and you must speak of me tenderly to them both. Say all that you can to extenuate my apparent want of feeling towards them. You may promise much, for I hope soon to realise the wishes of you all. My health and spirits demand that I should remain quietly here for a few days longer, but you must see me again, that I may receive the benefit of your sympathy and advice."

In the evening Fitz-Henry and Eugène rambled through the beautiful gardens of the palace, where they unexpectedly met Arnold, who had been passing the last two days at Versailles, unconscious that Eugène was there also until he thus accidentally encountered him with Fitz-Henry. They returned together to the hôtel of Eugène, where they had some refreshment; for Arnold had proposed to return to Paris with Fitz-Henry.

On their way Arnold informed Fitz-Henry that he had appointed to meet Stanley that evening in the Bois de Boulogne, in spite of the difference which had of late subsisted between them.

"But," continued Arnold, "Stanley leaves Paris to-morrow, and I did not wish him to return to our mutual friends without my being partially reconciled to him, though we can never be friends after what has passed."

Fitz-Henry at once determined to accompany Arnold, wishing to see Stanley once more before his departure, and, if possible, to point out to him the dangerous and unprincipled nature of his conduct, and to withdraw him from his career of vice and folly; for he still thought Stanley would pay some attention to his advice, if he did not strictly adhere to it."

Upon reaching Paris they took a *fiacre*, and proceeded immediately to the *café* indicated by Stanley, as it was near the time he had appointed for the meeting. As is usual on a summer's evening, the *café* was filled with the loungers of Paris, who had wandered thus far to enjoy the deep shade of the extensive and picturesque wood of Boulogne, whose close proximity to the barrier of *L'Etoile* and the Champs Elysées, makes it one of the most frequented localities without the walls of Paris. There the equestrian and pedestrian are to be seen, making their way through the broad roads or winding labyrinths which intersect the Bois de Boulogne in every quarter.

Nothing can be more amusing than the enjoyments of this lovely spot. All restrictions of etiquette and pride appear to be left at the gates of the enclosure by the merry pleasure-seeking Parisians, who abandon themselves to a wild delight, rambling and romping amidst the trees in every variety of grotesque and animated pastime. Here young men and women, who have fully reached the years of maturity, may be seen playing at hide and seek, or other juvenile amusements; and not more joyous is the ringing laugh of childhood than is the deep and hearty indication of mirth that meets you from the merry groups, as they follow each other through the mazes, or along the thickly-shaded path;

nor less amusing is it to see the equestrian of an hour, who, mounted on a donkey or pony, or on an apology for a better steed, in all the confidence of a Nimrod, flourishing the whip, and looking as if astonished at his own importance, starts on the long anticipated ride, alone, or in consort with a happy, merry party, mounted like himself, "To go they know not where;" for here the usual order of nature is reversed, and occasionally the sapient steed takes its own time and road, without in any way consulting the wishes of its rider; nay, it is half conjectured that they are in league with their masters to defraud the unlucky hirer of his full ride; for often, long before the stipulated time, the knowing quadruped may be seen quietly returning to his stand, having deposited its rider in some soft quarter of the forest, to make his way back on foot as best he might. Yes, numerous are the strange and mirth-moving sights to be met with in the Bois de Boulogne, while before its numerous *cafés* music, dancing, and singing, with other attractions, are displayed, becoming more "fierce and furious" as the night advances, sending into their localities the stragglers of the wood and riders of the path. Oh! a right happy, merry spot is this! and delightful is it, on a fine summer evening, to ramble through its woody paths—to hear the singing of the birds—to see the happiness of your fellow-creatures, apart, as it were, from the busy world, and yet sufficiently in it to have your feelings and your sympathies awakened by objects and sensations pertaining to the sublunary sphere in which we move.

Seated by a window of the *café*, which overlooked the merry scene beneath, Arnold and Fitz-Henry waited patiently for the arrival of Stanley, sometimes watching the company as they passed by, and sometimes listening to the various parties in the *salon* who were, like themselves, conversing over some slight refreshment, or gazing silently on the young harp-player, or the fair girl who accompanied him, and whose soft voice blended so sweetly with the harmonious tones produced by the youth. Thus time passed on, and they began to think Stanley would disappoint

them, and were even preparing to start, when he suddenly entered the *salon* in a state of inebriety, and scarcely conscious of what was passing around him. For a moment he stood near the entrance, and gazed vacantly around the *salon*, when his eyes fell upon Arnold, and an exclamation of surprise escaped him as he beheld Fitz-Henry. With a slow and unsteady step he approached to where they were seated.

"Fitz-Henry, my dear fellow, I am glad to see you, for I leave Paris to-morrow, and wish to part friends. I would much rather remain, but the governor will not stand it; he insists upon my returning to attend the lectures, which began last week. This is the second summons I have received, and so go I must; and instead of seeing pretty girls, and hearing soft music, I am doomed to gaze on ugly wounds, and listen to all sorts of groaning. No agreeable change that from the gay *salons* of Paris to the sick ward of a London hospital. I hate it. Let us have a glass to drown the thought, and to pledge to our next meeting."

"It must be only one, then," said Arnold, "for I think we have all had sufficient; besides, it is getting late, and you will have to be up early to-morrow morning. But what makes you appear so heated and flurried, Stanley? one would think you had been running a race with some one."

"And so I have, and with Julie," answered Stanley. "Such an affair! But I will tell you. Last night I met a splendid girl at the Café des Champs, and appointed to meet her at the Bois de Boulogne this evening, quite forgetting that I had made a rendezvous with Julie at the same place, who, as you may suppose, I wished an hundred miles off."

"The beauty and affection of poor Julie being now unable to attract you," observed Arnold.

"Exactly so," said Stanley, heartlessly; "quite out of date—*passé*. But, as I was saying, I forgot all about Julie, whom I found waiting for me. At first I was a little confounded, but I thought to get rid of her before the other came; but no such luck—she would remain in spite of all I said; for she knew I was

going to-morrow, and would have it that I had promised to take her with me to England. I soothed and stormed to no purpose. She clung to me still, and actually shammed a weeping fit, which, you may be sure, passed for nothing. Yet what could I do? Nothing would move her; and, in the midst of this strange scene, in walks my lovely *grisette*, all smiles and dimples. What was to be done? They soon found out how matters were—let a Frenchwoman alone for that. Julie wept, and said that I had basely deceived her, while the other stamped, and bawled out, loud enough to be heard all over the *café*, that I ought to be ashamed of myself to bring her so far to be bounced at by such a thing as *her*—pointing to Julie: and a lot besides. However, I soon quieted her by a few francs, and off I ran, leaving them to arrange matters as they pleased; but Julie would have followed me had I not been too quick for her, and so I left her panting on the way."

Both Arnold and Fitz-Henry strongly reprobated his conduct; but he only appeared to congratulate himself on having escaped so well, and was loudly vindicating his brutality, when suddenly he ceased, and, to the astonishment of his companions, rushed from the *salon*—but the cause of his abrupt departure was soon explained by the appearance of Julie, who entered by the door opposite to the one by which he had escaped. She was pale as death; her hair hung wildly over her shoulders, and her eyes flashed as she exclaimed:—

"Where is Stanley? I know he entered here. Tell me where he is, for I must—I will see him!"

And the excited and passionate girl stamped with her foot in the wild paroxysm of her rage and disappointment, as she stood before Arnold and Fitz-Henry, who endeavoured in vain to calm her agitation. They told her at once that Stanley had just left them, and that he would doubtless return when he thought she had departed.

"But I will not depart," said the now weeping Julie—"I will remain here till he returns; he shall not thus desert me. He leaves Paris to-morrow, and I will go with him. He promised

it, and he shall fulfil that promise. O God! what has he made me?—what has been my love—my mad adoration for him? And now he shuns me. To-night he has treated me harshly—disdainfully. Oh! Monsieur Fitz-Henry, you forewarned me of this; but I could not think him so base; I could not think the love—the vows—the attention—he bestowed upon me, were so treacherous—so short lived. And yet I love him still—will forsake all to follow him. Yes, my fate is fixed—to-night I have abandoned for ever the home that I hated—the grovelling occupation that I loathed. For him have I cast off every tie that bound me to my country; and if he now forsakes me—spurns me from him!—but no, he will not—he dares not now reject me."

Again the agitated girl started to her feet, her bright eyes flashing a bold defiance, and her lovely features assuming an expression of firm determination. It was at this moment that Stanley re-entered the *salon*, and, ere he was aware of her presence, Julie rushed towards him, clinging wildly to his arm, while he endeavoured, but in vain, to shake her off.

"Oh! do not—do not forsake me, Stanley! do not leave me a prey to remorse—the scorn of all who know me! But for you I had been virtuous—comparatively happy. O God! why did you pursue me to my ruin?—why did you profess to love, when it was passion only that actuated your conduct?—why did you promise me so much if you now abandon me to my fate?"

"I tell you again," said Stanley, "that I cannot take you with me; but you shall hear from me soon, and I will arrange for you to follow me. At present you must have patience. I will give you sufficient to support you for a week or two, and then you shall join me in England. You may depend upon me."

Stanley, like many of his sex, thought a few base coins—a brief provision for the absolute necessities of life—would be a full recompense for the loss of virtue, of character, and of that peace of mind of which he had bereft her for ever, and which no earthly power could ever restore.

"No, no, Stanley!" exclaimed Julie, passionately—"no! I

cannot depend upon your promises, for you have broken them already. I entreat—on my knees I implore you to take me with you. Do not cast me off as a vile wretch, unworthy of your love—do not compare me with those who sell their honour for gain. Had I not loved you madly—passionately loved you—I had not been that which I am. Do not then punish me for that affection which you have hitherto endeavoured to promote; do not now tell me that I have loved you too well—trusted you too blindly. Is it not enough that the excess of my love for you has degraded me in the eyes of the world; can you? ought you to hate me for that which you have yourself occasioned? Ought you not rather to redouble your kindness—your affection towards me? Oh! take me—take me with you; I will not intrude upon you when you wish it not, indeed I will not. Only let me live near you—only let me know that I can occasionally see you—feel that you still can love me, and I shall be happy in spite of all."

Stanley was evidently moved at this solemn and passionate appeal to his honour and affection. He raised the hapless Julie from the floor, and seated himself beside her. For once he felt ashamed at his position, for every eye in the now almost deserted *salon* was fixed upon him; though, from Julie's speaking in the English language, the purport of her words was understood but by few. Arnold and Fitz-Henry gazed in silent sorrow on the scene as Julie again urged her plea, using the most persuasive eloquence to move the hard heart of Stanley; but in vain—his slight touch of compassion had vanished, and his patience became exhausted. Half stupefied as he was by drink, he shrunk not from betraying his anger and disgust at the importunity of the unhappy girl whom he no longer loved; whom, thanks to his own baseness, he could no longer respect. Again he offered his purse, which was again rejected with contempt.

"It is your love—your protection that I ask," cried Julie, thrusting the proffered boon from her. "Will this purchase me that? will this restore me that respect—that countenance—which are no longer mine?—that station in society, low as it was, from

which you have driven me? Will this replace me as I was? will this restore my peace of mind—my innocence? Oh, no! it will not even supply the demands of hunger but for a brief space of time, and then what should I do? Yes, Stanley, what should I then do to support life?"

"Why, seek another lover," replied the heartless wretch, "and make him pay for the smiles and favours which to me are valueless."

In this reply Stanley had touched upon a chord that awoke the dormant passions of Julie; that brief sentence had overthrown every feeling of love that had so warmed her heart. Hate—deadly hate, and contempt—now filled the breast and aroused the ardent nature of the much-wronged girl. She fixed her flashing eyes upon him—she stood erect, her young form dilating, and her features again assumed that bold and fixed expression of firmness and defiance which had before evinced her determination of character. The beautiful softness of expression was changed to something almost demoniacal in its appearance, and her voice grated harshly on the ear as she spoke.

"Wretch! pitiful wretch! is this your boasted love—is this your vaunted promise? Tired of me yourself, you would cast me to another; you would steep my soul in guilt—make my youth the sport of the heartless—my affections the plaything of the base, as they have been yours. I know you now. Oh! that you had so unmasked your heart before me ere it had been too late! But revenge is left. Yes, monster—revenge! as strong—as overwhelming as has been my love. You shall not glory in the shame which you have brought upon me—you shall not exult over the degradation to which your baseness has subjected me! I will not carry the wreck of my affections to another—I will not again hazard the weakness which you have trampled upon and despised. Love, feeling, and womanly reserve, I cast off for ever! My nature is changed, and you shall see that it is so. Yes, I will follow you; in hate—in detestation—will I follow you through life. You shall not again

escape me. All that you love—all that is dear to yon—shall be endangered by my hate; the ears of all whose good opinion you value shall ring with the history of my wrongs—of your treachery. I will haunt you in the midst of pleasure—appal you in the hour of sickness and of gloom. Oh! I will revenge myself upon you, until you in turn shall supplicate to me; I will laugh in bitter scorn at the anguish which I can and will bring upon you. Life to me is nothing now; you have broken every charm that bound me to it—yet will I live, though it is only to revenge myself upon you."

Stanley's courage quailed beneath the revengeful glances of her whom he had so greatly injured; he shuddered as he beheld her wild and threatening gesticulation. For the first time he found himself overpowered by a female, and that a mere girl, but one strong in the firmness of her resolution and powerful in the wildness of her passions; one whose hate could not be treated with indifference—whose feelings were not to be outraged with impunity. Stanley even trembled for his own safety, and for a time he remained mute and motionless, gazing confusedly on the scene around him.

Arnold and Fitz-Henry, seeing how completely Stanley was subdued, had no longer any fears for Julie, and forebore to take any part in their altercation, though they waited to see the issue of the scene, which soon terminated somewhat differently to their expectation; for Stanley's self assurance had again returned, and, rising hastily, he was about to quit the *salon*, when he was observed by the watchful Julie, who again seized upon his arm, and prevented his intended escape. In vain he attempted to shake off the girl who so madly clung to him. Her loud laugh of derision, and the look of defiance with which she regarded him, roused the stifled rage of Stanley, whose large and muscular form contrasted strongly with the slim figure of Julie, and gave him full power over her. Furiously he dashed her from him, and, as he rushed out, the loud shriek of the hapless girl sounded through the *salon*, and in the next moment she lay senseless on the floor.

Both Arnold and Fitz-Henry ran forward to assist her. They raised her from the floor, and placed her carefully upon one of the benches of the *salon*, while they summoned the mistress of the *café*, who promptly attended, and, with great humanity, assisted in removing the still insensible girl to a private chamber, where she was placed upon a bed, and left under the charge of the females of the establishment; for, as it was now late, Arnold and Fitz-Henry took their departure, leaving a sum sufficient to defray the present expenses of Julie, and promising to return at an early hour on the following morning.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### The Morgue—The Suicide—Amendment—Pleasures of Friendship—Versailles—Coquetry.

As was anticipated, Stanley left Paris at a very early hour on the following morning, and long before Arnold and Fitz-Henry descended to the *salon* for breakfast. They were not sorry to hear of his departure, for there was no bond of fellowship between them; indeed, Stanley left no one to regret his absence—no one who wished to meet with him again; and thus it ever is with characters so at variance with every principle of feeling and of honour. Their society may be tolerated from circumstances or necessity, but every rational mind must feel a degree of pleasure when relieved from it, and never voluntarily subject themselves to such companionship; nay even those who, from a similar disposition, can join in their habits, and occasionally seek their society, do so from motives of self-interest or listless indifference; there is no feeling—no sincerity in their union; they participate in the same excesses, and visit the same scenes of dissipation; but they meet without esteem or affection, and always separate without regret.

Immediately after breakfast, Arnold and Fitz-Henry entered a

cabriolet, and proceeded to the Bois de Boulogne; but upon thëir arrival at the *café*, they were greatly disappointed to find that Julie had left it some hours before, leaving every expression of gratitude for their kindness towards her. The mistress of the *café* had endeavoured to detain her, at least till the arrival of her friends; but the self-will of the girl was not to be controlled, and from many circumstances it was conjectured that she had gone thus early in the hope of meeting Stanley at the office from whence he was to start, and thus made another attempt to accompany him to England.

It was under this supposition that the two friends determined to proceed immediately to the Messageries Royales, in expectation of hearing something of her there, and in which they were not disappointed, for one of the officials informed them that a girl had applied at the office for Boulogne to know if the diligence had started, and upon being informed that it had been gone nearly an hour, she had become very violent, and appeared to be half insane, or under the influence of strong excitement, which had caused her to be turned rather roughly from the yard.

Having no other clue by which to find the wretched Julie, and deeming it possible, as she knew their address, that she would apply to them if in any distress or urgent necessity, they gave up all further search, and, leaving the messageries, they proceeded by the Rue Notre Dame des Victoires towards the Palais Royal, on their way to the hôtel of Madame St. Foy, having promised to call upon Gustave during the morning, his mother being too unwell to allow of his leaving home.

As they approached the Pont Neuf they saw an immense crowd, which had collected near the entrance of the Morgue—that frightful receptacle of the dead, in which is deposited every dead body found within Paris, there to be recognised by relatives, or, if unclaimed after three days' exposure, to be removed elsewhere. While there they are stretched upon inclined planes, which bring their faces to a sickening proximity to the glazed and barred screen, which alone separates them from the spectators,

who flock in crowds from morning till night, either seeking lost friends, or what is more generally the case, merely to satisfy a depraved and morbid curiosity.

Once Fitz-Henry had entered this dread abode, but the terrible and sickening sight that presented itself had filled his mind with horror and disgust. The suicide and the murdered lay there, with their wounds exposed, their features distorted by the agonies of death, and frequently in a state of decomposition; so much so, that it was necessary for jets of water to be continually playing upon them. Some were not recognisable, except from the apparel which hung on the walls beside them; others, in the calm placidity of death, still retained the beauty or sweetness of expression which had marked them in life. Youth and age, beauty and deformity, are there placed side by side; the friendless and the loved repose together, alike insensible of the scenes around them.

In the present instance neither Arnold nor Fitz-Henry felt any inclination to approach the fearful scene. They inquired of the persons near them the cause of this unusual bustle, and were informed that a young girl had thrown herself from the bridge a few hours previously, and her head coming in contact with a boat passing at the time, she had been killed on the instant. No one knew who she was, and consequently the body had been removed to the Morgue.

A presentiment of fearful import filled the minds of both Fitz-Henry and Arnold. Disregarding their disgust of the spot, they struggled through the crowd which almost blocked up the entrance of the Morgue, and, having entered the hall, they forced their way to the screen which separated them from the ghastly objects which lay exposed in that portion of the room.

Their worst fears were realised. Glancing quickly over the six or eight bodies that lay before them, their eyes fell upon the corpse of a young girl, in whose distorted features the remains of great beauty were still visible. Her hair, long and damp, fell carelessly over her shoulders, and hung wildly from her fore-

head, leaving exposed the deep wound which had accelerated her death. Her full black eyes were open, but their once bright expression was gone; her lips were half unclosed, but the wild energy of her impetuous nature moved them no more: they rested apart in the stern rigidity of death. The ardent, beautiful, yet guilty Julie, had indeed buried her anguish and her shame in death.

The friends spoke not as they turned from this harrowing scene. They retraced their steps to the Hôtel des Tuileries, for they knew not how to act. They could not bear the idea that the body of the misguided girl should remain unclaimed, exposed to the vulgar and unfeeling, and yet, to own it, they feared might bring themselves into trouble; but Monsieur de Morgan assisted them in their perplexity by his instrumentality, and, at the joint expense of Arnold and Fitz-Henry, the remains of the unfortunate Julie were on the following day deposited in the Cemetary of Père la Chaise, there to rest unremembered save as the hapless victim of seduction.

Days passed on, and frequent were the visits that Fitz-Henry paid to the fair Edith, whose character was now all that he wished it to be. Her cheerful and joyous sallies of wit and mirth shone far more resplendent now they were unaccompanied by that levity and love of flirtation which had hitherto been so conspicuous. Often, when enjoying a conversation by themselves, was Fitz-Henry agreeably surprised by the depth of reasoning and tenderness of feeling evinced by the apparently thoughtless and giddy Edith. Love—all-powerful love—had wrought this change in her actions and her feelings. She had studied the character of him she loved, and had wisely regulated her own so as to assimilate with his; she had marked the effects which his cultivated mind had upon those around him; she had seen those whose frivolous conversation and unmeaning mirth had so greatly amused her sink into insignificance before the rich tone of conversation and manly bearing of Fitz-Henry; she had proved how worthless was the adulation of the one, how highly to be valued the commenda-

tion of the other. Her various accomplishments were now turned to their right account, and it would have been difficult to find a more fascinating being than Edith St. John, or one more worthy of her affections than him on whom she had placed them.

In his visits to Captain St. John, Fitz-Henry had occasionally been accompanied by Arnold and Gustave, the latter at the express wish of his mother; for though Madame St. Foy was too unwell to leave her own hôtel, yet she wished Gustave to associate as much as possible with the family of the captain, who, with Edith and Marie, had been frequently to see her, and their kind attention had caused her, in spite of her declining health, to look forward to the future with a calm resignation, feeling assured she would leave her son with friends who were able and willing to protect him. Her only cause of regret was the continued absence of Eugène; day after day his return had been expected, and Fitz-Henry had only been prevented from joining him at Versailles from the impression each morning that he would arrive during the day, as almost every morning had brought a note fixing upon the morrow for his departure from Versailles.

It was at this time that Arnold received a summons from England. His father had obtained for him a lucrative situation under government, which would require his immediate return, much to the regret of Fitz-Henry, who had of late so much enjoyed his society. Yet it was a consolation for them both that Arnold's new occupation would fix him permanently in London, and thus enable them to renew their acquaintance upon the return of Fitz-Henry to his native land without much fear of any future interruption to the friendly intercourse between them.

On the day previous to the one fixed upon for the departure of Arnold he paid a visit to Versailles, to take leave of Eugène. He was accompanied by Gustave and Fitz-Henry, who were also impatient to see Eugène, and, if possible, to bring him back with them to Paris, being all engaged to dine with Captain St. John, who kindly wished Arnold to pass his last evening in Paris with him. But their hopes were frustrated in respect to Eugène, for

they found him stretched on a bed of sickness, and wholly incapable of leaving his hôtel.

Fitz-Henry accused him of want of friendship in thus keeping his illness a secret from him, as the least intimation of it would have brought him immediately to Versailles; but Eugène assured him it was that very friendship which had prevented his informing him of his indisposition.

"For," continued he, "I knew how anxious you would be on my account, and I hoped each day to be enabled to tell you that I was better, and even that I was returning to Paris; for it has only been for the last two days that I have been so unwell, and, I assure you, I feel much better to-day. Besides, I knew of the indisposition of my mother, and how much, at such a time, your society and advice would be wanted by Gustave. I am now impatient to return, for I feel that I can now share with my brother the care of watching over the declining health of our mother. Yes, dear Gustave, we will together endeavour to make her happy—we will together make her forget the past, and anticipate with hope and confidence the future."

Gustave expressed his delight at the change in the feelings of his brother, though it made them still more regret his inability to return with them to Paris, for they knew the consolation which his presence would afford Madame St. Foy. They looked forward, however, with hope to his speedy recovery, and, as they parted, promised to see him frequently during his stay at Versailles, Fitz-Henry observing that he should not now escape his nursing, for that he would return on the following day, and remain with him as long as circumstances would allow, while Arnold expressed the hope that they should meet again, although he was now obliged to leave the country in which he had experienced such friendship and attention.

They arrived at the Faubourg St. Honoré at the appointed dinner hour of the captain, who, as well as Edith, was much distressed at the account he received of Eugène, and promised to visit him on the following morning. Poor Marie could scarcely

command her feelings; her features became still more pale, and the tear started to her eyes, unobserved by all except Fitz-Henry, who had purposely watched the effect of his sad intelligence upon her, and was now almost convinced that his conjectures were right—that the indisposition of the now melancholy Marie was occasioned by her love for Eugène, and that her feelings would not allow her to reveal those sentiments which she knew were not reciprocated by him she loved.

On the following day Fitz-Henry and Gustave took leave of Arnold at the Messageries de Laffite, and from thence proceeded to the hôtel of Madame St. Foy, where Fitz-Henry had promised to dine. In the evening he again visited Captain St. John, who, with Edith, had just returned from his promised visit to Eugène, whom they had found much better, and able to leave his bed. Fitz-Henry had scarcely time to enjoy a *tête-à-tête* with Edith ere he had to start for the train which was to convey him to Versailles.

It was now that Fitz-Henry became fully acquainted with the character of Eugène, the cultivation and ardour of his mind—the deep enthusiasm of his nature. The melancholy disposition, so unusual in one so young, and more especially in a native of France, might be attributed to the gloomy nature of his education, and his seclusion during the early part of his life, when the natural gaiety of boyhood was checked, and the more serious thoughts of manhood instilled into his youthful mind by the misanthropy of his father. The better and more noble attributes of his nature had scarcely been called into action. There had been none, excepting his father, who had made any claims upon his affection, and though he loved that father with all the duty of a son, yet Monsieur St. Foy was of too stern and reserved a nature to call forth or bestow upon his son those endearments which are so cherished by the young, and which the ardent and affectionate nature of Eugène so especially demanded. Love, as yet, had made no impression on his feelings; it was friendship alone that he desired and sought, and which, in his connexion

with Fitz-Henry, he had been so successful in obtaining. Before their meeting he felt the deep enthusiasm of his nature was not satisfied; he felt a void—a loneliness around him. His heart demanded some one who could appreciate its sentiments—who could enter into its devotedness of feeling—the purity and freshness of his mind; one to whom he could impart all his thoughts, his sorrows, and his joy; whose sympathy he could command—whose affections he could enjoy: his was a nature that sought to be beloved. His heart beat with sincerity and affection towards those who sought him, and happy was Fitz-Henry in obtaining the friendship of one so calculated to realise his own ideas of worth, and to share with him the charms which a just appreciation of nature invariably diffuses around us.

Nor was Gustave much less the object of interest to Fitz-Henry. Boy as he was, his many amiable qualities retained to him those friends who had at first been attracted by his personal appearance; so candid, so ardent, and joyous was his disposition, that he gained upon the affections as by a spell, and there were but few who could gaze upon his expressive and beautiful features—his young and graceful figure—without feeling some interest in his welfare. In many respects the brothers were similar. Both possessed great personal attractions, both evinced great firmness of mind and deep enthusiasm, both appeared to hold the world at defiance in expressing their feelings and opinions. But the great store of mental knowledge which enriched the mind of Eugène made him, on a close intimacy, appear superior to his brother. Gustave was all heart. Eugène possessed the same warmth of feeling, added to a reserve, which made him at times cautious of expressing the sentiments he felt; the one had all the joyous openness of boyhood, the other the calm stability of more matured thought.

Days passed on, and though Eugène was able to ramble through the gardens of Versailles, yet his physician would not allow him to subject himself to any strong excitement, and as Madame St. Foy was somewhat better, and Gustave paid frequent visits, wi'

Captain St. John and family, to Versailles, there appeared no immediate necessity for the return of Eugène to Paris; and he was left to the full enjoyment of the society of Fitz-Henry. Often did they ramble through the extensive chambers and galleries of the Palace, so richly decorated with paintings and sculpture, which may indeed be termed a pictorial history of France, so numerous and so graphic are the scenes of French history there depicted, extending through a succession of apartments which are calculated to measure, collectively, upwards of five miles, and which, through the munificence of the King of the French, are yearly increasing in extent and attractiveness. Gilding, marbles, and massive mirrors, are scattered profusely throughout this enchanting palace; yet, as you wander beneath the gorgeously painted ceilings, the mind reverts to the past, when the unfortunate Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette held their glittering court, surrounded by all the high and noble of France; and again, when the infuriated mob came to drag them from their luxurious home, and, with barbarian ferocity, profaned even the private apartments of the queen with their presence and their pillage.

But the quietude of Versailles was broken in upon by one of its *fêtes*, which, as usual, drew many thousands from Paris, to wander through its numerous promenades, and to see the grand and numerous fountains, which, on these occasions, are in full play. So magnificent and vast are they that they must be seen to be fully appreciated. On this occasion Eugène was surrounded by his friends. Gustave, Captain St. John, Edith, and Mr. Marshall, had been attracted by the gaiety of the *fête*; but Marie had remained with Madame St. Foy, for her health and spirits did not accord with the gay and bustling scenes which drew so many from Paris.

As the evening advanced Eugène was again left to the society of Fitz-Henry, for his Paris friends declined waiting for the fireworks, which were at rather a late hour, but which Eugène and Fitz-Henry greatly enjoyed, for, as is generally the case, the *feu d'artifice* was one of the greatest attractions of the *fête*; but this

was at length over also, and the friends were making their way to the hôtel of Eugène, when, in the midst of the crowd, they saw to their astonishment Miss Montague, who was leaning upon the arm of a young man dressed in the extreme of fashion, as also was the fair Adelina herself; they were followed by the youthful page, whose utmost judgment and exertion were required to keep his mistress in sight amidst the bustle and crowd which surrounded them.

Under such circumstances both Eugène and Fitz-Henry felt inclined to pass on without speaking to Miss Montague; but she had seen them, and immediately bustled up to where they were, and, with a most captivating smile, introduced her companion to them as Monsieur the Baron Rodolph, and her most especial friend.

Both Eugène and Fitz-Henry politely acknowledged the introduction, but the Baron, who appeared extremely young, scarcely answered the salutations which were offered him, and evidently wished to shorten the interview; but Miss Montague was not to be withheld from displaying before Fitz-Henry the new conquest she had made, and to convince him that, though he had been so indifferent to her smiles and attentions, there were others, even of rank and fortune, who were not so insensible of the honour done them by her partiality.

"You have quite forsaken us at the Hôtel des Tuileries, Fitz-Henry; but I suppose you find more attractions at Versailles, even though Miss St. John is absent; but you English people are so cool and calculating in your amours in comparison with foreigners. What would you say, baron, were you in love, and separated from the object of your affections?"

"*Were* I in love!" exclaimed the baron, with a foreign accent, and looking tenderly at Miss Montague—"wherefore say *were*, my Adelina? you know that I *am* so happily situated, and that I could not exist were I for one entire day to be separated from the object of my adoration."

"I declare, baron, you quite embarrass me," said Miss Mon-

tague, pretending to look confused; "but Mr. Fitz-Henry must excuse the warmth of your feelings—your high rank and the exalted sphere in which you move make you so independent of considerations. But we must not detain my friends. I suppose, Fitz-Henry, you have no commands at Paris? were you returning there to-night the baron would give you a seat with us in his carriage. But I will not urge you, so adieu—adieu. Monsieur Eugène, we shall be happy to welcome your return to Paris, when Rodolph will, with pleasure, introduce you to some of the aristocracy of your country."

The young baron did not, however, confirm the observations of Miss Montague, but rather hastened her departure, leaving the two friends much amused at the encounter, and greatly puzzled as to the identity of the Baron Rodolph, whose name and title were quite unknown to Eugène. They had never heard of him amongst the number of Miss Montague's acquaintances, and conjectured that she must have met with him within the last few days, but under what circumstances they could not conceive. From his manner and appearance they almost doubted his just claim to the title by which he had been introduced to them.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### Man's Prerogative and Woman's Right—Blessings estimated by Comparison—Attributes of Love and Friendship—Advantages of Sociality.

It was a calm and beautiful morning that succeeded the *fête* of Versailles, and Eugène, with Fitz-Henry, had risen early to enjoy its freshness. The scenes which, on the preceding night, had been so bustling and so gay, were now quiet and almost deserted; only a few stragglers were seen walking here and there on the promenades, or seated on the benches which are placed in various parts of the park and gardens, on one of which our friends sat

down, to enjoy the fine prospect it afforded of the principal avenue, with the lake and park beyond.

"How calm and refreshing is this scene after the heated and bustling crowd of last night!" remarked Eugène—"it seems like a renovation of life. Then I felt fatigued, both mentally and physically; now my frame is re-invigorated, my mind clear and refreshed. Like the morning of life, all is bright and pleasing—the flowers are more fragrant, the foliage more resplendent; Nature, awakened from her slumbers, has decked herself with care, and, like a young coquette, flings her charms and blandishments around her."

"And you, Eugène, like many of our sex, are captivated by the spells of enticing coquetry," said Fitz-Henry, smiling; "at least, you plead guilty to being so attracted by the coquetry of nature, and I may take this as a proof of your fallibility in respect to coquettes of mortal mould."

"And yet it is not so," replied Eugène; "the enticing attributes of nature are genuine and devoid of art, but the coquetry of woman is a more questionable character, and to which I am invulnerable; to me her beauty and accomplishments have but little attraction when they are used only for display; the smile that is cast indiscriminately on all is valueless—the unmeaning gaiety of an unreflecting mind fatiguing and uninviting. Such is not my estimation of female attractions; instead of coquetry I would have reserve—cheerfulness without levity—seriousness without gloom. She should be kind and attentive to all, but reserve the brighter effusion of her affections for the few. Woman by the freedom of her conduct should never wish to prove herself independent of support, for her reliance is on the superior strength with which nature has endowed man. This very weakness is her charm, as it should be her pride; her helplessness and trust are infinitely more attractive than her *hauteur* and her daring."

"I fear, Eugène, your doctrine would be considered as depriving women too much of their privileges. They think that to

attract, and sometimes to govern, is their province, and they would not care to acknowledge their dependance on us, or to consider man superior in mental energy or firmness of action to themselves."

"And yet both reason and religion teach it them," said Eugène. "Besides, allowing power and distinction to man, woman has still a large field for the exercise of her talents, and the display of her attractions, in which man is immeasurably behind. The domestic virtues and endearments, the social accomplishments that soften our nature and sweeten the cares of life—all emanate from woman. Here is her grand scene of action; here, without encroaching upon the prerogatives of man, she may shine pre-eminent and beloved."

"Indeed, Eugène, you are a young enthusiast," observed Fitz-Henry; "and yet I must confess that your ideas upon the subject greatly assimilate with my own. Woman is never seen to such advantage as when she is engaged in her domestic duties, or in the exercise of her social and endearing accomplishments; and thus it is that the married state may be rendered so happy, when each party adheres to the duties which nature assigns them individually to perform."

"It may be so," said Eugène, "but, at present, marriage is a subject the happiness or troubles of which I can understand only upon trust, for it has never occupied my mind. My seclusion, and other circumstances, have prevented any contemplations of becoming a benedict, or even of bending at the shrine of love. You will say that I am still too young to undertake the arduous character of the former, though certainly old enough to feel the influence of the latter—at least, in its first stage; for I assign three epochs to the sentiments of love: the first, all romance and passion, commencing sometimes with our teens, and ending two or three years after them; the second then begins, more stable, and less romantic, and far more promising of happiness; the third, and last, is still less tinged with the glowing colours of romance—has still less of passion; but it has stability and firmness, which

may bid defiance to circumstances and to time, and consequently is generally the most productive of conjugal felicity, though not so imposing to the casual observer. After this epoch has passed, love yields to dotage, or to the polluted remains of passion, unwarmed by feeling or romance, but which is often mistaken for the lingering flame of all powerful love; or, at least, that ennobling epithet is bestowed upon it for the furtherance of its ends."

"Bravo! my young philosopher!" cried Fitz-Henry, "you have defined the stages of love most admirably. One would think you had passed them all yourself, even before your years entitled you to enter upon the second."

"I assure you that I can plead not guilty to the charge," said Eugène; "I am not one to be caught easily, and you know I have seen but little of any young ladies excepting Edith and Marie, neither of whom was likely to captivate a thoughtful, gloomy being like myself: Edith a girl of the world, full of coquetry, and seeking admiration—Marie a wild romp, thinking of nothing but mischief, and as careless of pleasing those around her as Edith was ambitious of captivating them."

"Nay, nay, Eugène, I shall have to challenge you if you censure Edith," observed Fitz-Henry, smiling; "nor must you thus speak of Marie, as you value your safety."

"Oh! challenge me as often as you please, Sir Knight," replied Eugène, laughing, "but never imagine that you will get me to accept it; I am as unambitious of becoming your target as I am unwilling for you to become mine. But had you not interrupted me I should have made the '*amende honorable*' on the instant, by observing, in conclusion, such *was* Edith, and such *was* Marie. The former, thanks to your tuition, has become a more reasonable and a far more agreeable being, and Marie is quite another creature now, though I am grieved to attribute her change to ill health."

"But may not love also have some share in this change in Marie, as you insinuate it has in Edith?" remarked Fitz-Henry, who was happy in having this opportunity of questioning Eugène

in regard to his feelïngs towards Marie, and which had, indeed, been the principal cause of his ïntroducing the subject, and which made him study the very features of his friend, as he continued. "Believe me, Eugène, I esteem most highly the amiable Marie, and have marked her declining health and spirits with sorrow. I have wished, if possible, to find out the cause of her indisposition, and, from what I have observed, I attribute it entirely to anxiety of mind; as, indeed, do others, though they do not appear to know what has caused this anxiety: I attribute it to love."

"You surprise me, Fitz-Henry," remarked Eugène, thoughtfully; "I could not imagine love to be the inmate of a heart so young—so wild—as was that of Marie. I have considered her incapable of feeling any stability of affection. I have always esteemed her, and have of late felt much more interested in her happiness; for her present melancholy and retired manners appeal more strongly to my feelings, though it was with sorrow that I attributed the change to her state of ill health. But what cause have you to impute this to love? and why should she conceal it? There are but few who might not now be proud to obtain the love of Marie Darcier. Do you suspect on whom she has bestowed it?"

"I cannot explain it all just now," said Fitz-Henry; "but she is indeed worthy of the interest you feel for her. On our return to Paris we must investigate the cause, and, if possible, assist her recovery; at present we will think only of our breakfast, for the morning air has made me doubly susceptible of its attractive powers. What a pity that physical wants should thus intrude upon the sublime sensations awakened by the poetry of nature and of the heart! but so it is, and we must submit to the derogatory fact. Unlike the hero of romance, we require something more than air to exist upon, and our most exalted ideas must occasionally give way to the subject of gastronomy; and so, my friend, your flights of fancy must yield to my flights of reason, and you must leave this enchanting scene to accompany me to your hôtel."

Thus playfully did Fitz-Henry turn from the subject which

had so seriously occupied them both; for he would not intimate to his young friend his own suspicions as to the object of Marie's attachment. He had observed how greatly Eugène was interested in her welfare, and considered it would be better to leave its disclosure to circumstances, deeming it most probable that Eugène would soon see that he was himself the object of her love; and from its being thus revealed to him by acts of affection and devotedness, he would be far more likely to reciprocate the feeling than were it explained to him by a third person.

On their return to the hôtel they found letters from Paris; one from Gustave, informing them that his mother was not so well, and that Marie was now attending upon her; that Edith was engaged with her father, he being in great trouble respecting his son Albert St. John, who had fought a duel in London, an account of which had just reached them. Another letter was from Edith, explaining more fully the consternation in which they were placed by this mad act of her brother, who, it appeared, had quitted Italy, and returned to London, without the knowledge or sanction of his father. "His antagonist," continued Edith in her letter, "is so dangerously wounded, that there is but little chance of his recovery. Albert, and the others connected in the fatal affair, have fled, no one knows whither, and my father has sent Mr. Marshall to England to investigate the cause which led to the sad catastrophe, and, if possible, to gain some intelligence of Albert. I need scarcely say, Fitz-Henry, that your presence in Paris, with that of Eugène, is most desirable; yet, should my cousin not be sufficiently recovered, do not hesitate to remain at Versailles, and I will write again should the presence of either of you be more urgently demanded."

The contents of these letters made both Fitz-Henry and Eugène anxious to return to Paris, but the latter had made an appointment with his physician for the evening, and consequently could not conveniently leave before he had seen him; besides, there were other circumstances and arrangements which prevented their immediate departure. They therefore determined to remain at

Versailles until the following morning, and then to start by an early train for Paris.

The cool shadows of the evening had succeeded to the glaring heat of the day when Eugène and Fitz-Henry proceeded in their last ramble through the enchanting gardens of Versailles. Both appeared to enjoy doubly the beautiful scenes now that they were about to leave them; both felt reluctant to quit its delightful quietude for the noise and bustle of Paris. So many happy hours had they passed together apart, as it were, from the world, and enjoying the society of each other.

"And this is our last evening at Versailles," observed Eugène, as they sat regarding the quiet scene before them. "To-morrow, and we shall be amidst the tumult of Paris—the bustle and excitements of the gay world. How often shall I recall the last few happy days passed here with you!—how often dwell on their delightful tranquillity! I feel but little able to enter into the frivolities of the world, or to cope with its heartlessness and insincerity; indeed, I almost dread the change I am about to experience."

"There is, I grant you, much that is insincere, and much that evinces an absence of heart, in the transactions of life," replied Fitz-Henry; "but we are too apt to join in the general cry against the world, and to attribute to its agency much that originates with ourselves. To call it a bad world is but an indefinite accusation after all, and certainly not a Christian one. We apply apathy and wickedness to it upon the evidence of others, without endeavouring to prove the justness of the application, or by our conduct making an effort to improve it. We do not sufficiently confine our observations to *our own world*, which is but a limited sphere compared to the world at large, whose motives we can but imperfectly estimate, from the incapacity of our mind to embrace speculations so extended and so vast. Did we confine our application to those who, from their proximity or connexion, form *our world*, we should be more cautious in our invective; we should be able to investigate the motive, and consequently frequently find a

reason to palliate the act; we should always find a full average of good, and too generally prove that it is the guilt or rashness of ourselves that occasions the bad. But we extend our accusation beyond the limits of perception, and thus render it as impossible, from its vagueness, to confute it, as it is, in reality, from the same cause, to prove its applicability. We accuse the world of coldness and neglect without pausing to inquire whether they are occasioned by our own acts or not."

"It may be so," said Eugène; "but still you admit there are but few—very few, who can really enter into the sympathies and affections of our nature; that there are many, however good and worthy we may be, who still withhold from us their sympathy and esteem, and can even treat our misfortunes with derision, from a sheer malignity of disposition—many who can wander through life as if they were only happy when destroying the fair visions of content and peace which are occasionally scattered around them."

"Doubtless there are many such," observed Fitz-Henry; "yet this does not destroy my theory, but rather confirms it, and assures me the more that, literally speaking, the world is constituted more generally for happiness, and that it is bad and cheerless only from our own abuse of its benefits. There is much more good in the world than we see upon its surface. We do not sufficiently seek it, or, at least, are great blunderers in our way of doing so. We shut ourselves up in our reserve—perhaps our pride; we look suspiciously upon every advance made to gain our intimacy; we doubt the sincerity of the sympathy that is offered us, and in our jealousy and discontent mar the blessings we possess, and yet dare to tax the world with coldness and neglect. There are many who possess hearts feeling and sincere—many that are affectionate and ardent in their nature; yet, from a natural shyness, or, perchance, from a dread of appearing singular in the eyes of the many, affect a coolness which they do not feel, and are thus, from a want of knowing them thoroughly, classed with the proud and indifferent."

"But these are few in comparison with the many who, by

nature, are callous and unamiable," said Eugène—" the many who are, in reality, dead to the sympathies of nature and to the beauties of the world."

" I fear there are many," observed Fitz-Henry, " who lose much of the beauty and happiness of the world from their incapacity or disinclination to observe it rightly. How many, for instance, would pass through this beautiful garden—would see yon dazzling sun sink in all its splendour beyond that lake, which, like a glittering mirror, reflects its parting beams—would hear the sweet harmony of the birds that are chanting around us—would gaze on the deep foliage of these lofty trees—the glowing colours of the shrubs and flowers which are scattered on every side—and yet, hearing and seeing all this, would, in their apathy, exclaim against the beauties of nature! The world is beautiful and bright, and it is the cloud within us that destroys the charm. We do not school our minds to appreciate its beauties—we do not regulate our hearts to feel its happiness."

" Your philosophy is right," exclaimed Eugène, smiling—" did all possess a heart and a mind like yours I, for one, should not have occasion to complain of the world or its inhabitants."

" Nay, Eugène, do not descend to flattery," said Fitz-Henry; " I am but an unit in the number of those who have hearts to feel and minds to appreciate the good and the beautiful. It is by comparison that we estimate properly the blessings we enjoy. Were all good and kind alike we should not so fully appreciate their worth; were yon blue canopy above us one entire mass of glittering stars we should not feel half the adoration and delight with which we now gaze upon each bright orb, surrounded by the darkening mass that contrasts its brightness, and brings it thus individually before us. You would not," continued Fitz-Henry, smiling, " half appreciate my friendship were every one you met with to feel and express the same sentiments towards you; it is its individuality that renders love so sweet."

" You are right, Fitz-Henry," observed Eugène, " for doubtless there is, as you observe, a singleness of feeling in love that en-

hances its attraction; but upon that subject you are more competent to speak than I am. I can better estimate the increase of value attached to a blessing by comparison as regards the sentiment of friendship, which, though it admits of plurality to a degree, would lose much of its charm were it to become more extensively diffused by our indiscriminate application of it. It is a noble—a generous passion—less selfish than love—possessing less of jealousy or envy. The most pure—the best sentiment of love—is friendship. Love brings about marriage; friendship makes marriage happiness. Love looks upon its object with passionate adoration; friendship with the calm and steady eye of affection. The one appeals partially to the senses; the other fixes itself entirely upon the mind and heart."

"Most assuredly it is so," said Fitz-Henry; "and such are the distinctive attributes of the two most noble, most endearing of our passions. The friendship subsisting between man and wife constitutes the chief charm of a married life, as it is the greatest security for its happiness. Love frequently evaporates from possession; friendship clings through life, in spite of change and circumstances; love being generally excited by personal attractions, or accomplishments, while friendship springs from the sympathy of hearts—the perception of innate worth, that fades not with the bloom of youth, but flourishes from age to age, ever exchanging those little acts of affection, which are the real tests of sincerity, as they are the greatest sources of our happiness. Great acts of kindness and loud declamations of love may spring from a heart that is not sincere; but those thousand little attentions, silent and unpremeditated, flowing spontaneously—watchfully—over our every-day occurrences of life—these can only spring from a firm and ardent attachment, and are the effusion of friendship or of love when blended with that ennobling sentiment."

"And such proof of the sincerity of our friendship have I received!" exclaimed Eugène, "and therefore confidently can I

by those whose selfish and worldly-minded hearts have never been lit by its cheering ray—who, mistaking its superior nature, fancy that its endearing appellation may be bestowed indiscriminately upon those with whom we come in contact in the common intercourse of society. Both love and friendship, when they are felt in sincerity, have a sublime influence upon the mind and heart; they harmonise our feelings and subdue our passions. We yield every thought, every wish—we exercise every better attribute of our nature—to gain and secure the affection of those whose mind and feelings assimilate with our own. In the wild imaginings of youth—in the calmer thoughts of manhood—in the serious meditations of age—in each step of life, from the cradle to the grave, do we cherish the charm of being loved. In sorrow it is the voice of sympathy that cheers and sustains us. In the proud feelings of our nature love and friendship stand predominant, and urge us to be great and good; for when the eyes of those we love look on, we redouble our energies; we shrink from the evil principles of the world, and our hearts and minds become elevated, and better calculated to withstand the frowns of fortune and the neglect of the indifferent and the heartless. You will say this is a parade of my sentiments and feelings, but it was suggested by your remarks on the happiness occasioned by the never-ceasing attentions of real affection."

"Nay, on the contrary, your observations have delighted me," observed Fitz-Henry, "for they show how greatly your ideas assimilate with my own. Affection is a theme upon which almost every one may be eloquent—more especially an enthusiast like my friend Eugène, who has so well enlarged upon the happiness conferred by the attentions which we meet with from those we love. Indeed, setting aside those which emanate from real affection, there is much gratification derived from that courtesy which proceeds only from a wish to please, and it is a subject of regret that such a feeling is not more generally diffused. It costs us but little to add to the amusement or the happiness of those around us. This endeavour to be agreeable is never more ac-

ceptable, or its absence more conspicuous, than when we travel, or remove from the scenes and friends which usually surround us; and in this respect the English are generally more blamable than those of other nations. Indeed, I cannot but condemn the suspicious and unsocial reserve which marks our intercourse with strangers. How many agreeable companions, and how much information do we lose, by shunning those whom circumstances have thrown in our way, and who are willing to enter into our thoughts and feelings of the moment, and to contribute by their society to enliven us on our way! What matters it whether we are fellow-travellers for an hour, a day, or for a term of years? Fate has thrown us together to entertain and be social with each other, and it is a false pride, and an uncharitable estimate of our fellow-beings, that withhold us from entering freely and joyously into the companionship of those around us. Of course there are limits to be observed—a respectable and pleasing exterior does not always command a mind equally prepossessing; but there are few who will allow their bad qualities to appear upon a short acquaintance, and none but from whom some little information may be obtained. Besides, we can, without much ceremony, get rid of such companions if we find their manners or ideas objectionable to us; but, as in a casual companion, we so generally see the bright side of his character only, we have seldom cause to repent our partial intimacy, but more frequently have reason to congratulate ourselves on having gained another friend, or, at the least, added to our stock of knowledge by conceding to the dictates of a liberal and social feeling."

"I confess," replied Eugène, smiling, "that your compatriots are not quite *comme il faut* as regards society, but that natural characteristic is greatly, if not entirely removed, by travel, and a free intercourse with other nations. But see, we must break up our conference, or at least continue it in a more sheltered locality; for there is a storm approaching, which we have quite overlooked while descanting upon the beauties of nature—evincing a blindness so peculiar to humanity. Alas! the beautiful evening which

called forth the happy commencement of our rather lengthened debate has changed to clouds and storm! and thus it is in life—sorrow succeeds to joy, and ere we can fully appreciate the one, we are called upon to participate in the other."

"And for our good it is so," said Fitz-Henry; "the storms of nature tend to invigorate creation, and the sorrows of life to improve our perception of its blessings. Half the nobleness of our nature—half our reasoning faculties, which raise us so high in the scale of creation, would be useless and lost were our lives one uniform scene of cloudless happiness. There is something noble in combating with sorrow and misfortune; it evinces a reliance upon the Creator, and a just pride in using the exalted attributes of fortitude and resignation with which He has blessed us. Too much prosperity would make us unmindful of what we owe to Him, and regardless of what we owe in sympathy to the sorrows of others. It is fortunate for us that we are not the artificers of our own fate, so blind are we as to what in reality constitutes our happiness or misery. The present little annoyance which this unexpected storm has occasioned us may soon be surmounted by removing to a place of safety, and those evils from which we cannot remove may be greatly lessened by confronting them with firmness and resignation."

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### The Chamber of Death—Last Injuctions—Danger and Remorse.

THE friends had scarcely reached the hôtel, and were congratulating themselves upon having thus escaped the storm, when the *garçon* entered with a letter for Fitz-Henry, which was brought by a special messenger from Paris, who was waiting with a *voiture* in front of the hôtel.

The letter was from Gustave, with the information that his

mother was considered in great danger, and requesting Fitz-Henry, with Eugène, to return immediately to Paris, a *voiture* having been sent to convey them from Versailles, the greatest expedition being necessary if they wished to see her alive.

Both Fitz-Henry and Eugène were greatly distressed at this intelligence; especially the latter, who felt his having so long delayed an interview with his mother. His heart told him that he had acted wrongly, and he was most anxious to reach Paris in time to receive her forgiveness, and to assure her of his own; indeed, he was most wretched, and could scarcely listen to the consolation and arguments which Fitz-Henry advanced to calm his agitation. He threw himself into the carriage, and gave himself up to a paroxysm of grief, as they dashed onward through the pitiless storm, now raging in all its fury, and which at times almost obliged the horses to stop on the road; but the messenger whom Gustave had sent, and who had procured fresh horses at Versailles, urged the coachman on with promises of increased gratuity according to his speed. This had the desired effect, and they hastened on till they reached the hôtel of Madame St. Foy, where Gustave was waiting impatiently to receive them.

Fitz-Henry immediately repaired to the chamber of Madame St. Foy, to prepare her for the reception of Eugène. He saw at once that she was dying, though her senses were perfect, and her features wore the expression of calmness and resignation. She recognised him immediately, and, taking his hand as he bent over her, expressed her happiness in seeing him once more; then, in a low and feeble voice, she inquired for Eugène.

"He is waiting anxiously to see you," observed Fitz-Henry; "but do not agitate yourself too much. Eugène is impatient to receive your forgiveness for having thus long delayed an interview; but his late severe illness must plead for him. Be calm, dear madame, and I will bring him to you."

Amongst others in this chamber of sickness was Marie Darcier. For three days she had been constant in her attendance upon Madame St. Foy, who, indeed, could scarcely bear her from her

presence, so great was the affection which she had conceived for the gentle girl. Fitz-Henry had spoken to her as he entered the chamber, and found that Edith was prevented from being there by the indisposition of Captain St. John, who had felt most acutely the last rash act of his son.

Fitz-Henry cautioned Eugène to control his feelings as much as possible, knowing how fatal any strong excitement would be to Madame St. Foy. Silently, therefore, did Eugène approach the bedside of his dying mother, and, throwing himself beside Gustave, he bent forward, and pressed his lips upon her brow; yet he could not restrain the tears which fell copiously from his eyes at the sad scene before him. The grief of Gustave was excessive as he knelt by his brother, and his loud sobs were heard in the stillness which so fearfully pervades the chamber of the dying. Madame St. Foy gazed silently but fondly on Eugène as he knelt beside her. His silent grief appealed to her heart, and a shade of agitation passed over her hitherto calm features as, in a weak and trembling voice, she addressed herself to him.

"Oh! my dear, my long-forsaken boy, can you indeed forgive your mother? can you indeed forgive all the sorrow—the disgrace—which she has brought upon you?"

"Hush, hush! dear mother!" exclaimed Eugène, softly; "not a word of the past. Enough that you forgive me—forgive my proud and stubborn heart, that has so rebelled against the dictates of duty and of reason. Oh! speak not of the past, and my future conduct shall evince my affection for you and for my brother."

"The future is not for me on earth, dear Eugène," said Madame St. Foy, faintly; "nor do I wish it. I shall die happy now, assured of your affection—assured of your love for your brother. A few weeks since and I should have shrunk from the thought of death; for I wanted then those kind friends who now surround me. I should then have left Gustave alone, and without a friend; now I leave him united to his brother, and under the protection of those who will care for his welfare. Oh!

I have much to be grateful for—much to soothe my passage to the grave!"

Madame St. Foy sunk exhausted on her pillow, and for a time all was silent, except the deep sighs of those around, and the half-stifled sobs of Gustave, who, with his brother, remained near the bed, watching intently every change in the countenance of their mother. On the opposite side sat Fitz-Henry, whose features expressed how much he sympathised in the melancholy scene, as his eyes glanced from his two friends to the pale and sorrowing Marie who sat beside him, silent as death, with her head resting on her hand, and her eyes cast down, yet occasionally raised towards him who so greatly occupied her thoughts, even in this chamber of death. She had not yet been observed by Eugène, so great had been his anxiety respecting his mother.

After some little time Madame St. Foy slowly raised herself, and, looking anxiously towards Marie, motioned for her to approach, a summons which was instantly obeyed by the watchful girl; and a slight blush overspread her features as, with eyes cast down, she walked towards where Eugène was kneeling. For the first time he was now made aware of her presence, and, with an expression of tenderness and satisfaction, he hastily rose to meet her, and, with a look of deep feeling, led her to the bedside of his mother, remaining himself beside her.

"Dear Marie," said Madame St. Foy, as the girl bent towards her—"you who have been so good—so kind to me—receive my last thanks—my blessings—for your affectionate attentions—you whom I have only known so recently; but Eugène has known you long, and can appreciate your kindness to his mother. To him I must leave it to repay you."

"The happiness of Marie is as dear to me as my own," observed Eugène, as he pressed her hand. "Yes, dear mother, I will add my gratitude to yours. I have, indeed, known her long, but never till this moment half appreciated her worth. Henceforth double will be my interest in her welfare; for never shall I cease

to remember her affection for you—never cease to repay it with my own!"

Marie trembled with deep emotion as she listened to the words of Eugène, but she dared not meet the eyes that she knew were fixed upon her. Her bosom heaved, and her small hand returned not the pressure that had thrilled through her frame. She remained silent; but the glance of Madame St. Foy was cast upon her, wandering from her to Eugène; and in a moment the delighted mother comprehended it all. A slight smile lighted her features as she gazed upon them—those young and graceful beings, who she felt were destined for each other. She whispered to Eugène as he bent his ear to her lips, but none other heard the words which were spoken, or knew to what Eugène alluded as he replied, in a low voice—"It shall be so, my mother;" and again resumed his position by Gustave and Marie.

Again a brief interval of silence succeeded, and it was evident that Madame St. Foy was sinking fast. At her request Fitz-Henry had joined the group who were immediately beside her, and with a voice almost inarticulate, and pausing between nearly every word, she expressed her last sentiments of gratitude and affection.

"Fitz-Henry, I owe all this to you; the happiness of my last moments is occasioned by your affection for my children. They owe you much; may they long live to evince their gratitude! Dying I express my own. To your care I leave Gustave; he is young—very young; be to him a guardian—a protector, such as you have been. Continue to them both the friendship you have so nobly shown—the generous solicitude you have so strongly evinced. Their affection and devotedness to you are strong; may they last through life! Bear my gratitude to the good Captain St. John—to Edith; they have been most kind—most affectionate to me. Marie, my dear and affectionate Marie—you—"

Madame St. Foy could not continue the sentence. Again all was silent, and for a moment they thought the last scene was over; but again the dying mother opened her eyes, and fixed

them on the dear and beloved beings who knelt beside her. Her lips moved, but it was only occasionally that her words reached the ears of those who were listening so silently—breathlessly—for every sound.

"Farewell, my children—Eugène, Gustave, Marie, and you, Fitz-Henry. I die happy—believe me, most happy. I would not live to hazard the joy I now experience. Years have passed since I have felt the hope—the bliss which now lights me to the grave. My sight fails—I can scarcely see you; yet 'tis happiness to know that you are so near me. Heaven bless—protect you all! Do not weep for me, dear Gustave, dear Eugène; do not regret that I am gone: remember my death was so calm—so happy—I—"

The voice of Madame St. Foy failed; but her lips moved, and her eyes were raised as if in prayer, while a slight smile appeared to overspread her pallid features. A moment more and all was silent—motionless: one sigh, and all was over; without a struggle Madame St. Foy had breathed her last. The solemn and impressive scene was finished, and silently Fitz-Henry led his weeping friends from the chamber of death, while the gentle Marie retired to another apartment, leaving the sorrowful domestics to perform the last sad offices for the dead.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the melancholy period which immediately followed the death of Madame St. Foy. Both Eugène and Fitz-Henry remained with Gustave till all was concluded. The funeral was strictly private, and, at the wish of Eugène, the remains of his mother were deposited in the family vault, in the cemetery of Père la Chaise, much to the gratification of Gustave, who had not expected this act of affectionate regard on the part of his brother. Captain St. John followed on the melancholy occasion, and, at its conclusion, expressed his wish that Gustave should remove to the Faubourg St. Honoré; but this invitation was gratefully yet firmly declined by the unhappy boy, whose strong affection for Fitz-Henry would not allow him now to leave him. By the will of his mother Fitz-Henry was appointed his

sole guardian, as well as joint executor with Captain St. John, who, previously to the death of Madame St. Foy, had kindly offered to assist in her affairs should she require it.

Gustave was, by the death of his mother, placed in independent circumstances, and the monetary matters were soon arranged by the executors, it being entirely funded property, the principal part of which was invested in English securities by his father, the late Captain Monrose, who had intended, with Madame St. Foy and their son, to remove from Brussels to England, where he wished permanently to reside; and in her will Madame St. Foy had expressed her wish for Gustave to adopt that country as his own, in accordance with the intentions of his father; and the more especially so, now that she had placed him under the protection of Fitz-Henry.

Eugène, who was comparatively rich, felt at first much hurt that his home was not to be shared by his brother; but his own deep friendship for Fitz-Henry, and the few ties he had himself in France, soon reconciled him to the arrangement of his mother. He knew that the greater portion of his own time would henceforth be passed in England, which from the connexion of Edith and Fitz-Henry, would now also become the future residence of Captain St. John. Thus, after a little reflection, Eugène even approved the change which this arrangement would occasion, for he felt that his dearest friends would be situated in England, between which and his own country he determined his future life should be passed. His esteem and regard for the English had been awakened, not only by the kindness of Captain St. John, his uncle, but by the knowledge he had obtained of their characteristics from associating with Arnold and Fitz-Henry.

About a fortnight after the funeral of Madame St. Foy Fitz-Henry received a letter from Arnold, the contents of which greatly surprised him; for he was now informed, for the first time, that the antagonist of Albert St. John was no other than George Stanley, who still remained with little hopes of recovery.

In commencing his letter Arnold had described his own situa-

tion, and expressed his entire approbation of the employment in in which he was now engaged; it was, indeed, highly lucrative, and one that placed him in that station of society which it had always been his ambition to occupy.

"In fact," continued he, in the letter, "I am comparatively very happy, and only wait your return to England to complete that happiness. My young friend Gustave will of course accompany you, and, I should suppose, Eugène also, as your connexion with Edith will cause the family of Captain St. John to reside here; though I fear the recent death of Madame St. Foy will detain you still for some time in Paris. You ask if I have seen or heard anything of Stanley. I have that to relate of him which will surprise you greatly, as it did me. What think you of his being the antagonist of Albert St. John? Yet such is the case, though it was only two days since that I was made aware of it, from his having assumed another name, and being too ill to apprise us of his situation. The facts of this unhappy affair are, as nearly as I can ascertain, as follow:—

"Soon after his return from Paris Stanley became acquainted with an actress, who was engaged at one of the minor theatres in town, and with whom, it appears, Albert St. John had also been most intimate previously to his leaving London for Italy. Upon his unexpected return, a few weeks since, he found out the connexion which subsisted between Stanley and the girl, and immediately protested against it; but the girl decided for her last lover, and added derision to her rejection of her former one. This, with the consequent bravado of Stanley, aroused the jealousy and revenge of Albert, and a challenge was the consequence, which, as you know, has terminated so unfortunately. Throughout the whole affair Stanley had acted under an assumed name; consequently I had no idea that he was in any way connected with the duel of which the papers furnished me an account. Two days since he regained his reason, and ordered his father and me immediately to be sent for; for he was perfectly aware of his great danger, and wished us to be made acquainted with his sad

position. I felt much for him; the more so from witnessing his repentance and remorse. He can speak but little, yet he has alluded more than once to the melancholy fate of poor Julie, which, at the time, made little impression upon him, but which now appears to fill his mind with horror and contrition. He also speaks of Albert St. John, against whom he bears no anger, having, as he observed, himself been the aggressor. Should he survive, this narrow escape from death may make him a better character; but I fear there is scarcely a hope of his recovery. Indeed, we are all prepared for the worst, and my next letter may be to inform you of his death. May it not be so! for his sake—for the sake of Captain St. John and his family, to whom I owe so much, and with whom you are so closely connected!"

Fitz-Henry could not keep this sad intelligence from Captain St. John, for the letters of Mr. Marshall had also informed them of it. It was stated that Albert, and the others connected in the fatal affray, had immediately quitted England, and had still escaped the vigilance of those employed for their detection. It was supposed they were in Germany, but there was no correct information as to their locality. Both Edith and her father were in continued apprehension of his being discovered and brought to justice, and all those connected with the family shared in their disquietude and alarm.

At first Captain St. John had evinced great anger against his son, and threatened with his displeasure any one who should countenance him, or shield him from the vengeance of the law; but subsequently he had partially relented, and had engaged the first counsel in England for Albert's defence should he unfortunately be apprehended.

# CHAPTER XVIII.

## The Crisis—Love a Physician—Doubt and Mystery—Suspicious Assignation.

The affair of Albert was not the only cause of anxiety at the hôtel of Captain St. John. Marie Darcier had become most seriously indisposed. The care and watching at the bed-side of Madame St. Foy had been too much for the weakness of her constitution, and this, joined to her subsequent agitation, had entirely confined her to her bed; indeed, the physicians who attended her did not scruple to intimate to her sorrowing friends the danger in which she was placed. The conduct of Eugène towards her was greatly changed. Kind and affectionate he had ever been, but from the night when they knelt together at the bed-side of his mother his regard for the amiable girl had warmed into a sentiment far more ardent. There was an anxiety in his manner and a devotedness in his attention which revealed, more eloquently than words could have done, how fondly he was attached to her. He recalled her affectionate attentions to his mother, whose last wish—breathed in secret to him—was, if possible, to make the amiable Marie mistress of that house which she had herself so recklessly forsaken; and when Eugène, in the fullness of his heart, replied that it should be so, he knew not how soon his own feelings would urge him to the accomplishment of his mother's wishes. Now his greatest fear was that the affections of Marie were bestowed upon another; for he did not suspect that he was himself the person alluded to by Fitz-Henry, who now more than ever guarded the secret, for he generously thought that, should the fears respecting Marie be realized, it would be a lasting source of sorrow to Eugène to know that he was himself the innocent cause of her untimely fate.

But the long-cherished secret of the hapless Marie was now to be revealed under the most distressing circumstances. Fever and delirium had seized upon her, and, in the fearful moments of her

insanity, she called incessantly upon the name of Eugène, now upbraiding him for his want of love, and now lavishing every endearing epithet upon him.

It was at this season of fearful suspense and deep affliction that the firm mind and sympathizing diposition of Fitz-Henry were so fully appreciated. It was he who reassured the drooping heart of Eugène as he hung over the apparently dying Marie; it was his voice that whispered consolation to the ear of Edith, who, sorrowing over her helpless friend, and foreboding some fatal mischance to her brother Albert, had sunk into the deepest shade of melancholy. It was the calm reasoning of Fitz-Henry that stilled the angry spirit of Captain St. John when he alluded to his son, and soothed him when he spoke of Marie or of Edith; and in his bereavement, in the sadness which had fallen upon his young and late joyous heart, it was to Fitz-Henry that Gustave clung for consolation and advice.

One evening they had all assembled in the chamber of Marie; for it was expected to be her last day on earth—the long dreaded, yet anxiously wished for crisis, which was to determine her fate. Almost breathlessly they surrounded her couch; for they were fearful of disturbing the deep sleep into which she had fallen, for upon its duration, and the absence of the least movement or excitement, mainly depended the hopes of her physicians. From time to time the finger was applied to the wrist of the unconscious patient, who lay so mutely still—so deadly pale—that it would have been difficult to have marked her departure from life—her entrance upon death; and even the criterion of pulsation was occasionally resorted to in vain, so feeble—so thin were its vibrations, and the surface of the mirror which was now applied to her lips was scarcely dimmed by the breath which so faintly issued from the fount of life.

Oh! it was a solemn—a melancholy scene, that chamber of sickness! that chamber of anticipated death. The young, the loved, and the affectionate, had assembled there; but the shadow of sorrow had fallen upon them all: the young heart was sad—the

young eye was dim—the joyous and sanguine voice of youth was hushed. Mute and motionless they sat, with eyes fixed upon her, who was so dear to them all—upon her who, a few weeks since, had made that very chamber echo with her laughter; that beautiful—that joyous being who had so often made those hearts thrill with admiration at her cheerfulness and amiability which now beat so anxiously for her reprieve from death. What was she now? Inanimate—still—alike unconscious of love or hate, hanging on the brink of the grave, yet unable to make one struggle against the power of death—love, friendship, devotedness, availing naught. A moment more, and she might be—what? O God! accede to the agonizing prayers for her life that are breathed in silence by those who are watching around her. Spare her yet awhile from the silent dwellings of the dead, to gladden the hearts of those who so passionately love her!

Each moment that passed appeared an age, so fraught was it with anxiety and suspense. At length, a slight movement—a half-drawn sigh—told that the object of so many hopes and fears had broken from her slumber. All remained still—so still that the loud beatings of each heart might almost be heard. Cautiously the physicians approached the bed, and bent over the now conscious invalid, whose eyes wandered fugitively round the chamber, resting on each well-known, well-loved form that sat so motionless beside her. Once she attempted to speak, but the finger of the physician was held up to impose silence. He motioned all to leave the chamber, a command which they felt reluctant to obey, though they knew its necessity. Eugène would have pressed his lips to the marble hand that lay, contrasting its whiteness with the deep colours of the satin counterpane on which it rested; but the same mute interdiction was given, and he was constrained to follow his silent companions to the adjoining apartment, where they waited impatiently for the entrance of the physician upon whose announcement depended so much of happiness or of misery.

At every slight sound each eye was turned towards the door.

expectation kept them mute. Silently they gazed upon each other, and their own fears increased as they observed the doubt and anxiety depicted in the features of their mute companions. At length he entered—the messenger of fate! and all crowded around him. Every ear was stretched forth to catch his words—words of so much import, which each longed yet dreaded to hear. His announcement called forth the bright tear into every eye; but they were tears of joy—of thankfulness. "Thank God!" exclaimed they simultaneously, as they heard the joyful intelligence that there was hope. The crisis had passed, and, with care and attention, the gentle Marie might be restored to them again, though, from her excessive debility, her restoration would be the work of time; yet the physician could safely pronounce her out of danger, and give every promise of her recovery.

It was with a cheerful heart that each separated that night—that night of sorrow and suspense. They had met in sorrow, and almost without hope; but the hand of the Creator had worked against human probability, and the life of which they despaired had been saved. They were now full of hope and gratitude; hope in the realization of their wishes—gratitude towards Him who had wrought the change.

The night had, indeed, been long and anxious, and the morning had far advanced when Fitz-Henry and Gustave departed for the Hôtel des Tuileries, leaving Eugène to snatch some repose after his great anxiety, and to be ready to answer the first summons that might call him to the chamber of Marie; for, won by his great importunity and the ardent solicitude he evinced, the physician had promised him a few moments' conversation with the invalid when she should have awakened from the second sleep into which she had fallen, and which they expected would so far restore her as to allow of the interview. Indeed, from what had passed, they anticipated that the presence of Eugène would tend greatly to promote her recovery, and therefore it was that his early visit was allowed.

Love is a great physician, as was evident in the instance of

Marie and Eugène. Within a few days after the crisis of her illness Marie was able to leave her chamber, and recline on the sofa which ornamented the *salon*; and here it was that Eugène was so frequently stationed, engaged in reading to, or conversing with the pale yet beautiful invalid; she who was now made so happy by a full declaration of that love which she had so much desired—that affection which she thought it her greatest happiness to possess. Openly, ardently, now did her young heart reveal its long-cherished emotions, feelings, and thoughts, which her innate modesty had bid her to conceal, to brood over in silence, till death itself was nearly the result. No longer was Eugène a stranger to the tender passion; he had become the anxious, ardent lover. The most susceptible feelings of his nature had been awakened by the silent yet powerful adoration of the young girl whose character had been so changed by its influence, turning her light and rambling heart into one serious and refined, firm in its affection, and worthy of the love and admiration bestowed upon it by him whose love she so strongly coveted.

Days passed on, and the health of Marie continued to improve; yet still there was much anxiety amongst the friends by whom she was surrounded, and in which her good feelings caused her to share. The continued uncertainty as to the fate of Albert St. John, and the increased danger of his antagonist, gave them much uneasiness; but their fears were also awakened for the effect which this anxiety appeared to have upon the health of Edith. For some days they had observed a restlessness and melancholy in her manner that surprised and alarmed them. In vain Fitz-Henry inquired the cause; in vain he asked to participate in her anxiety—to be admitted to her confidence. Edith remained silent and dejected, and it was only when urged by his repeated importunities that she would refer to the critical state in which her brother was placed as the principal cause of her distress.

Although Fitz-Henry did not doubt the sorrow of Edith being in part occasioned by the unfortunate position of her brother, yet he felt convinced there was something more than what she had acknow-

ledged as the cause of her dejection; he could not attribute to this alone the strange alteration in her conduct, which had, indeed, of late, become so mysterious and unsettled. Frequently, accompanied only by her female attendant, would she absent herself from the family circle, and more especially so when her father was from home; and this at an hour when nothing but a strong necessity would have urged her to do so. More than once on her return from these strange wanderings had Fitz-Henry upbraided her with want of affection, situated as they were in regard to each other, in not acting more candidly towards him; for though he was not of a jealous disposition, yet he considered that he had a right to demand some explanation of a conduct so strange. To these remonstrances Edith would reply only by her tears, and by her assurance of unaltered love, lamenting the circumstances which compelled her to act thus mysteriously and apparently so unkindly towards him.

Fitz-Henry would listen with pleasure and satisfaction to her assurance of continued affection; yet he could but feel the greatest anxiety and apprehension on her account when he observed her continued sadness and mystery of conduct, which had now become so injurious to her health and objectionable to her friends. More than once he thought of naming the subject to her father, but the fear of displeasing Edith withheld him; nor did he wish to awaken the alarm of Captain St. John, who, strange as it may appear, had not noticed her frequent absence from home, though he had observed her increased melancholy, and had redoubled his kindness and affection towards her in consequence.

The repeated indiscretion of Albert St. John had drawn upon him the severest anger of his father, which had partly subsided since his duel with Stanley, in consequence of the intercession of their mutual friends, and a letter which Albert had written to his father, requesting his forgiveness, and promising an amendment of conduct for the future; which letter, without any clue as to his place of concealment being given, had been forwarded to Paris, and received by the captain. No more had been heard of

Albert till within the last few days, when the place of his retreat was publicly made known by his having been engaged in a fresh broil, which had drawn upon him the observance of both friends and enemies, and caused him to fly from Cologne, where it now appeared he had taken refuge after his duel in England. This act, after such protestations of amendment, had so incensed his father against him that he avowed his intentions of discarding him entirely, not being able to tolerate in his own son that want of principle and honour which he prided himself upon possessing. Indeed, the only harsh words he had ever used towards Edith were caused by her pleading for her brother; and now, as by mutual consent, the name of Albert St. John was never mentioned in the presence of the captain, who had openly declared that the dearest friends he had would forfeit his esteem should they be found to have any connexion with his unprincipled and reckless son.

This had occurred immediately after the severe illness of Marie, and as Fitz-Henry knew the affection which Edith still entertained for her brother, he thought it possible that the concealment of her feelings towards him which she was obliged to observe in the presence of her father, and her anxiety on account of her young friend, might occasion her increased dejection; and therefore it was that he felt so much for her, and in part overlooked her strange conduct in other respects, which, under different circumstances, he might have felt inclined to censure and investigate more closely. He was fearful, by noticing it too openly himself, he should draw upon her the observation of her father, whose temper had of late become rather irritable, in consequence of his son's conduct, and of his own indisposition occasioned by it.

On the occasion of one of his visits to the hôtel of Captain St. John, Fitz-Henry had proceeded to the small apartment which Edith usually occupied during the early part of the morning, and to which no one was admitted without her permission, excepting her own immediate family and Fitz-Henry. Contrary to his expectations, he found neither Marie nor Edith was there, though

it was evident one of them had recently left it, for a chair had been drawn towards the table, on which lay an open album, with a handkerchief beside it, which Fitz-Henry recognized as belonging to Edith. For a few moments he remained unoccupied, gazing vacantly round the room, having dispatched the attendant to inform Edith of his being there; but, as she did not immediately make her appearance, he took up the album to amuse himself with its contents, and, as he hastily turned over the leaves, an open paper fell from them on the floor, which he picked up and commenced reading, thinking it was something intended for the album; the more so, as it was without address or signature. The contents were, however, different to what he had expected to read, and he was indeed greatly puzzled to understand the purport of the following words, evidently written in a masculine hand.

"For two days I have not seen you. Why is this? You must be aware how ardently I wish for your presence, when all, save you, forsake me. Do not again disappoint me, or I shall leave Paris in despair. Be secret, be firm, and, come what may, see me to-night. Remember the name you bear, and fail not."

For a moment a feeling of jealousy took possession of Fitz-Henry; yet, upon reflection, what reason had he for supposing the contents of the paper were anything but the effusion of some rather romantic contributor to the pages of the album? Yet he could not but associate it with the mysterious visits of Edith, and he determined to question her respecting the paper which had caused him such emotions; but when she entered, and he saw her pale and melancholy features, the only feelings he could entertain for her were sympathy and pity, and the contents of the paper were forgotten in his interest for her.

# CHAPTER XIX.

## The Accident—Momentous Interview—Reconciliation—Mutual Explanation.

On the same evening Fitz-Henry again visited the Faubourg St. Honoré. He found the captain was from home, having taken Marie to the Théâtre Français, leaving Edith at home to receive her visitor, she having declined going with them, on the plea of indisposition.

Throughout the evening Fitz-Henry thought Edith displayed a restlessness and a half-concealed anxiety for his departure that vexed and surprised him. He felt half inclined to inquire whether she had not some more agreeable engagement for the evening than his society, which she appeared so ready to dispense with; for he could not divest himself of the impression that she was waiting his departure to pay one of those mysterious visits which had of late so much annoyed him. He recalled the contents of the paper which had attracted his attention in the morning, and felt half inclined to attribute more meaning to its purport than he had yet done. The sentence "Come what may, see me to-night," more especially recurred to his mind, and from the conduct of Edith he began to suspect that it was in reality an assignation, and that this very night Edith intended to fulfil the injunction conveyed by the paper. Indeed, so strongly was this idea impressed upon his mind, that when he quitted the hôtel, he for a moment thought of watching her movements; but it was only for a moment—her sad looks, as he had left her, appealed to his feelings, and his heart was too noble to act the spy on her whom he loved and would trust; yet his heart was sad, and it was in a melancholy mood that he pursued his way towards his own hôtel.

Fitz-Henry had scarcely reached the Cathedral of St. Roch when a cabriolet dashed furiously past him, and, coming in

contact with a lamp-post, was overthrown with fearful violence on the pavement. For a moment Fitz-Henry started back, so near was he to the place of the accident; but seeing a gentleman lying senseless under the broken vehicle, he ran to his assistance, and, with the aid of the driver, who had escaped with a few slight bruises, he conveyed him to a chemist's shop which was near at hand, where his wounds were examined and dressed immediately, though the patient still remained insensible, which the chemist informed Fitz-Henry was occasioned by the shock and loss of blood rather than by the extent of the wounds, which were comparatively trifling. The stranger was an Englishman, and apparently of respectability. He was young, and was dressed rather extravagantly, and, upon his recovery, his tone of conversation evinced a freedom and recklessness that corresponded with his general appearance. He expressed his thanks to Fitz-Henry for his kindness, and urged his wish to be taken immediately to his apartments, which were situated in the Rue St. Roch, to which place Fitz-Henry offered to accompany him; a proposition that appeared most agreeable to the stranger, who still felt incapable of the least exertion, which rendered the assistance of another acceptable.

The apartments of the stranger were small, but comfortably furnished. He was placed in bed, and Fitz-Henry immediately sent for the physician who usually attended at the Hôtel des Tuileries, and also to inform Gustave that he should not return to his hôtel until the following morning, sending an account of the accident which had occurred, and the wish of the wounded man for his attendance during the night.

It was now near the hour of eleven, and Fitz-Henry had seated himself by the bed-side of the patient, whom the physician had just left, with injunctions of quiet and a strict adherence to his advice, when the *garçon* entered, with the information that Madame Blagrove had arrived, and was detained in another apartment by the mistress of the hôtel, who feared the results of a sudden interview from her not being aware of the accident which had occurred to her husband.

"We have told madame," continued the boy, "that you had not yet returned; for my mistress would not tell her what had happened without first consulting you."

This was the first time that Fitz-Henry had heard the name of the stranger, and he started as it was pronounced by the *garçon*; for the name of Blagrove awakened many disagreeable ideas, though he had no reason for supposing the person to whom it now applied was in any way connected with him to whom his own thoughts referred; the more especially so as it appeared the invalid was married, which he was almost sure was not the case with the Mr. Blagrove to whom Edith had so frequently alluded in the early stages of her intimacy with him. Thus reassured, he regained his composure of mind, and was able to direct his attention to the stranger, who appeared greatly agitated at the announcement made by the boy, and his voice faltered as he addressed himself to Fitz-Henry.

"Monsieur, I know not the name of one to whom I am so greatly indebted, but you have sufficiently evinced the kindness of your disposition for me not to hesitate in drawing still further upon your goodness: I must beg of you to break my unfortunate accident to my wife. Her constitution is delicate, and I fear a too sudden intimation of my position might be attended with danger. I feel assured you will extend your interest to her, and point out the necessity of our not meeting to-night, for I fear the excitement would be too much for either. You may add, that I hope by to-morrow to be sufficiently recovered to see her."

In the excitement of the moment Fitz-Henry did not think of revealing his name to Mr. Blagrove, but readily assented to his request, and was conducted by the *garçon* to the apartment in which Mrs. Blagrove was waiting the expected return of her husband. The room was dimly lighted, and a thick veil prevented him from seeing the features of the lady, who was sitting in an attitude of deep thought, with her head resting on her hand, and her eyes cast upon the ground; but the boy having withdrawn, Fitz-Henry commenced speaking, and was proceeding to

relate the cause of his intrusion when a loud scream broke from Mrs. Blagrove, who started from her seat, and revealed to the astonished Fitz-Henry the features of Edith St. John.

For some moments Fitz-Henry remained silent, gazing on the pale and trembling Edith. The emotions of his heart were too conflicting—too overwhelming for utterance. The gentle—the confiding Edith—the wife of another? It was too strange—too horrible—to be at once fully comprehended. Yet there was pity mingled in his feelings of wounded pride and sorrow—pity for the feelings of her who now appeared bent before him by the violence of her emotions, and it was in a tone more of sorrow than reproach that he addressed her.

"This is indeed a most painful position for us both; yet, Edith, I will not upbraid you—I will not add to the remorse which I am sure you feel for the part you have acted. Nay, speak not; I will spare you the pain of explanation: Mr. Blagrove has informed me of the tie that subsists between you. I seek not to know the necessity of concealing this from me; motives most urgent, I doubt not, withheld you from an explanation—an explanation which might have spared me much of misery, and possibly you of remorse."

"Fitz-Henry," said the weeping Edith, "this is, indeed, a meeting most painful—most harrowing to us both. But do not trust to appearances, greatly as they may confute my words. I am not the guilty wretch you deem me—I am not so unworthy of that confidence which you have hitherto placed in me. Confide still in my honour—my integrity; I assure you that the tie which subsists between Mr. Blagrove and myself is not one that can, or ought to affect that bond which so firmly unites me to you."

"Edith," replied Fitz-Henry, solemnly, "do not deceive me—do not delude me with hopes which cannot now be realised. You are received here as the wife of Mr. Blagrove; he has himself acknowledged you as such to me. What duty but that of wife could have brought you here—alone, and at such an hour—unknown, as I am sure it is, to your father? No, Edith—no! You

would spare my feelings—would defer, as long as circumstances will admit, the agonising conviction that you can never be mine; but this is cruel—unwomanly. Tell me at once that you are his wife, since I already believe most firmly that you are so. Tell me at once that the connexion which has subsisted between us must end. I will not ask for an explanation; I will not even upbraid you with my presence. Far from Paris—far from the scenes that have been so dear to me—will I dwell on the memory of the past—recall the happiness that once beamed around me—the hope that connected me so brightly with the future."

Fitz-Henry threw himself upon a seat, and pressed his hand to his eyes; but this could not conceal the deep emotion that crushed his heart—the bitter feelings that marked his vanished hopes—his strong, his vehement affliction. Edith was touched at the sufferings which her own conduct had occasioned to one so sincere—so generous, and she forgot her own sorrows in her sympathy for him.

"Oh! Fitz-Henry, what can I urge—what can I plead to mitigate the agony which I have caused? Under present circumstances how can I demand your confidence—how ask your sympathy for myself? and yet, if you knew how circumstances have conspired to place me in the position in which I stand—how false—how utterly false is the appearance that now condems me, you would give me your pity, your commiseration. By what chance—by what fatal casualty have you been brought into this position—so wretched to us both? How is it that I find you here?"

These words roused Fitz-Henry to a sense of the painful duty which he had to perform. His extreme emotion and surprise at seeing Edith so situated had for a time banished all recollection of the accident and of the mission on which he had been sent. He now felt still more for the unhappy Edith, for in spite of all she had urged, and however strange and unaccountable such a connexion might appear, he felt convinced that she was the wife of Mr. Blagrove, and slowly and cautiously he commenced his task.

"Forgive me, Edith; in my feelings of self, I had forgotten the position of others—forgotten the duty which brought me here to seek you. Alas! I little knew how much—how deeply—my own fate was interested in the interview that awaited me! You ask how it is that you see me here, and would demand how it is that I have become acquainted with Mr. Blagrove. Our acquaintance has been only of a few hours duration. By chance I witnessed this evening a slight accident that occurred to him on his way to his hôtel. Be not alarmed," continued Fitz-Henry, as he saw the agitation of Edith; "there is no danger. The cabriolet was by accident overturned, and thrown upon the pavement, near to where I was passing, on my way from the Faubourg St. Honoré."

"Fitz-Henry," exclaimed Edith, starting from her seat, "do not deceive me—do not keep me from a real knowledge of his situation—you know not how dearly—how deeply, my own fate—my own happiness—is connected with his. I must not be kept from him, my duty—my inclination—forbid it. Alas! there is no other who would watch over him as I should! Why will you detain me?—why prevent me from following the dictates of my heart? Surely he wishes me to be with him."

"No, Edith!" replied Fitz-Henry, "it is by his wish that I detain you. He would spare the distressing duty which he knew your inclination—your affection—would urge you to perform. For his sake, if not for your own, you must not see him to-night. I again assure you there is no danger, but his physician has ordered him to be kept from all excitement for the present: he must be quiet. Confide him to my care; at least, for this night. Yes, Edith, I can, for your sake, watch over him who has clouded my bright star of hope. Forgive me! I will not again refer to that. Let me entreat you to return home; it is not right—it is not safe for you to remain here so late. Fear nothing from me; your happiness is still too dear for me to reveal aught that might endanger it. Summon your attendant and depart. To-morrow I will see you early—will see you, perhaps, for the last time."

Again was Fitz-Henry subdued by his deep emotion, which he endeavoured, but in vain, to conceal from Edith.

"Fitz-Henry, this must not be," she exclaimed; "I cannot—I ought not to witness this without endeavouring to relieve you from the anguish which is occasioned by myself. Yes, even the strong and urgent necessity for my secrecy must not avail against the continuance of your suspicion. I must stand justified under such circumstances if I break in part the promise which I have so solemnly given. Mr. Blagrove is *not* my husband! Circumstances have rendered it necessary that I pass here as his wife; but there is no bond of that nature between us. More I am not at liberty just now to explain, but ere we meet again I will seek permission to reveal that secret which is now so distressing to us both, for I see how much of happiness is endangered in my keeping it."

"Not his wife!" exclaimed Fitz-Henry, while a more deadly paleness overspread his features; "not the wife of Mr. Blagrove! Oh! Edith, beware! no other connexion ought, or could have brought you here thus at night, clandestinely, to seek him, alone in his apartments. Your deep agitation at hearing of his accident—your manner throughout this painful interview—convince me that your affections are placed on him. That affection, deep as I see it is, would not have brought you here without the sanction of marriage vows. I will not—I cannot believe that you would so greatly outrage propriety and discretion."

The innate sense of modesty that warmed the heart of Edith inspired her at once with the half-expressed meaning of Fitz-Henry. Her neck and forehead were crimsoned with the blush of womanly pride—of wounded feelings. Unabashed—fearlessly she stood before him; her dark eyes flashed, and the proud curl of her lips revealed the depth of her emotion; but a moment more and the anger of her soul had passed by, for she felt convinced how greatly circumstances justified Fitz-Henry in his suspicions; she remembered his pure love—his high sense of honour, and she shrunk from being even for a moment considered

by him in a light so degrading—so revolting to her feelings. She hid her face on his breast, and the tears flowed from her eyes, as she spoke.

"I forgive you, Fitz-Henry; I forgive the cruel wound which your words inflicted upon my heart, for I know you do not—cannot think me that which your sentiments implied. But all concealment must now end; I could not bear a second thought of such a nature to be reflected upon me. Vows, promises—all must be broken, and danger braved; but Edith St. John must not be even suspected of that which is wrong, especially by him who has such a claim to her confidence. The cause which brought me here—the reason for concealment—for the assumption of a name to which I have no claim, will all be explained in a few words: he who has so excited your compassion—he whose fate is so deeply connected with my own—is Albert St. John, my brother!"

What a magic was there in that brief sentence! Edith was pressed to the heart of Fitz-Henry more proudly—more fondly than ever. There needed no further explanation; Fitz-Henry comprehended at once the necessity there had been for the secrecy observed by Edith. He knew the danger which a discovery of his place of concealment would occasion Albert; he knew how strong would be the anger of Captain St. John were he made aware that she visited her brother—he knew also the generous motive which had guided Edith more especially in concealing all this from him; for she knew that Fitz-Henry would forfeit the good opinion and confidence of her father were he ever suspected of being associated with herself in seeing or relieving her unfortunate yet guilty brother; and, knowing all this, nobly and generously had she involved herself in increased danger and sorrow, rather than that he whom she loved should be subjected to the suspicion and anger of her father. All this flashed upon the mind of Fitz-Henry as he now so ardently pressed her to his heart, and many minutes had elapsed ere they were recalled to a sense of the situation in which they were respectively placed. At length

Edith was prevailed upon to leave the hôtel without seeing her brother, for confidently could she now entrust him to the care of Fitz-Henry, who, after calling her attendant, and taking a more than usually tender leave of her, returned to the chamber of his wounded friend, whom he found had become most impatient at his unexpected delay.

"Madame Blagrove is gone," exclaimed Fitz-Henry aloud, for the *garçon* was there. "It was long ere I could prevail upon her not to see you to-night. She was much affected at your sad positiou, and I thought it better not to leave her until she became more composed. This has caused my rather long absence; but now I am ready to resume my office of watch." As he spoke Fitz-Henry drew near the bed, and taking the hand of the young man, added, in a low tone—"Albert St. John, fear nothing, I am Paul Fitz-Henry, the affianced husband of your beloved sister!"

After the departure of the *garçon* the two young men entered fully into an explanation of their respective situations. Albert informed Fitz-Henry of his escape from Cologne, and of his journey to Paris, which he had undertaken in hope of obtaining pecuniary assistance from his friends, to whom he was fearful of writing. He had found means of apprising Edith of his locality, not wishing at first to brave the anger of his father, which, he found from his sister, was still more severe than he had expected. They had thought it better, at least for a time, that the captain should not be made acquainted with Albert's being in Paris, and the same secrecy was to be observed in respect to others, as the dangerous state in which Stanley continued rendered the concealment of Albert imperatively necessary.

"The kind heart of Edith," continued Albert, "brought her often to see me, in spite of the danger she incurred in doing so. Further to avoid suspicion, I suggested the propriety of her passing here as my wife, intimating to the people of the hôtel that we had been married privately, and that our marriage had not yet been revealed to her family, with whom she resided: this accounted for our not remaining together. I had, upon

leaving England, assumed the name of Blagrove, to avoid detection, borrowing it from an old suitor of Edith, of whom you have doubtless heard, and who is recently married, and travelling in Italy, which I knew would prevent his interfering in my plan. Edith has frequently mentioned the connexion which subsists between her and yourself, and her motive for not wishing you to be made acquainted with my being in Paris."

"Dear and generous Edith!" said Fitz-Henry, interrupting Albert—"she has indeed acted nobly in thus braving danger by herself rather than endanger my happiness, by bringing upon me the anger of her father! Since circumstances, however, have brought us together, do not fear to command me. But enough to-night—it is late, and you require rest; so I shall say good night, though I do not intend to leave the chamber."

Fitz-Henry threw himself upon the sofa, and the remainder of the night was passed in silence. At an early hour on the following morning Gustave unexpectedly made his appearance; for the boy was anxious to join Fitz-Henry, and had come to see if he could render him any assistance; but, at the request of Albert, Gustave was not made acquainted with his identity, for he felt a reluctance in trusting his affairs to one so young; consequently Fitz-Henry took an early opportunity of taking his young friend away, and they proceeded together to the Faubourg St. Honoré, where Fitz-Henry had a long interview with Edith, and informed her that Albert was much better. It was also suggested by Fitz-Henry that, as he should now frequently see Albert himself, there would be no necessity for her doing so, except occasionally, when she might accompany him without exciting the suspicion of her father.

# CHAPTER XX.

## False Report—The Exposé—The Marriage—Betrothment—The Return.

Some eight or ten mornings after the accident of Albert, Fitz-Henry was sitting quietly with Edith in the *salon*, when her father entered suddenly, and apparently in the greatest anxiety of mind, which he endeavoured to conceal from his daughter, who was greatly alarmed at his appearance; but his feelings completely overpowered his resolution to be calm, and, after a violent struggle to control his emotion, the old man burst into tears, to the increased alarm of Edith, who hung upon the neck of her father, and begged of him to reveal the cause of his distress.

"It is of no use keeping it from you," exclaimed the captain, in deep emotion; "your poor brother is no more. I have just read an account of the sad catastrophe in one of the English papers. He, with one of his companions, foolishly entered a small sailing boat on the dangerous Lake of Lucerne, and, when opposite Tell's Chapel, a sudden gust of wind capsized them, and they were drowned. Oh! my poor boy! to die thus suddenly without my forgiveness!—without my seeing him again, after my hard-hearted denunciation against him! Oh! Edith, I shall never forgive myself for not listening to you when you so earnestly pleaded for him!—never shall I be happy again!"

"Yes, my dear father, you will be happy," said Edith, as she wiped the tears of the relenting old man; "you will still be happy in the forgiveness of my brother. The account which has so much distressed you is erroneous; they have mistaken the names of the sufferers, at least, in respect to Albert. He lives, and is now in Paris. Forgive me, my father, that I have in this instance acted with duplicity towards you. I knew that you would relent; I knew that your heart was not in reality so hardened against him."

her many interviews with her brother, the accidental adventure of Fitz-Henry, the repentance, and wish of Albert to be reconciled to his father.

"And now," continued the smiling girl, throwing herself at the feet of the captain—"now I have told you all, and you have only to punish me for my disobedience."

And the delighted old captain did punish her by pressing her to his heart, and implanting warm kisses upon her lips and brow; and Fitz-Henry, too, came in for his share of the punishment, for strongly and heartily was his hand shaken by the captain, who declared he was never so happy in finding himself outwitted, and in being obliged to acknowledge there were others who could act better aud more generously than himself.

On the very next morning the family of Captain St. John was made still more happy by the arrival of Mr. Marshall, who brought the pleasing intelligence that Stanley was entirely out of danger, and by his confessions had perfectly exonerated Albert from seeking the duel, which, indeed, had originated in his own insolence towards him, and which Albert was justified in resenting. This pleasing account made the captain still more lenient towards his son, who was forthwith removed from his apartments to the hôtel of his father, where Edith had full liberty to attend him, and which attention, with his present peace of mind, greatly accelerated his recovery.

Thus did happiness shine once more in the hospitable hôtel of Captain St. John. Marie was fast recovering, and the affection between her and Eugène remained firm and ardent, while Edith and Fitz-Henry appeared to rival them only in the strength of their attachment. Gustave had become more resigned to the loss of his mother, and, to remove the impression of melancholy as much as possible from the mind of the affectionate boy, Fitz-Henry urged him to seek every occasion of rational amusement, and frequently they visited together the many scenes of quiet enjoyment with which Paris abounds.

One evening they attended the promenade concert in the Rue

Vivienné, which was unusually crowded, and they had scarcely found seats when they observed Miss Montague enter, hanging on the arm of the Baron Rodolph, both dressed in the extreme of fashion, and the fair Adelina radiant with smiles, and giving herself all the airs of a young coquette as she paraded her moustached and handsome chevalier. Her wandering glances soon fell upon Fitz-Henry and his companion, and she immediately made her way towards them, evidently proud of her situation with the young baron, who, on his part, did not appear quite so gratified with his fair companion; nor was he very courteous towards Fitz-Henry, but remained almost silent when introduced this second time by the loquacious Adelina, whose extreme activity in speech and loudness of tone would scarcely allow those who were seated near her to enjoy the music. In vain Fitz-Henry endeavoured to stay this "torrent of words;" in vain the frowns and whispers of those around her evinced the disapprobation they felt at this interruption; the never-tired Adelina ceased not—mingling one topic with another, till she became quite bewildered as to the subject of her own conversation, and at last came to a stand, from sheer want of breath, to continue her multifarious harangue.

It was quite laughable to see the many little attentions which she demanded from her swain, continually dropping her handkerchief, or giving her fan or bouquet to hold; and now directing his attention to various parts of the *salon*, asking the French denomination for everything she saw, and incessantly calling forth his broken English, and inflicting her still worse French upon him. At length, to the delight of Fitz-Henry and the regret of Gustave, whose boyish fancy had been much amused at the scene, Miss Montague came to the resolution of departing, declaring it quite *outré* to remain to the conclusion of the concert, and dispatching the baron in search of a *fiacre*, while she remained to adjust her paraphernalia in the *salon*.

The music still went on, and some little time had elapsed, but the baron did not make his appearance, and the patience of Miss

Montague became quite exhausted; and even Fitz-Henry began to think there was some unexpected cause for the baron's detention. But the concert was now over, and it was requisite that they should leave the hall; Fitz-Henry, therefore, was obliged to take charge of Miss Montague to her hôtel. A coach was soon engaged, and they left the concert-room together, accompanied by Gustave, who could not resist giving the pouting Adelina an occasional rub on the faithlessness of her admirer.

But when they reached the hôtel a fresh surprise awaited them, and of a more serious nature. All was bustle and confusion; Adolphus was running about half wild, and Madame de Morgan was busily employed in preparing a warm bath in the bed-room of Miss Montague, who, having taken leave of Fitz-Henry, had entered her apartments, greatly astonished at the consternation which her presence appeared to occasion, not only in Madame de Morgan and her attendants, but also in the physician, who, to her great surprise, was waiting to receive her. An explanation was immediately demanded by the half-alarmed Adelina, whose wonderment increased when she was informed that Monsieur the Baron had given instructions for all this preparation. It appeared from the statement of Madame de Morgan, that the baron had dashed up to the door of the hôtel in a *fiacre*, and in apparent great alarm, stating that Mademoiselle Montague had been taken seriously ill at the concert, and, leaving her under the protection of Monsieur Fitz-Henry, he had been dispatched for Amelia, and sundry restoratives which were in the cabinet of Miss Montague, and to procure which the baron had proceeded to her apartments, sending Adolphus off for a physician, and starting soon after himself, accompanied by Amelia, who was loaded with the numerous articles required by her mistress.

There was something so strange in all this that Miss Montague became seriously alarmed, and sent for Fitz-Henry to investigate the affair; but the mystery was soon explained by a note which was found in the *salon*, addressed to Miss Montague, and which she gave to Fitz-Henry, being too much agitated to read it her-

self; but her rage, pride, and shame, knew no bounds as she listened to the following effusions indited by the *soi-disant* baron.

"MADEMOISELLE,

"Wishing, as much as possible, to avoid wounding your very susceptible heart, I will explain in a few words the position in which I am placed. Attracted by your extraordinary eccentricities, and afterwards detained by the liberality of your dotage, I enacted the character of your admirer, though, at the same time, I will confess the principal attraction was the charming Amelia, who was the first to find out and appreciate my numerous qualifications, and, to gratify her own feelings, suggested the scheme which I soon put into practice. Assuming the title of baron, I presented myself before you, and the result answered our expectations. My attentions were acceptable, and I became a frequent visitor to you, and was thus able to enjoy the society of Amelia without exciting your suspicion. Enriched by you both, I now left my situation as assistant to Monsieur Defoe, your *perruquier*, and became the idler, and, like many others in Paris, lived by my wits and the favours of the infatuated.

"In the capacity of hair-dresser I had been frequently honoured by your orders, and you will remember occasionally also by your smiles; but, thanks to my borrowed moustache and your blinded vanity, you never identified the Baron Rodolph with the humble and handsome boy Pierre. I enjoyed in secret the triumph of my plans, and for a time remained satisfied and happy; but you became too profuse in your endearments, and caused my rather fastidious nature to revolt; again Amelia came to my assistance, and we concerted the plot which to-night has been so successful.

"It is possible, upon examination, you will find a few trifles gone from your desk and cabinet, but do not trouble yourself to seek them; they are in safe keeping, where they must remain, unless you wish me to make disclosures which, though founded on truth, may, on being repeated, offend the delicacy of your

nature. Banish the coquette, and assume a seriousness more becoming your age, is the parting advice of

"Your greatly-obliged

"PIERRE,

"*Ci devant* BARON RODOLPH."

This terrible *exposé* threw Miss Montague into a succession of fainting fits, from which it was long ere the united efforts of Madame de Morgan and Fitz-Henry could recover her; yet, in spite of all, Fitz-Henry felt for the position in which she was placed by her own egregious folly, and generously he resolved to do all in his power to assist her in this disagreeable dilemma. By his advice she quitted Paris on the following day, there being fortunately an English family leaving the hôtel for Boulogne, under whose charge he could place her. He urged the propriety of giving up all idea of pursuing the fugitives, for reasons most obvious; and further, to keep all knowledge of the transaction from her friends in England, he advised her to leave the boy Adolphus under his charge, a change agreeable to all parties; for the young gentleman had already evinced a great predilection for the service of Fitz-Henry, and had more than once attempted the transfer of himself from the one to the other.

Time passed happily on, and summer was merging into autumn; the emerald livery of nature was changing to sober brown, and the gorgeous flower giving way to the luxurious fruit. The bright canopy of heaven became less dazzling in its splendour, and autumnal shadows were occasionally cast upon the still cheerful landscape, enlivened by the picturesque employment of the vine-dresser, and varied in its beauties by the intermixture of innumerable tints, of every shade and colour, that were scattered over tree and shrub, blending the freshness of summer with the matured hues of autumn.

It was at this period of the year that Fitz-Henry had proposed to return to his native land, to revisit once more the scenes and friends which, amidst all his changes and pleasures, had not been

forgotten, and to be with whom again he thought would only tend to increase his present felicity. But ere he left the gay scenes of Paris there was a ceremony to be performed in which he was to take no unimportant part; this was the marriage of Edith St. John and himself. The captain had been peremptory in his determination of having it celebrated at the British Embassy, where, twenty-eight years before, he had received the hand of Edith's mother, and Fitz-Henry could not object to an arrangement which would hasten the pleasing event; it was in vain, therefore, that Edith pleaded for a delay; in vain that she expressed a wish for her marriage to take place in England; the majority was against her, and she yielded at length with so good a grace that many were malicious enough to say they doubted whether her wishes were in reality so opposed to those of her father. Be that as it may, she now appeared perfectly resigned to the proposed arrangement, and seemed to contemplate with complacency and fortitude the approach of that day which was to transfer her from the guardianship of her father to that of Fitz-Henry.

It was a bright and sunny morning that ushered in the bridal day of Paul Fitz-Henry and Edith St. John; for nature seemed to rejoice at the happiness of the good, and put forth her greatest attractions in honour of the day. At an early hour a large party had assembled at the hôtel of the captain, and from thence proceeded to the British Embassy, where Fitz-Henry and his party had already arrived, and were waiting to receive them. Never did the fair Edith appear more lovely. A slight blush of excitement mantled on her cheek as, with eyes cast down, she received the congratulations of those around her. Attired in virgin white, her long and glossy hair bound by a simple wreath of orange blossoms, and half concealed by the rich and flowing veil that descended to her feet, she did, indeed, shine conspicuous, even amidst the bevy of beautiful girls who clustered around her, amongst whom the lovely Marie attracted no little attention. Nor was the party of the bridegroom wanting in personal attraction. Fitz-Henry himself had many gifts of nature to be grateful for,

and appeared to advantage, even beside Eugène and Gustave, and threw Albert St. John and Mr. Marshall in the shade, who, on other occasions, might have been considered as handsome. Indeed, it was but seldom that the amiable Bishop Luscombe had been called upon to unite a couple so suited to each other, or so generally attractive. He performed the ceremony with his usual impressiveness, and afterwards accompanied the bridal party to the hôtel of Captain St. John, where a splended *déjeûner à la fourchette* had been provided for them, and where the healths of the bride and bridegroom were drunk with enthusiasm and sincerity by their assembled friends.

As the evening advanced the young and happy couple separated from their joyous friends, and entered the carriage that was to convey them to the peaceful and romantic locality of Montmorency, one of the most picturesque villages in the environs of Paris; and, though the bride and bridegroom could scarcely be seen from beneath the half-drawn blinds, yet the elegant carriage, with its four English horses and smart postillions, all decked with their wedding favours, caused no little sensation in the retired scenes through which they passed.

Captain St. John had allowed only a fortnight for the young couple to enjoy their enviable seclusion, and at the end of that time they returned to Paris, taking up their residence at the Hôtel des Tuileries, in what Madame de Morgan termed her "*grands appartements*," much to the delight of Gustave, who had anticipated with pleasure the return of Fitz-Henry, though he had prognosticated a great diminution in friendship on the part of his friend, whose young bride he thought would now monopolise his attention; but a few days convinced him that his fears were groundless. The same affection subsisted between them—the same kindness and attention were exchanged, and Gustave now boasted, in addition, his having obtained the regard of Edith, the many amiable attractions of the boy having endeared him to her. Nor was his devoted attachment to her husband less the subject of her approbation, but which, indeed, tended greatly to increase her

own affection for the young and volatile being whom fate had placed under their care.

Eugène, too, was still the friend and frequent companion of Fitz-Henry, though it must be confessed the sweet smiles of Marie Darcier drew him frequently to the Faubourg St. Honoré. The captain had now installed her into the office which Edith had vacated, and so well did the young girl perform the duties of the *ménage* that the captain declared she would, in less than two years, be sufficiently initiated in domestic duties to assume the management of an establishment, and promised Eugène that at the end of that period he should be allowed to claim her as his bride, provided they then wished it to be so; adding, they were both too young at present to enter upon so important a career as that of matrimony.

At length the time arrived for their return to England, and though both Edith and Paul had many ties that bound them to their native country, yet they could not quit without regret the scenes where they had experienced so much of happiness. Eugène had resolved to accompany them as a guest, and he looked forward to a long stay in that country of which he had heard so much, and which, from so many associations, would henceforth be so dear to him. Nor was the impatience of Gustave less to enter the land of his adoption. He looked with a delight natural in one so young to the pleasure and excitement of the voyage, and to the continued enjoyment of that society in which he had been so fortunately placed. It was agreed that on the following summer they should all re-visit Paris, and proceed from thence to the Château St. Foy as the guests of Eugène, where Albert and Mr. Marshall were to meet them after their return from Italy, where they intended to pass the winter. This was at the suggestion of Captain St. John, who did not wish his son to re-visit England for the present; and as Mr. Marshall intended to visit Rome, it was agreed that Albert should accompany him. The two young men, therefore, left Paris a few days before their friends quitted it for Boulogne, *en route* for England.

It was on a clear and fresh autumnal morning that a steam-boat left Boulogne for Dover, with its small deck more than usually crowded by passengers. Amongst them was many a heart that beat high in anticipation of home, and its attendant blessings; many an eye that glistened as thoughts of kindred and friends flashed upon the mind, bringing those bright realizations of the future which had shone on the path of the wanderer as, far away, he had pictured that sweet re-union, when he should relate to the ear of affection the many wonders of his travels.

But amongst the many there was no group that excited more attention from their fellow-travellers than that of which Captain St. John was the centre, surrounded by his beautiful and united family. The old warrior looked the very personification of content and happiness. Couched beside him, in a girlish yet graceful attitude, was the lovely Marie, apparently engaged in reading, but in reality listening to the wild and ardent language of Eugène, who had thrown himself beside her. Near them were seated Edith and Fitz-Henry, intent upon the scene before them; for the white cliffs of Dover were now visible in the distance, and the heart of every child of England rebounded as they rose so proudly before them, piercing with the eye of expectation the scenes of happiness and home which lay beyond them. Occasionally Fitz-Henry turned from the fair Edith to explain the different localities to Gustave, who was standing beside them, his bright eyes sparkling with animation, and his young and joyous heart bounding towards the happy shores of his adopted country.

Fitz-Henry could but contrast his present happy feelings with the lone and gloomy thoughts under which he had quitted his native land, and as he gazed on the happy smiles around him in the loved and the loving—as he penetrated the misty veil of futurity, and felt the bright glow of hope within him, his mind was filled with the conviction of his happiness, and his eyes glistened as he acknowledged to himself how greatly to his advantage had been passed A FEW WEEKS IN PARIS.

END OF PAUL FITZ-HENRY.

# ERRATA.

| PAGE | LINE | | | PAGE | LINE | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 30 | *for* statue *read* | stature | 71 | 24 | *for* least *read* | lest |
| 14 | 4 | side | sun | 81 | 4 | profered | proffered |
| 24 | 21 | dow | how | 119 | 10 | are you | you are |
| 33 | 23 | verge | merge | 124 | 29 | quited | quitted |
| 35 | 21 | votex | vortex | 136 | 2 | afternoon | ante-room |

# THE POETRY OF LIFE.

## AN ESSAY.

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EXALTED inspiration of divine origin! æthereal attribute of the soul! thou innate conception of the sublime and the beautiful! how highly-prized—how endearing is thy influence upon the human heart!—how harmonising amidst the strife and bustle of society! Yes, blessed are those who, as they wander through this probationary state of existence, can gather from surrounding scenes and circumstances the beautiful associations of the "poetry of life!" who see not with the eye of apathy the thousand beauties which nature scatters around them—who gaze with awe and admiration on the lofty workings of creation, feeling and appreciating the noblest attributes of our nature, and enjoying that harmony of the mind which, attuned by sympathy and inspiration, rises in the magnitude of its thoughts, and joins in the universal hymn of adoration to the Great Giver of all!

Alas! how many there are in this busy world of ours whose imagination never conceive the possibility of such a state of existence! or, at least, how many whose minds, absorbed by the avocations and cares of ordinary life, have lost the impressions of their youth; who now, even in their hours of leisure and retirement, feel the inspiration of no higher thoughts than those pertaining to worldly advancement! In vain to them are the beauties of nature displayed—in vain the thoughts and the acts of intellectual ca-

pability are brought before them; their minds, heavy as the earth on which they tread, acknowledge not the presence of intuitive greatness. They shrink from a character so organised as one incapable of performing the common necessaries of life—a being who is wasting his time and his abilities in the vain illusion of an Utopian existence; their advice would be to shun the poetry of life for its realities—its stern, its debasing realities; as if the Divine Creator had instilled that elevating principle of life into our nature to be subservient to the elements of mortality—to shrink below that morbid portion of our composition entailed upon us as the children of earth; as if that spiritualising spark were imparted within us to fade away uncultivated and disregarded—as if that ray divine were not the moving principle of life, whose inspiration should be cherished to further our advancement towards perfection—the great end intended for us by the all-wise Creator. Yes, happy—thrice happy are those who, in their wanderings through life, can feel its poetry and its beauties!

But "in what does the poetry of life consist?" may be asked by those whose long and habitual intercourse with the world has erased its peculiar attributes from their minds. Of such I would ask—"is there no record on the tablet of your memory which refers to the days of your youth? Can you not recall those hours of happiness when nature cast its blandishments around you? when the present brought joy, and the future was gilded by the rays of hope? when the earth seemed the abode of peace, and the path on which you trod was strewn with flowers?" *Then* it was that you felt the poetry of life; *then* your heart and mind were elevated by its divine inspirations, and you felt the freshness of your being. Alas! could you have anticipated the feelings of after years, how would you have shrunk from the contamination of worldly traffic! how would you have dreaded that influence which, by degrees, and imperceptibly, has so changed your nature, stealing from you the freshness of heart which had wrought the spell, and substituting in its stead feelings and thoughts so greatly

different, withdrawing you from your communion with nature and the sweet impressions of your childhood, and casting you into the vortex of inquietude and ambition!

There are some who declaim against indulging in the poetry of life because they consider it unsuitable to our worldly state of existence; but the fallacy of such arguments is abundantly proved. Some of the most beautiful productions in literature, both in poetry and prose, have been written by those who, in their official capacity, have gained the approbation of their fellow-beings both for their attention to and their perfect conception of the various duties of their station. They have entered warmly and steadfastly into the affairs of the world, and yet, in their inspired writings—in their social hours of intercourse, we mark the presence of the poetry of life, and feel that they are enlightened by its beauties. And why should it not be so? why should our duties as man to man be less ably performed because we possess that elevation of mind—that inspiration of heart—which enables us to appreciate and enjoy the higher and more refined feelings of our nature; those feelings of innate happiness which universally constitute the attributes of youth—of the mind when fresh from the hand of the Creator, ere yet its long companionship with man has obscured its ingenuous brightness, and thrown the mist of prejudice and of jealousy around it? Yes, there is not one amongst us, however stern and worldly may now be his character, who has not, in the days of his youth, felt the poetry of life; and, happily, the advance of time does not in every case cause the extinction of that exalting feeling. There are many to whom it clings through life, unchilled by the workings of time and of circumstances; many who, though years have passed by, and the bloom of youth has faded away, still retain the freshness of heart which characterised them in their childhood; many who can still gather from surrounding scenes, and from the society of their fellow-beings, thoughts that elevate and objects that enchant.

The poetry of life does not emanate *from* the minds of the

poet and the enthusiast; it exists independent of their bright conceptions. The mind may be uncultivated, and even to a degree apathetic, and yet occasionally feel the influence of its power. There are times when some sudden and unexpected gratification of the senses strikes upon the chord of a dormant sensibility, and awakes, even in the hearts of the most callous, the long-lost feelings of their youth, the thrill, the poetry of life. The unread rustic, as he wanders forth to his daily toil, or as he returns at eve to his quiet home, feels within him a sensation which he cannot describe as his eye glances over the wild beauties of nature, or his ear listens to some well-known sound. He thinks not of his toil, he heeds not his fatigue; his mind is filled with the rich and gratuitous bounties which nature scatters around him, and he feels that freshness of heart which characterizes the poetry of life. But, by a temperament naturally ardent and imaginative, the same feelings are experienced in all their bearings and intensity, and the rapt mind, yielding to the bright enchantment of their power, breaks forth in the language of poetry, or revels in the inspiration of enthusiasm; and hence the poet, and the enthusiast. To them nature is indeed prodigal of her beauties, and life a scene of enchantment; the deepest solitude is not loneliness to them—every shrub, every tree, every hill, every valley, claims companionship with their thoughts, and is filled by the creations of their bright conceptions. The murmuring stream, as it meanders through the smiling vale, sheds a calm upon their hearts, and reflects the beauty of their ideal world. The whispering breeze speaks to them in the language of those not there—of those whose accents of love and affection have passed away, but which are now recalled in all the freshness of their first impressions. The fragrance of the violet, and the beauty of the rose, bring with them associations endearing to the heart, and, as they gaze on the star-lit sky, their thoughts take a higher and wider range, and, soaring from the boundary of earth, they dare to penetrate the deep mysteries of æthereal substance, and in imagination wander through the regions of immortal brightness. To them the wild melody of the

warbling songster—the deep intonation of the jarring elements—the calm of eve, and the freshness of the morning, are all replete with the poetry of life; above—around—it hovers like a spell upon them, entrancing the heart and mind by the harmonizing influence of its power.

And what are the natural character and disposition of those who carry with them into society the influence of this sublime principle?—a principle which, to the casual observer, may appear so inimical to connexions of a more earthly nature? It is this. Warmed and elevated by a higher feeling, they rise above the common prejudices of our nature, and enter more fully into the pleasures of companionship. They participate more ardently in the joys and sorrows of those around them—trust more confidently —love more devotedly, flinging aside the cloak of jealousy and suspicion. They follow only the dictates of their own ingenuous hearts, and speak the language of truth and sincerity, thus throwing a charm into the circles of society by the freshness and disinterestedness of their thoughts and actions.

Such is the being whose heart and mind are yet unchanged by the hand of time, and revel in all the freshness of their youth—the pristine beauty of their first impressions; whose soul is imbued with the poetry of life. And is there a more cherished realization of its power than in the companionship of one subjected to its influence—one who can wander with us through the garden of the world, enjoying its tranquillity and appreciating its beauties, entering fully into our conceptions of life and the attributes of our nature, and speaking to us in the language of the heart; one whose reciprocity of taste and feeling is evinced in every word and in every action—whose silent appeal to our affection needs not the eloquence of words to enforce its reality; one who, governed by his own unfettered mind, gives not the hand and heart by the frigid rules of custom, but enters fully and ardently into the joys of social fellowship, advancing boldly his hatred of the baser passions of our nature, and treating the unprincipled and unthinking with the contempt they merit; one

who shrinks not from the avowal of his feelings—the warmth of his affections; who attempts not to conceal the tear of sympathy or the blush of modesty, but follows the dictates of a pure heart, faithful to its promises, and untainted by the world?

Oh! love and friendship! ye sublime inspirations of the human heart! instilled into our nature by a power supreme—what are ye, thus to raise us so far above the feelings of mere mortality? thus to make us participate in joys unspeakable? What are ye but the refulgence of a light divine—the bright conceptions of the mind when disunited from its grosser part, and ennobled by the rays of reason and of intellect? What but a spell that strews our path with flowers, and mingles the ray of gladness in our hours of trouble, bringing the boon of hope, and faith, and peace, and joy amongst us? What are ye but a beaming of that gift of Heaven—the sweet, unfading poetry of life?

END OF THE POETRY OF LIFE.

J. Larrance, Printer, 6, Dyers' Buildings, Holborn.

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