

bury it, and the only one amongst them who did not fall beneath the heavy fire of the enemy.'

'Then you could give some indication on the subject; you could help to find them?' inquired Charles anxiously.

'So much the more readily,' replied Vincent, 'because the captain made us take as our point of reconnaissance the parallel bearings of a rock and two hills which helped to mark out the spot.'

'So you would remember it?'

'I could point it out as precisely as the position of the bed in this room.'

Charles sprang from his seat. 'Your fortune then is made?' he exclaimed, energetically. 'Why have you been silent so long. The French government would have accepted any proposition you might have made to them.'

'Very likely,' replied Vincent; 'but anyway, my information could have been of no use.'

'Why so?'

'Spain refused the required permission: look at this.'

He held out to the young man a second paper, which announced, in fact, that the demand for permission to search for the tumbrils which had been buried by the French in 1812 on the banks of the Douro had been refused by the government of Madrid.

'But could one not do without this permission?' inquired Charles. 'Where is the necessity of attempting officially a search, which might be made quietly without any display. Once upon the spot, and the ground purchased, who could prevent the search?'

'I have thought about it many a time for the last thirty years,' continued the veteran; 'but where was I to find the money necessary for the expenses of the journey, and for the purchase of the field?'

'Would it not be possible to apply to some one richer than ourselves, and to put them in possession of the secret?'

'But how should we make them credit our reports?—our prevent our confidence being abused, if they did believe it? And if by any chance we should fail in the attempt, or if it should turn out, as in the fable, that when the hour of partition came, the lion should keep the whole of the prey for himself, should we not then, in addition to the fatigues of the journey, and the uncertainties of success, have to brave the miseries of a lawsuit? Of what use would all this be, tell me? Is it worth my while to take so much trouble for the few days I have yet to live? No, no; the millions may rest in peace as far as I am concerned. I have a retired pension of two hundred francs: thanks to the good help of my little Susan, that, with the small yearly sum attached to my cross, is sufficient to supply me with tobacco and my daily rations. I laugh at all other wants as I would at a detachment of Cossacks.'

'And so you will let this opportunity escape you?' continued Charles with feverish earnestness. 'You will refuse all this wealth?'

'For myself, most cheerfully,' replied the old man; 'but for you it would be different. I could perceive just now that you were ambitious; that you would consider no sacrifice too great which would enable you to acquire riches. Well, then, amass the sum which would be necessary for our journey, and I will accompany you to the spot.'

'You!—Are you in earnest?'

'Earn two thousand francs, and then I will bring you to the very spot where the treasure lies concealed. Will that satisfy you?'

'Satisfy me, uncle!' cried Charles in a transport of joy. Then checking himself, he added in an anxious tone, 'But how can I ever scrape together so much money? It never can be done.'

'Work courageously, and bring me your pay regularly every week. I promise you there will be no difficulty in accomplishing it.'

'Remember, uncle, what a trifle the savings of a workman can amount to.'

'That is my look-out.'

'How many years will be necessary?'

'You were just now ready to sacrifice eighteen years, as well as an eye and an arm, in the same cause.'

'Ah, if I were only sure!'

'Of acquiring a treasure? I swear to you by the ashes of the *Little Corporal* that you shall.'

This was the soldier's great oath. Charles saw that he was serious in the matter. Vincent encouraged him anew, by assuring him that his future fate lay in his own power; and the young man retired to rest resolved to begin a life of sober and careful industry.

But the hopes awakened within him by his conversation with his uncle were too splendid to allow of his sleeping. He passed the night in a sort of fever, calculating the means of gaining as quickly as possible the desired sum; settling how he would employ his future riches; and passing in review, one after another, as realities, all the chimeras which heretofore had only floated like dim visions before his imagination. When Susan came down next morning, he had already gone off to his work. Vincent, observing her surprise, nodded his head and smiled, but said nothing. He had recommended secrecy to the young workman, and resolved to maintain it himself. Moreover, he wished to see whether Charles would persevere in his good resolutions.

The first months of trial were full of difficulty to the young workman. He had contracted habits which required no small resolution to break through. Incessant work seemed insupportable to him. He was now

obliged to struggle against that capricious fickleness of purpose which hitherto had influenced his actions, to surmount the impulses of weariness and disgust, and to resist the importunities of his former companions in dissipation.

This was at first a difficult task. Many a time his courage failed, and he was upon the point of returning to his former habits; but his earnest desire to attain the proposed end reanimated him in his course. Each time that he brought to the veteran his weekly savings, and perceived how insensibly they were increasing in amount, he experienced a renewal of hope which gave fresh ardour to his endeavours—it was only a little step towards his end, but still it was a step. Besides, each day the effort became easier; for in proportion as his life became more regular, his tastes took a new direction. The assiduity with which he laboured throughout the day rendered his evening repose more welcome; the separation from his noisy and reckless companions lent a new charm to the society of his uncle and his cousin. Susan, too, had recovered her gaiety, as well as her frank familiarity of manner. Her every thought was given to her aged uncle and to Charles; and each day her careful love adorned their humble home with some fresh charm, and drew still closer those bonds of tenderness and affection which can make the lowliest dwelling the abode of happiness and peace. Charles was quite surprised at finding in his cousin attractions which he had never before discovered. She became insensibly each day more necessary to his happiness. Without his being aware of it, the aim of his life was gradually changing; the hope of attaining the treasure promised by Vincent was no longer his only spring of action; in all he did, he now thought of Susan; his constant desire was to merit her approbation, to become dearer to her.

The human soul is a sort of moral daguerreotype: let it be surrounded by images of order, of industry, of self-devotion; let it be illuminated by the sunshine of affection; and each of these images will imprint themselves upon its surface, and remain there for ever firmly fixed.

The life which Charles was now leading gradually extinguished his ardent ambition: he saw within his reach a purer and simpler happiness than any of which he had ever before formed a conception; his paradise was no longer a fairyland, such as the 'Arabian Nights' depict, but a narrow circle, peopled with homely joys which he could with difficulty embrace within his grasp. And yet this transformation, visible to all around him, remained a secret to himself. He did not know that he was changed, he only knew that he was more tranquil and more happy. The only new feeling of which he was conscious was his love for Susan. The treasure he was labouring for, instead of being his principal object, he looked upon only as a means towards making his union with Susan more joyous. He looked forward to it as an important addition, but still only as accessory to higher hopes; also he now began to feel the greatest anxiety to know whether his love was shared.

He was one evening pacing the little apartment, while Vincent and Susan were chatting together beside the stove. Their conversation turned on Charles's former master, who, after thirty years of a life passed in honest labour, had just put up to sale his little bookbinding establishment, that he might retire to the country with his aged wife for the remainder of his days.

'Now that is a couple,' said the old soldier, 'who knew how to turn the world into a paradise; always of one mind, always in good humour, and fully occupied.'

'Yes,' replied Susan, thoughtfully, 'the richest couple on earth might well envy their lot.'

Charles, who had just then approached the stove, stopped a moment, and looking fixedly at his cousin, inquired, 'Then you would like your husband to love you, Susan?'

'Why, yes—certainly—if possible,' she replied, smiling, and slightly colouring.

'You can have your wish then,' said Charles warmly. 'You have only to say one word.'

'What word, my cousin?' said Susan with some emotion.

'That you will accept me for your husband,' replied the young man: adding with respectful tenderness, as he saw the surprise and confusion which this abrupt avowal of his intentions had produced in his cousin, 'Oh do not let that annoy you, Susan; it has long been my most earnest desire to ask you this question. I only waited on account of a certain reason with which my uncle is acquainted, but you see how it has escaped me against my will; and now only be as frank as I have been. Tell me whether I may hope that you can love me; our good uncle is there, so that you need have no fears that you are doing wrong.'

The young man's voice faltered; he took his cousin's hand, which he pressed within his own, and a tear trembled in his eye. Susan was silent, for her heart was too full to speak; and the old soldier looked at them both with a smile of mingled playfulness and feeling. At length putting his arm around the young girl, and drawing her gently towards Charles, he said gaily, 'Well now, speak, my little one.'

'Susan!' exclaimed her cousin, still holding her hand, 'one word, only one word—will you be my wife?'

She hid her head upon his shoulder, and a half-articulated 'Yes' escaped her lips.

'Eh, well now, I declare,' cried Vincent, clapping his hand on his knee, 'there was a great deal of difficulty about saying that much. Now you must both give me a kiss,' said he, kindly taking their hands. 'I will leave

you this evening for talking over your secrets, and tomorrow we will speak of business.'

The next morning the old man, taking his nephew aside, announced to him that the sum which was required for their journey was now complete, and that they might set off for Spain as soon as they pleased. This news, which ought to have enchanted Charles, filled him, on the contrary, with painful emotion. To think that he must leave Susan at the very moment when their intercourse was becoming such a source of happiness—that he must encounter all the uncertainties of a long and difficult journey, when it would have been so sweet to stay in his now happy home! The young man was almost ready to curse the millions which he must go so far to seek. Since the time when he had gained a new object of interest in life, his desire for riches had gradually lost its hold upon his mind. What use was there in seeking for wealth to purchase happiness?—he had found it already. He did not, however, express these thoughts to his uncle, but merely declared himself ready to accompany him at an hour's notice. The old soldier reminded him that age was less hasty than youth in its movements, and asked for a few days' delay previous to their departure. 'Meanwhile, I wish, Charles,' said the old man, 'that you would borrow from our neighbours those old newspapers which tell of the famous depot on the banks of the Douro; we can look over them carefully together, and may perhaps find some information that shall be useful to us on our arrival there.'

The young man having made the desired application, they were, in the course of half an hour, seated side by side, poring over some well-thumbed papers. Charles at first found only the details with which he was already familiar—the refusal of the Spanish government—the fruitless researches of some Barcelona merchants. He thought that every document had been read, when his glance rested upon a letter signed by a certain P. Dufour.

'Peter Dufour!' repeated Vincent; 'that was the name of the quarter-master of the company.'

'So he is called here,' replied Charles.

'Heaven save me! I thought the brave old boy was in the other world long ago; he was the confederate of the captain. Let us see what he has to say for himself.'

Instead of answering, Charles uttered a cry of disappointment; he had looked over the letter, and on perusing its contents, had turned deadly pale.

'What on earth is the matter?' inquired Vincent.

'The matter, indeed!' repeated the young workman. 'The matter is, that if Dufour speaks truth, we may as well stay at home.'

'Why?'

'Because the tumbrils were filled with powder instead of silver!'

Vincent clapped his hand to his forehead with an exclamation of surprise and disappointment. Susan laid down her work, and fixed her eyes mournfully on her cousin. The latter was the first to recover from the stupor occasioned by this unexpected discovery. After a few moments, he rose up with a look of cheerful animation, and approaching Susan, seized her hand, exclaiming, 'After all, here is my best treasure—one I would not give up for all the silver that may be buried in Spain and France too! So cheer up, good uncle, and let us make the best use of what is left to us. With true hearts and strong hands we can never be poor. Can we, Susan?'

'Never,' she replied; and her eyes expressed even more unbounded confidence than was implied in the single word uttered by her lips.

The old man slowly raised his head, and repeated the well-known proverb, '*L'homme propose mais Dieu dispose.*' Then, after a moment's thought, he continued, 'I hoped to have seen you both wealthy before I died; but perhaps it is best as it is. Don't let us forget, however, your savings, Charles—Peter Dufour's letter cannot rob us of the two thousand francs; and,' added he, smiling, 'I have some savings of my own, thanks to the management of this good girl: we will see what can be done with it all.' So saying, he rested his head on his elbow, and seemed for a while lost in meditation. At last he raised his head, and cried out joyously, 'I have it!—I have it!'

'What have you, good uncle?' exclaimed the young people simultaneously.

'Patience, patience,' replied the veteran with a knowing smile; you shall know it all in good time. Will you call a hackney-coach for me Charles? I have some business out, and it is still early in the day. Susan, child, I shall want you to come with me.'

His desire was obeyed; and as he drove through the streets, he acquainted her that his heart was set upon establishing them both in the business which had been just relinquished by Charles's former master. 'And,' added he, 'Mr. Lebrun is an honest man, and will lend me a helping hand in the business. What say you to my plan, child?'

'Oh it would only make me too happy, dear uncle,' she gratefully replied.

They called on Mr. Lebrun, and were so successful in their negotiations, that on being again seated in the coach, the old man knocked his stick with vehemence on the floor, exclaiming, 'By the ashes of the *Little Corporal* he shall have it!' Susan kissed his hand with joyful affection. 'Only let me see you settled in your own manage, and I shall die happy,' said the old man with some emotion. 'But remember, Charles is to know