YONGE CHARLOTTE MARY

A MODERN TELEMACHUS

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Содержание

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PREFACE

The idea of this tale was taken from *The Mariners' Chronicle*, compiled by a person named Scott early in the last century —a curious book of narratives of maritime adventures, with exceedingly quaint illustrations. Nothing has ever shown me more plainly that truth is stranger than fiction, for all that is most improbable here is the actual fact.

The Comte de Bourke was really an Irish Jacobite, naturalised in France, and married to the daughter of the Marquis de Varennes, as well as in high favour with the Marshal Duke of Berwick.

In 1719, just when the ambition of Elizabeth Farnese, the second wife of Philip V. of Spain, had involved that country in a war with England, France, and Austria, the Count was transferred from the Spanish Embassy to that of Sweden, and sent for his wife and two elder children to join him at a Spanish port.

This arrangement was so strange that I can only account for it by supposing that as this was the date of a feeble Spanish attempt on behalf of the Jacobites in Scotland, Comte de Bourke may

not have ventured by the direct route. Or it may not have been etiquette for him to re-enter France when appointed ambassador.

At any rate, the poor Countess did take this route to the South, and I am inclined to think the narrative must be correct, as all the side-lights I have been able to gain perfectly agree with it, often in an unexpected manner.

The suite and the baggage were just as related in the story —the only liberty I have taken being the bestowal of names. 'M. Arture' was really of the party, but I have made him Scotch instead of Irish, and I have no knowledge that the lackey was not French. The imbecility of the Abbé is merely a deduction from his helplessness, but of course this may have been caused by illness.

The meeting with M. de Varennes at Avignon, Berwick's offer of an escort, and the Countess's dread of the Pyrenees, are all facts, as well as her embarkation in the Genoese tartane bound for Barcelona, and its capture by the Algerine corsair commanded by a Dutch renegade, who treated her well, and to whom she gave her watch.

Algerine history confirms what is said of his treatment. Louis XIV. had bombarded the pirate city, and compelled the Dey to receive a consul and to liberate French prisoners and French property; but the lady having been taken in an Italian ship, the Dutchman was afraid to set her ashore without first taking her to Algiers, lest he should fall under suspicion. He would not venture on taking so many women on board his own vessel, being

evidently afraid of his crew of more than two hundred Turks and Moors, but sent seven men on board the prize and took it in tow.

Curiously enough, history mentions the very tempest which drove the tartane apart from her captor, for it also shattered the French transports and interfered with Berwick's Spanish campaign.

The circumstances of the wreck have been closely followed. 'M. Arture' actually saved Mademoiselle de Bourke, and placed her in the arms of the *maître d'hôtel*, who had reached a rock, together with the Abbé, the lackey, and one out of the four maids. The other three were all in the cabin with their mistress and her son, and shared their fate.

The real 'Arture' tried to swim to the shore, but never was seen again, so that his adventures with the little boy are wholly imaginary. But the little girl's conduct is perfectly true. When in the steward's arms she declared that the savages might take her life, but never should make her deny her faith.

The account of these captors was a great difficulty, till in the old *Universal History* I found a description of Algeria which tallied wonderfully with the narrative. It was taken from a survey of the coast made a few years later by English officials.

The tribe inhabiting Mounts Araz and Couco, and bordering on Djigheli Bay, were really wild Arabs, claiming high descent, but very loose Mohammedans, and savage in their habits. Their name of Cabeleyzes is said—with what truth I know not—to mean 'revolted,' and they held themselves independent of the

Dey. They were in the habit of murdering or enslaving all shipwrecked travellers, except subjects of Algiers, whom they released with nothing but their lives.

All this perfectly explains the sufferings of Mademoiselle de Bourke. The history of the plundering, the threats, the savage treatment of the corpses, the wild dogs, the councils of the tribe, the separation of the captives, and the child's heroism, is all literally true—the expedient of Victorine's defence alone being an invention. It is also true that the little girl and the *maître d'hôtel* wrote four letters, and sent them by different chances to Algiers, but only the last ever arrived, and it created a great sensation.

M. Dessault is a real personage, and the kindness of the Dey and of the Moors was exactly as related, also the expedient of sending the Marabout of Bugia to negotiate.

Mr. Thomas Thompson was really the English Consul at the time, but his share in the matter is imaginary, as it depends on Arthur's adventures.

The account of the Marabout system comes from the *Universal History*; but the arrival, the negotiations, and the desire of the sheyk to detain the young French lady for a wife to his son, are from the narrative. He really did claim to be an equal match for her, were she daughter of the King of France, since he was King of the Mountains.

The welcome at Algiers and the *Te Deum* in the Consul's chapel also are related in the book that serves me for authority. It

adds that Mademoiselle de Bourke finally married a Marquis de B–, and lived much respected in Provence, dying shortly before the Revolution.

I will only mention further that a rescued Abyssinian slave named Fareek (happily not tongueless) was well known to me many years ago in the household of the late Warden Barter of Winchester College.

Since writing the above I have by the kindness of friends been enabled to discover Mr. Scott's authority, namely, a book entitled *Voyage pour la Redemption des captifs aux Royaumes d'Alger et de Tunis, fait en* 1720 *par les P.P. François Comelin, Philemon de la Motte, et Joseph Bernard, de l'Ordre de la Sainte Trinité, dit Mathurine*. This Order was established by Jean Matha for the ransom and rescue of prisoners in the hands of the Moors.

A translation of the adventures of the Comtesse de Bourke and her daughter was published in the *Catholic World*, New York, July 1881. It exactly agrees with the narration in *The Mariners' Chronicle* except that, in the true spirit of the eighteenth century, Mr. Scott thought fit to suppress that these ecclesiastics were at Algiers at the time of the arrival of Mademoiselle de Bourke's letter, that they interested themselves actively on her behalf, and that they wrote the narrative from the lips of the *maître d'hôtel* (who indeed may clearly be traced throughout). It seems also that the gold cups were chalices, and that a complete set of altar equipments fell a prey to the Cabeleyzes, whose name the good fathers endeavour to connect with *Cabale*—with about as much

reason as if we endeavoured to derive that word from the ministry of Charles II.

Had I known in time of the assistance of these benevolent brethren I would certainly have introduced them with all due honour, but, like the Abbé Vertot, I have to say, *Mon histoire est écrite*, and what is worse—printed. Moreover, they do not seem to have gone on the mission with the Marabout from Bugia, so that their presence really only accounts for the *Te Deum* with which the redeemed captives were welcomed.

It does not seem quite certain whether M. Dessault was Consul or Envoy; I incline to think the latter. The translation in the *Catholic World* speaks of Sir Arthur, but Mr. Scott's 'M. Arture' is much more *vraisemblable*. He probably had either a surname to be concealed or else unpronounceable to French lips. Scott must have had some further information of the after history of Mademoiselle de Bourke since he mentions her marriage, which could hardly have taken place when Père Comelin's book was published in 1720.

C. M. YONGE.

CHAPTER I—COMPANIONS OF THE VOYAGE

'Make mention thereto
Touching my much loved father's safe return,
If of his whereabouts I may best hear.'

Odyssey (Musgrave).

'Oh! brother, I wish they had named you Télémaque, and then it would have been all right!'

'Why so, sister? Why should I be called by so ugly a name? I like Ulysses much better; and it is also the name of my papa.'

'That is the very thing. His name is Ulysses, and we are going to seek for him.'

'Oh! I hope that cruel old Mentor is not coming to tumble us down over a great rook, like Télémaque in the picture.'

'You mean Père le Brun?'

'Yes; you know he always says he is our Mentor. And I wish he would change into a goddess with a helmet and a shield, with an ugly face, and go off in a cloud. Do you think he will, Estelle?'

'Do not be so silly, Ulick; there are no goddesses now.'

'I heard M. de la Mêde tell that pretty lady with the diamond butterfly that she was his goddess; so there are!'

'You do not understand, brother. That was only flattery and

compliment. Goddesses were only in the Greek mythology, and were all over long ago!'

'But are we really going to see our papa?'

'Oh yes, mamma told me so. He is made Ambassador to Sweden, you know.'

'Is that greater than Envoy to Spain?'

'Very, very much greater. They call mamma Madame l'Ambassadrice; and she is having three complete new dresses made. See, there are *la bonne* and Laurent talking. It is English, and if we go near with our cups and balls we shall hear all about it. Laurent always knows, because my uncle tells him.'

'You must call him *La Juenesse* now he is made mamma's lackey. Is he not beautiful in his new livery?'

'Be still now, brother; I want to hear what they are saying.'

This may sound somewhat sly, but French children, before Rousseau had made them the fashion, were kept in the background, and were reduced to picking up intelligence as best they could without any sense of its being dishonourable to do so; and, indeed, it was more neglect than desire of concealment that left their uninformed.

This was in 1719, four years after the accession of Louis XV., a puny infant, to the French throne, and in the midst of the Regency of the Duke of Orleans. The scene was a broad walk in the Tuileries gardens, beneath a closely-clipped wall of greenery, along which were disposed alternately busts upon pedestals, and stone vases of flowers, while beyond lay formal beds of flowers,

the gravel walks between radiating from a fountain, at present quiescent, for it was only ten o'clock in the forenoon, and the gardens were chiefly frequented at that hour by children and their attendants, who, like Estelle and Ulysse de Bourke, were taking an early walk on their way home from mass.

They were a miniature lady and gentleman of the period in costume, with the single exception that, in consideration of their being only nine and seven years old, their hair was free from powder. Estelle's light, almost flaxen locks were brushed back from her forehead, and tied behind with a rose-coloured ribbon, but uncovered, except by a tiny lace cap on the crown of her head; Ulick's darker hair was carefully arranged in great curls on his back and shoulders, as like a full-bottomed wig as nature would permit, and over it he wore a little cocked hat edged with gold lace. He had a rich laced cravat, a double-breasted waistcoat of pale blue satin, and breeches to match, a brown velvet coat with blue embroidery on the pockets, collar, and skirts, silk stockings to match, as well as the knot of the tiny scabbard of the semblance of a sword at his side, shoes with silver buckles, and altogether he might have been a full-grown Comte or Vicomte seen through a diminishing glass. His sister was in a full-hooped dress, with tight long waist, and sleeves reaching to her elbows, the under skirt a pale pink, the upper a deeper rose colour; but stiff as was the attire, she had managed to give it a slight general air of disarrangement, to get her cap a little on one side, a stray curl loose on her forehead, to tear a bit of the dangling lace on her

arms, and to splash her robe with a puddle. He was in air, feature, and complexion a perfect little dark Frenchman. The contour of her face, still more its rosy glow, were more in accordance with her surname, and so especially were the large deep blue eyes with the long dark lashes and pencilled brows. And there was a lively restless air about her full of intelligence, as she manoeuvred her brother towards a stone seat, guarded by a couple of cupids reining in sleepy-looking lions in stone, where, under the shade of a lime-tree, her little petticoated brother of two years old was asleep, cradled in the lap of a large, portly, handsome woman, in a dark dress, a white cap and apron, and dark crimson cloak, loosely put back, as it was an August day. Native costumes were then, as now, always worn by French nurses; but this was not the garb of any province of the kingdom, and was as Irish as the brogue in which she was conversing with the tall fine young man who stood at ease beside her. He was in a magnificent green and gold livery suit, his hair powdered, and fastened in a *queue*, the whiteness contrasting with the dark brows, and the eyes and complexion of that fine Irish type that it is the fashion to call Milesian. He looked proud of his dress, which was viewed in those days as eminently becoming, and did in fact display his well-made figure and limbs to great advantage; but he looked anxiously about, and his first inquiry on coming on the scene in attendance upon the little boy had been—

'The top of the morning to ye, mother! And where is Victorine?'

'Arrah, and what would ye want with Victorine?' demanded the *bonne*. 'Is not the old mother enough for one while, to feast her eyes on her an' Lanty Callaghan, now he has shed the *marmiton's* slough, and come out in old Ireland's colours, like a butterfly from a palmer? La Jeunesse, instead of Laurent here, and Laurent there.'

La Pierre and La Jeunesse were the stereotyped names of all pairs of lackeys in French noble houses, and the title was a mark of promotion; but Lanty winced and said, 'Have done with that, mother. You know that never the pot nor the kettle has blacked my fingers since Master Phelim went to the good fathers' school with me to carry his books and insinse him with the larning. 'Tis all one, as his own body-servant that I have been, as was fitting for his own foster-brother, till now, when not one of the servants, barring myself and Maître Hébert, the steward, will follow Madame la Comtesse beyond the four walls of Paris. "Will you desert us too, Laurent?" says the lady. "And is it me you mane, Madame," says I, "Sorrah a Callaghan ever deserted a Burke!" "Then," says she, "if you will go with us to Sweden, you shall have two lackey's suits, and a couple of *louis d'or* to cross your pocket with by the year, forbye the fee and bounty of all the visitors to M. le Comte." "Is it M. l'Abbé goes with Madame?" says I. "And why not," says she. "Then," says I, "'tis myself that is mightily obliged to your ladyship, and am ready to put on her colours and do all in reason in her service, so as I am free to attend to Master Phelim, that is M. l'Abbé,

whenever he needs me, that am in duty bound as his own foster-brother." "Ah, Laurent," says she, "'tis you that are the faithful domestic. We shall all stand in need of such good offices as we can do to one another, for we shall have a long and troublesome, if not dangerous journey, both before and after we have met M. le Comte.'"

Estelle here nodded her head with a certain satisfaction, while the nurse replied—

'And what other answer could the son of your father make —Heavens be his bed—that was shot through the head by the masther's side in the weary wars in Spain? and whom could ye be bound to serve barring Master Phelim, that's lain in the same cradle with yees—'

'Is not Victorine here, mother?' still restlessly demanded Lanty.

'Never you heed Victorine,' replied she. 'Sure she may have a little arrand of her own, and ye might have a word for the old mother that never parted with you before.'

'You not going, mother!' he exclaimed.

"Tis my heart that will go with you and Masther Phelim, my jewel; but Madame la Comtesse will have it that this weeny little darlint'—caressing the child in her lap—'could never bear the cold of that bare and dissolute place in the north you are bound for, and old Madame la Marquise, her mother, would be mad entirely if all the children left her; but our own lady can't quit the little one without leaving his own nurse Honor with him!'

'That's news to me intirely, mother,' said Lanty; 'bad luck to it!'

Honor laughed that half-proud, half-sad laugh of mothers when their sons outgrow them. 'Fine talking! Much he cares for the old mother if he can see the young girl go with him.'

For Lanty's eyes had brightened at sight of a slight little figure, trim to the last degree, with a jaunty little cap on her dark hair, gay trimmings to the black apron, dainty shoes and stockings that came tripping down the path. His tongue instantly changed to French from what he called English, as in pathetic insinuating modulations he demanded how she could be making him weary his very heart out.

'Who bade you?' she retorted. 'I never asked you to waste your time here!'

'And will ye not give me a glance of the eyes that have made a cinder of my poor heart, when I am going away into the desolate north, among the bears and the savages and the heretics?'

'There will be plenty of eyes there to look at your fine green and gold, for the sake of the Paris cut; though a great lumbering fellow like you does not know how to show it off!'

'And if I bring back a heretic *bru* to break the heart of the mother, will it not be all the fault of the cruelty of Mademoiselle Victorine?'

Here Estelle, unable to withstand Lanty's piteous intonations, broke in, 'Never mind, Laurent, Victorine goes with us. She went to be measured for a new pair of slices on purpose!'

'Ah! I thought I should disembarrass myself of a great troublesome Irishman!'

'No!' retorted the boy, 'you knew Laurent was going, for Maître Hébert had just come in to say he must have a lackey's suit!'

'Yes,' said Estelle, 'that was when you took me in your arms and kissed me, and said you would follow Madame la Comtesse to the end of the world.'

The old nurse laughed heartily, but Victorine cried out, 'Does Mademoiselle think I am going to follow naughty little girls who invent follies? It is still free to me to change my mind. Poor Simon Claquette is gnawing his heart out, and he is to be left *concierge*!'

The clock at the palace chimed eleven, Estelle took her brother's hand, Honor rose with little Jacques in her arms, Victorine paced beside her, and Lanty as La Jeunesse followed, puffing out his breast, and wielding his cane, as they all went home to *déjeuner*.

Twenty-nine years before the opening of this narrative, just after the battle of Boyne Water had ruined the hopes of the Stewarts in Ireland, Sir Ulick Burke had attended James II. in his flight from Waterford; and his wife had followed him, attended by her two faithful servants, Patrick Callaghan, and his wife Honor, carrying her mistress's child on her bosom, and her own on her back.

Sir Ulick, or Le Chevalier Bourke, as the French called him,

had no scruple in taking service in the armies of Louis XIV. Callaghan followed him everywhere, while Honor remained a devoted attendant on her lady, doubly bound to her by exile and sorrow.

Little Ulick Burke's foster-sister died, perhaps because she had always been made second to him through all the hardships and exposure of the journey. Other babes of both lady and nurse had succumbed to the mortality which beset the children of that generation, and the only survivors besides the eldest Burke and one daughter were the two youngest of each mother, and they had arrived so nearly at the same time that Honor Callaghan could again be foster-mother to Phelim Burke, a sickly child, reared with great difficulty.

The family were becoming almost French. Sir Ulick was an intimate friend of one of the noblest men of the day, James Fitz-James, Marshal Duke of Berwick, who united military talent, almost equal to that of his uncle of Marlborough, to an unswerving honour and integrity very rare in those evil times. Under him, Sir Ulick fought in the campaigns that finally established the House of Bourbon upon the throne of Spain, and the younger Ulick or Ulysse, as his name had been classicalised and Frenchified, was making his first campaign as a mere boy at the time of the battle of Almanza, that solitary British defeat, for which our national consolation is that the French were commanded by an Englishman, the Duke of Berwick, and the English by a Frenchman, the Huguenot Rubigné, Earl of Galway.

The first English charge was, however, fatal to the Chevalier Bourke, who fell mortally wounded, and in the endeavour to carry him off the field the faithful Callaghan likewise fell. Sir Ulick lived long enough to be visited by the Duke, and to commend his children to his friend's protection.

Berwick was held to be dry and stiff, but he was a faithful friend, and well redeemed his promise. The eldest son, young as he was, obtained as wife the daughter of the Marquis de Varennes, and soon distinguished himself both in war and policy, so as to receive the title of Comte de Bourke.

The French Church was called on to provide for the other two children. The daughter, Alice, became a nun in one of the Parisian convents, with promises of promotion. The younger son, Phelim, was weakly in health, and of intellect feeble, if not deficient, and was almost dependent on the devoted care and tenderness of his foster-brother, Laurence Callaghan. Nobody was startled when Berwick's interest procured for the dull boy of ten years old the Abbey of St. Eudoce in Champagne. To be sure the responsibilities were not great, for the Abbey had been burnt down a century and a half ago by the Huguenots, and there had never been any monks in it since, so the only effect was that little Phelim Burke went by the imposing title of Monsieur l'Abbé de St. Eudoce, and his family enjoyed as much of the revenues of the estates of the Abbey as the Intendant thought proper to transmit to them. He was, to a certain degree, ecclesiastically educated, having just memory enough to retain

for recitation the tasks that Lanty helped him to learn, and he could copy the themes or translations made for him by his faithful companion. Neither boy had the least notion of unfairness or deception in this arrangement: it was only the natural service of the one to the other, and if it were perceived in the Fathers of the Seminary, whither Lanty daily conducted the young Abbot, they winked at it. Nor, though the quick-witted Lanty thus acquired a considerable amount of learning, no idea occurred to him of availing himself of it for his own advantage. It sat outside him, as it were, for 'Masther Phelim's' use; and he no more thought of applying it to his own elevation than he did of wearing the *soutane* he brushed for his young master.

The Abbé was now five-and-twenty, had received the tonsure, and had been admitted to minor Orders, but there was no necessity for him to proceed any farther unless higher promotion should be accorded to him in recompense of his brother's services. He was a gentle, amiable being, not at all fit to take care of himself; and since the death of his mother, he had been the charge of his brother and sister-in-law, or perhaps more correctly speaking, of the Dowager Marquise de Varennes, for all the branches of the family lived together in the Hotel de Varennes at Paris, or its chateau in the country, and the fine old lady ruled over all, her son and son-in-law being often absent, as was the case at present.

A fresh European war had been provoked by the ambition of the second wife of Philip V. of Spain, the Prince for whose cause

Berwick had fought. This Queen, Elizabeth Farnese, wanted rank and dominion for her own son; moreover, Philip looked with longing eyes at his native kingdom of France, all claim to which he had resigned when Spain was bequeathed to him; but now that only a sickly child, Louis XV., stood between him and the succession in right of blood, he felt his rights superior to those of the Duke of Orleans. Thus Spain was induced to become hostile to France, and to commence the war known as that of the Quadruple Alliance.

While there was still hope of accommodation, the Comte de Bourke had been sent as a special envoy to Madrid, and there continued even after the war had broken out, and the Duke of Berwick, resigning all the estates he had received from the gratitude of Philip V., had led an army across the frontier.

The Count had, however, just been appointed Ambassador to Sweden, and was anxious to be joined by his family on the way thither.

The tidings had created great commotion. Madame de Varennes looked on Sweden as an Ultima Thule of frost and snow, but knew that a lady's presence was essential to the display required of an ambassador. She strove, however, to have the children left with her; but her daughter declared that she could not part with Estelle, who was already a companion and friend, and that Ulysse must be with his father, who longed for his eldest son, so that only little Jacques, a delicate child, was to be left to console his grandmother.

CHAPTER II—A JACOBITE WAIF

'Sac now he's o'er the floods sae gray,
And Lord Maxwell has ta'en his good-night.'

Lord Maxwell's Good-night.

Madame La Comtesse de Bourke was by no means a helpless fine lady. She had several times accompanied her husband on his expeditions, and had only not gone with him to Madrid because he did not expect to be long absent, and she sorely rued the separation.

She was very busy in her own room, superintending the packing, and assisting in it, when her own clever fingers were more effective than those of her maids. She was in her *robe de chambre*, a dark blue wrapper, embroidered with white, and put on more neatly than was always the case with French ladies in *déshabille*. The hoop, long stiff stays, rich brocade robe, and fabric of powdered hair were equally unsuitable to ease or exertion, and consequently were seldom assumed till late in the day, when the toilette was often made in public.

So Madame de Bourke's hair was simply rolled out of her way, and she appeared in her true colours, as a little brisk, bonny woman, with no actual beauty, but very expressive light gray eyes, furnished with intensely long black lashes, and a sweet,

mobile, lively countenance.

Estelle was trying to amuse little Jacques, and prevent him from trotting between the boxes, putting all sorts of undesirable goods into them; and Ulysse had collected his toys, and was pleading earnestly that a headless wooden horse and a kite, twice as tall as himself, of Lanty's manufacture, might go with them.

He was told that another *cerf-volant* should be made for him at the journey's end; but was only partially consoled, and his mother was fain to compound for a box of woolly lambs. Estelle winked away a tear when her doll was rejected, a wooden, highly painted lady, bedizened in brocade, and so dear to her soul that it was hard to be told that she was too old for such toys, and that the Swedes would be shocked to see the Ambassador's daughter embracing a doll. She had, however, to preserve her character of a reasonable child, and tried to derive consolation from the permission to bestow 'Mademoiselle' upon the *concierge's* little sick daughter, who would be sure to cherish her duly.

'But, oh mamma, I pray you to let me take my book!'

'Assuredly, my child. Let us see! What? Télémaque? Not "Prince Percinet and Princess Gracieuse?"'

'I am tired of them, mamma.'

'Nor Madame d'Aulnoy's Fairy Tales?'

'Oh no, thank you, mamma; I love nothing so well as Télémaque.'

'Thou art a droll child!' said her mother.

'Ah, but we are going to be like Télémaque.'

'Heaven forfend!' said the poor lady.

'Yes, dear mamma, I am glad you are going with us instead of staying at home to weave and unweave webs. If Penelope had been like you, she would have gone!'

'Take care, is not Jacques acting Penelope?' said Madame de Bourke, unable to help smiling at her little daughter's glib mythology, while going to the rescue of the embroidery silks, in which her youngest son was entangling himself.

At that moment there was a knock at the door, and a message was brought that the Countess of Nithsdale begged the favour of a few minutes' conversation in private with Madame. The Scottish title fared better on the lips of La Jeunesse than it would have done on those of his predecessor. There was considerable intimacy among all the Jacobite exiles in and about Paris; and Winifred, Countess of Nithsdale, though living a very quiet and secluded life, was held in high estimation among all who recollected the act of wifely heroism by which she had rescued her husband from the block.

Madame de Bourke bade the maids carry off the little Jacques, and Ulysse followed; but Estelle, who had often listened with rapt attention to the story of the escape, and longed to feast her eyes on the heroine, remained in her corner, usefully employed in disentangling the embroilment of silks, and with the illustrations to her beloved Télémaque as a resource in case the conversation should be tedious. Children who have hundreds of picture-books to rustle through can little guess how their predecessors could

once dream over one.

Estelle made her low reverence unnoticed, and watched with eager eyes as the slight figure entered, clad in the stately costume that was regarded as proper respect to her hostess; but the long loose sacque of blue silk was faded, the *feuille-morte* velvet petticoat frayed, the lace on the neck and sleeves washed and mended; there were no jewels on the sleeves, though the long gloves fitted exquisitely, no gems in the buckles of the high-heeled shoes, and the only ornament in the carefully rolled and powdered hair, a white rose. Her face was thin and worn, with pleasant brown eyes. Estelle could not think her as beautiful as Calypso inconsolable for Ulysses, or Antiope receiving the boar's a head. 'I know she is better than either,' thought the little maid; 'but I wish she was more like Minerva.'

The Countesses met with the lowest of curtseys, and apologies on the one side for intrusion, on the other for *déshabille*, so they concluded with an embrace really affectionate, though consideration for powder made it necessarily somewhat theatrical in appearance.

These were the stiffest of days, just before formality had become unbearable, and the reaction of simplicity had set in; and Estelle had undone two desperate knots in the green and yellow silks before the preliminary compliments were over, and Lady Nithsdale arrived at the point.

'Madame is about to rejoin *Monsieur son Mari*.'

'I am about to have that happiness.'

'That is the reason I have been bold enough to derange her.'

'Do not mention it. It is always a delight to see *Madame la Comtesse*.'

'Ah! what will Madame say when she hears that it is to ask a great favour of her.'

'Madame may reckon on me for whatever she would command.'

'If you can grant it—oh! Madame,' cried the Scottish Countess, beginning to drop her formality in her eagerness, 'we shall be for ever beholden to you, and you will make a wounded heart to sing, besides perhaps saving a noble young spirit.'

'Madame makes me impatient to hear what she would have of me,' said the French Countess, becoming a little on her guard, as the wife of a diplomatist, recollecting, too, that peace with George I. might mean war with the Jacobites.

'I know not whether a young kinsman of my Lord's has ever been presented to Madame. His name is Arthur Maxwell Hope; but we call him usually by his Christian name.'

'A tall, dark, handsome youth, almost like a Spaniard, or a picture by Vandyke? It seems to me that I have seen him with M. le Comte.' (Madame de Bourke could not venture on such a word as Nithsdale.)

'Madame is right. The mother of the boy is a Maxwell, a cousin not far removed from my Lord, but he could not hinder her from being given in marriage as second wife to Sir David Hope, already an old man. He was good to her, but when he

died, the sons by the first wife were harsh and unkind to her and to her son, of whom they had always been jealous. The eldest was a creature of my Lord Stair, and altogether a Whig; indeed, he now holds an office at the Court of the Elector of Hanover, and has been created one of *his* peers. (The scorn with which the gentle Winifred uttered those words was worth seeing, and the other noble lady gave a little derisive laugh.) 'These half-brothers declared that Lady Hope was nurturing the young Arthur in Toryism and disaffection, and they made it a plea for separating him from her, and sending him to an old minister, who kept a school, and who was very severe and even cruel to the poor boy. But I am wearying Madame.'

'Oh no, I listen with the deepest interest.'

'Finally, when the King was expected in Scotland, and men's minds were full of anger and bitterness, as well as hope and spirit, the boy—he was then only fourteen years of age—boasted of his grandfather's having fought at Killiecrankie, and used language which the tutor pronounced treasonable. He was punished and confined to his room; but in the night he made his escape and joined the royal army. My husband was grieved to see him, told him he had no right to political opinions, and tried to send him home in time to make his peace before all was lost. Alas! no. The little fellow did, indeed, pass out safely from Preston, but only to join my Lord Mar. He was among the gentlemen who embarked at Banff; and when my Lord, by Heaven's mercy, had escaped from the Tower of London, and we arrived at Paris, almost the

first person we saw was little Arthur, whom we thought to have been safe at home. We have kept him with us, and I contrived to let his mother know that he is living, for she had mourned him as among the slain.'

'Poor mother.'

'You may well pity her, Madame. She writes to me that if Arthur had returned at once from Preston, as my Lord advised, all would have been passed over as a schoolboy frolic; and, indeed, he has never been attainted; but there is nothing that his eldest brother, Lord Burnside as they call him, dreads so much as that it should be known that one of his family was engaged in the campaign, or that he is keeping such ill company as we are. Therefore, at her request, we have never called him Hope, but let him go by our name of Maxwell, which is his by baptism; and now she tells me that if he could make his way to Scotland, not as if coming from Paris or Bar-le-Duc, but merely as if travelling on the Continent, his brother would consent to his return.'

'Would she be willing that he should live under the usurper?'

'Madame, to tell you the truth,' said Lady Nithsdale, 'the Lady Hope is not one to heed the question of usurpers, so long as her son is safe and a good lad. Nay, for my part, we all lived peaceably and happily enough under Queen Anne; and by all I hear, so they still do at home under the Elector of Hanover.'

'The Regent has acknowledged him,' put in the French lady.

'Well,' said the poor exile, 'I know my Lord felt that it was his duty to obey the summons of his lawful sovereign, and that, as

he said when he took up arms, one can only do one's duty and take the consequences; but oh! when I look at the misery and desolation that has come of it, when I think of the wives not so happy as I am, when I see my dear Lord wearing out his life in banishment, and think of our dear home and our poor people, I am tempted to wonder whether it were indeed a duty, or whether there were any right to call on brave men without a more steadfast purpose not to abandon them!'

'It would have been very different if the Duke of Berwick had led the way,' observed Madame de Bourke. 'Then my husband would have gone, but, being French subjects, honour stayed both him and the Duke as long as the Regent made no move.' The good lady, of course, thought that the Marshal Duke and her own Count must secure victory; but Lady Nithsdale was intent on her own branch of the subject, and did not pursue 'what might have been.'

'After all,' she said, 'poor Arthur, at fourteen, could have no true political convictions. He merely fled because he was harshly treated, heard his grandfather branded as a traitor, and had an enthusiasm for my husband, who had been kind to him. It was a mere boy's escapade, and if he had returned home when my Lord bade him, it would only have been remembered as such. He knows it now, and I frankly tell you, Madame, that what he has seen of our exiled court has not increased his ardour in the cause.'

'Alas, no,' said Madame de Bourke. 'If the Chevalier de St.

George were other than he is, it would be easier to act in his behalf.'

'And you agree with me, Madame,' continued the visitor, 'that nothing can be worse or more hopeless for a youth than the life to which we are constrained here, with our whole shadow of hope in intrigue; and for our men, no occupation worthy of their sex. We women are not so ill off, with our children and domestic affairs; but it breaks my heart to see brave gentlemen's lives thus wasted. We have done our best for Arthur. He has studied with one of our good clergy, and my Lord himself has taught him to fence; but we cannot treat him any longer as a boy, and I know not what is to be his future, unless we can return him to his own country.'

'Our army,' suggested Madame de Bourke.

'Ah! but he is Protestant.'

'A heretic!' exclaimed the lady, drawing herself up. 'But—'

'Oh, do not refuse me on that account. He is a good lad, and has lived enough among Catholics to keep his opinions in the background. But you understand that it is another reason for wishing to convey him, if not to Scotland, to some land like Sweden or Prussia, where his faith would not be a bar to his promotion.'

'What is it you would have me do?' said Madame de Bourke, more coldly.

'If Madame would permit him to be included in her passport, as about to join the Ambassador's suite, and thus conduct him to Sweden; Lady Hope would find means to communicate with him

from thence, the poor young man would be saved from a ruined career, and the heart of the widow and mother would bless you for ever.

Madame de Bourke was touched, but she was a prudent woman, and paused to ask whether the youth had shown any tendency to run into temptation, from which Lady Nithsdale wished to remove him.

'Oh no,' she answered; 'he was a perfectly good docile lad, though high-spirited, submissive to the Earl, and a kind playfellow to her little girls; it was his very excellence that made it so unfortunate that he should thus be stranded in early youth in consequence of one boyish folly.'

The Countess began to yield. She thought he might go as secretary to her Lord, and she owned that if he was a brave young man, he would be an addition to her little escort, which only numbered two men besides her brother-in-law, the Abbé, who was of almost as little account as his young nephew. 'But I should warn you, Madame,' added Madame de Bourke, 'that it may be a very dangerous journey. I own to you, though I would not tell my poor mother, that my heart fails me when I think of it, and were it not for the express commands of their father, I would not risk my poor children on it.'

'I do not think you will find Sweden otherwise than a cheerful and pleasant abode,' said Lady Nithsdale.

'Ah! if we were only in Sweden, or with my husband, all would be well!' replied the other lady; 'but we have to pass through the

mountains, and the Catalans are always ill-affected to us French.'

'Nay; but you are a party of women, and belong to an ambassador!' was the answer.

'What do those robbers care for that? We are all the better prey for them! I have heard histories of Spanish cruelty and lawlessness that would make you shudder! You cannot guess at the dreadful presentiments that have haunted me ever since I had my husband's letter.'

'There is danger everywhere, dear friend,' said Lady Nithsdale kindly; 'but God finds a way for us through all.'

'Ah! you have experienced it,' said Madame de Bourke. 'Let us proceed to the affairs. I only thought I should tell you the truth.'

Lady Nithsdale answered for the courage of her *protégé*, and it was further determined that he should be presented to her that evening by the Earl, at the farewell reception which Madame de Varennes was to hold on her daughter's behalf, when it could be determined in what capacity he should be named in the passport.

Estelle, who had been listening with all her ears, and trying to find a character in Fénelon's romance to be represented by Arthur Hope, now further heard it explained that the party were to go southward to meet her father at one of the Mediterranean ports, as the English Government were so suspicious of Jacobites that he did not venture on taking the direct route by sea, but meant to travel through Germany. Madame de Bourke expected to meet her brother at Avignon, and to obtain his advice as to

her further route.

Estelle heard this with great satisfaction. 'We shall go to the Mediterranean Sea and be in danger,' she said to herself, unfolding the map at the beginning of her Télémaque; 'that is quite right! Perhaps we shall see Calypso's island.'

She begged hard to be allowed to sit up that evening to see the hero of the escape from the Tower of London, as well as the travelling companion destined for her, and she prevailed, for mamma pronounced that she had been very sage and reasonable all day, and the grandmamma, who was so soon to part with her, could refuse her nothing. So she was full dressed, with hair curled, and permitted to stand by the tall high-backed chair where the old lady sat to receive her visitors.

The Marquise de Varennes was a small withered woman, with keen eyes, and a sort of sparkle of manner, and power of setting people at ease, that made her the more charming the older she grew. An experienced eye could detect that she retained the costume of the prime of Louis XIV., when headdresses were less high than that which her daughter was obliged to wear. For the two last mortal hours of that busy day had poor Madame de Bourke been compelled to sit under the hands of the hairdresser, who was building up, with paste and powder and the like, an original conception of his, namely, a northern landscape, with snow-laden trees, drifts of snow, diamond icicles, and even a cottage beside an ice-bound stream. She could ill spare the time, and longed to be excused; but the artist had begged so hard to be

allowed to carry out his brilliant and unique idea, this last time of attending on Madame l'Ambassadrice, that there was no resisting him, and perhaps her strange forebodings made her less willing to inflict a disappointment on the poor man. It would have been strange to contrast the fabric of vanity building up outside her head, with the melancholy bodings within it, as she sat motionless under the hairdresser's fingers; but at the end she roused herself to smile gratefully, and give the admiration that was felt to be due to the monstrosity that crowned her. Forbearance and Christian patience may be exercised even on a toilette à la Louis XV. Long practice enabled her to walk about, seat herself, rise and curtsey without detriment to the edifice, or bestowing the powder either on her neighbours or on the richly-flowered white brocade she wore; while she received the compliments, one after another, of ladies in even more gorgeous array, and gentlemen in velvet coats, adorned with gold lace, cravats of exquisite fabric, and diamond shoe buckles.

Phelim Burke, otherwise l'Abbé de St. Eudoce, stood near her. He was a thin, yellow, and freckled youth, with sandy hair and typical Irish features, but without their drollery, and his face was what might have been expected in a half-starved, half-clad gossoon in a cabin, rather than surmounting a silken *soutane* in a Parisian salon; but he had a pleasant smile when kindly addressed by his friends.

Presently Lady Nithsdale drew near, accompanied by a tall, grave gentleman, and bringing with them a still taller youth, with

the stiffest of backs and the longest of legs, who, when presented, made a bow apparently from the end of his spine, like Estelle's lamented Dutch-jointed doll when made to sit down. Moreover, he was more shabbily dressed than any other gentleman present, with a general outgrown look about his coat, and darns in his silk stockings; and though they were made by the hand of a Countess, that did not add to their elegance. And as he stood as stiff as a ramrod or as a sentinel, Estelle's good breeding was all called into play, and her mother's heart quailed as she said to herself, 'A great raw Scot! What can be done with him?

Lord Nithsdale spoke for him, thinking he had better go as secretary, and showing some handwriting of good quality. 'Did he know any languages?' 'French, English, Latin, and some Greek.' 'And, Madame,' added Lord Nithsdale, 'not only is his French much better than mine, as you would hear if the boy durst open his mouth, but our broad Scotch is so like Swedish that he will almost be an interpreter there.'

However hopeless Madame de Bourke felt, she smiled and professed herself rejoiced to hear it, and it was further decided that Arthur Maxwell Hope, aged eighteen, Scot by birth, should be mentioned among those of the Ambassador's household for whom she demanded passports. Her position rendered this no matter of difficulty, and it was wiser to give the full truth to the home authorities; but as it was desirable that it should not be reported to the English Government that Lord Burnside's brother was in the suite of the Jacobite Comte de Bourke, he was only to

be known to the public by his first name, which was not much harder to French lips than Maxwell or Hope.

'Tall and black and awkward,' said Estelle, describing him to her brother. 'I shall not like him—I shall call him Phalante instead of Arthur.'

'Arthur,' said Ulysse; 'King Arthur was turned into a crow!'

'Well, this Arthur is like a crow—a great black skinny crow with torn feathers.'

CHAPTER III—ON THE RHONE

'Fairer scenes the opening eye
Of the day can scarce descry,
Fairer sight he looks not on
Than the pleasant banks of Rhone.'

Archbishop Trench.

Long legs may be in the abstract an advantage, but scarcely so in what was called in France *une grande Berline*. This was the favourite travelling carriage of the eighteenth century, and consisted of a close carriage or coach proper, with arrangements on the top for luggage, and behind it another seat open, but provided with a large leathern hood, and in front another place for the coachman and his companions. Each seat was wide enough to hold three persons, and thus within sat Madame de Bourke, her brother-in-law, the two children, Arthur Hope, and Mademoiselle Julienne, an elderly woman of the artisan class, *femme de chambre* to the Countess. Victorine, who was attendant on the children, would travel under the hood with two more maids; and the front seat would be occupied by the coachman, Laurence Callaghan—otherwise La Jeunesse, and Maître Hébert, the *maître d'hôtel*. Fain would Arthur have shared their elevation, so far as ease and comfort of mind and body went, and the Countess's wishes may have gone the same way;

but besides that it would have been an insult to class him with the servants, the horses of the home establishment, driven by their own coachman, took the party the first stage out of Paris; and though afterwards the post-horses or mules, six in number, would be ridden by their own postilions, there was such an amount of luggage as to leave little or no space for a third person outside.

It had been a perfect sight to see the carriage packed; when Arthur, convoyed by Lord Nithsdale, arrived in the courtyard of the Hôtel de Varennes. Madame de Bourke was taking with her all the paraphernalia of an ambassador—a service of plate, in a huge chest stowed under the seat, a portrait of Philip V., in a gold frame set with diamonds, being included among her jewellery —and Lord Nithsdale, standing by, could not but drily remark, 'Yonder is more than we brought with us, Arthur.'

The two walked up and down the court together, unwilling to intrude on the parting which, as they well knew, would be made in floods of tears. Sad enough indeed it was, for Madame de Varennes was advanced in years, and her daughter had not only to part with her, but with the baby Jacques, for an unknown space of time; but the self-command and restraint of grief for the sake of each other was absolutely unknown. It was a point of honour and sentiment to weep as much as possible, and it would have been regarded as frigid and unnatural not to go on crying too much to eat or speak for a whole day beforehand, and at least two afterwards.

So when the travellers descended the steps to take their seats,

each face was enveloped in a handkerchief, and there were passionate embraces, literal pressings to the breast, and violent sobs, as each victim, one after the other, ascended the carriage steps and fell back on the seat; while in the background, Honor Callaghan was uttering Irish wails over the Abbé and Laurence, and the lamentable sound set the little lap-dog and the big watch-dog howling in chorus. Arthur Hope, probably as miserable as any of them in parting with his friend and hero, was only standing like a stake, and an embarrassed stake (if that be possible), and Lord Nithsdale, though anxious for him, heartily pitying all, was nevertheless haunted by a queer recollection of Lance and his dog, and thinking that French dogs were not devoid of sympathy, and that the part of Crab was left for Arthur.

However, the last embrace was given, and the ladies were all packed in, while the Abbé with his breast heaving with sobs, his big hat in one hand, and a huge silk pocket-handkerchief in the other, did not forget his manners, but waved to Arthur to ascend the steps first. 'Secretary, not guest. You must remember that another time,' said Lord Nithsdale. 'God bless you, my dear lad, and bring you safe back to bonny Scotland, a true and leal heart.'

Arthur wrung his friend's hand once more, and disappeared into the vehicle; Nurse Honor made one more rush, and uttered another 'Ohone' over Abbé Phelim, who followed into the carriage; the door was shut; there was a last wail over 'Lanty, the sunbeam of me heart,' as he climbed to the box seat; the harness jingled; coachman and postilions cracked their whips,

the impatient horses dashed out at the *porte cochére*; and Arthur, after endeavouring to dispose of his legs, looked about him, and saw, opposite to him, Madame de Bourke lying back in the corner in a transport of grief, one arm round her daughter, and her little son lying across her lap, both sobbing and crying; and on one side of him the Abbé, sunk in his corner, his yellow silk handkerchief over his face; on the other, Mademoiselle Julienne, who was crying too, but with more moderation, perhaps more out of propriety or from infection than from actual grief: at any rate she had more of her senses about her than any one else, and managed to dispose of the various loose articles that had been thrown after the travellers, in pockets and under cushions. Arthur would have assisted, but only succeeded in treading on various toes and eliciting some small shrieks, which disconcerted him all the more, and made Mademoiselle Julienne look daggers at him, as she relieved her lady of little Ulysse, lifting him to her own knee, where, as he was absolutely exhausted with crying, he fell asleep.

Arthur hoped the others would do the same, and perhaps there was more dozing than they would have confessed; but whenever there was a movement, and some familiar object in the streets of Paris struck the eye of Madame, the Abbé, or Estelle, there was a little cry, and they went off on a fresh score.

'Poor wretched weak creatures!' he said to himself, as he thought the traditions of Scottish heroic women in whose heroism he had gloated. And yet he was wrong: Madame de

Bourke was capable of as much resolute self-devotion as any of the ladies on the other side of the Channel, but tears were a tribute required by the times. So she gave way to them—just as no doubt the women of former days saw nothing absurd in bottling them.

Arthur's position among all these weeping figures was extremely awkward, all the more so that he carried his sword upright between his legs, not daring to disturb the lachrymose company enough to dispose of it in the sword case appropriated to weapons. He longed to take out the little pocket Virgil, which Lord Nithsdale had given him, so as to have some occupation for his eyes, but he durst not, lest he should be thought rude, till, at a halt at a cabaret to water the horses, the striking of a clock reminded the Abbé that it was the time for reading the Hours, and when the breviary was taken out, Arthur thought his book might follow it.

By and by there was a halt at Corbeil, where was the nunnery of Alice Bourke, of whom her brother and sister-in-law were to take leave. They, with the children, were set down there, while Arthur went on with the carriage and servants to the inn to dine.

It was the first visit of Ulysse to the convent, and he was much amazed at peeping at his aunt's hooded face through a grating.

However, the family were admitted to dine in the refectory; but poor Madame de Bourke was fit for nothing but to lie on a bed, attended affectionately by her sister-in-law, Soeur Ste. Madeleine.

'O sister, sister,' was her cry, 'I must say it to you—I would not to my poor mother—that I have the most horrible presentiments I shall never see her again, nor my poor child. No, nor my husband; I knew it when he took leave of me for that terrible Spain.'

'Yet you see he is safe, and you will be with him, sister,' returned the nun.

'Ah! that I knew I should! But think of those fearful Pyrenees, and the bandits that infest them—and all the valuables we carry with us!'

'Surely I heard that Marshal Berwick had offered you an escort.'

'That will only attract the attention of the brigands and bring them in greater force. O sister, sister, my heart sinks at the thought of my poor children in the hands of those savages! I dream of them every night.'

'The suite of an ambassador is sacred.'

'Ah! but what do they care for that, the robbers? I know destruction lies that way!'

'Nay, sister, this is not like you. You always were brave, and trusted heaven, when you had to follow Ulick.'

'Alas! never had I this sinking of heart, which tells me I shall be torn from my poor children and never rejoin him.'

Sister Ste. Madeleine caressed and prayed with the poor lady, and did her utmost to reassure and comfort her, promising a *neuvaine* for her safe journey and meeting with her husband.

'For the children,' said the poor Countess. 'I know I never

shall see him more.'

However, the cheerfulness of the bright Irish-woman had done her some good, and she was better by the time she rose to pursue her journey. Estelle and Ulysse had been much petted by the nuns, and when all met again, to the great relief of Arthur, he found continuous weeping was not *de rigueur*. When they got in again, he was able to get rid of his sword, and only trod on two pair of toes, and got his legs twice tumbled over.

Moreover, Madame de Bourke had recovered the faculty of making pretty speeches, and when the weapon was put into the sword case, she observed with a sad little smile, 'Ah, Monsieur! we look to you as our defender!'

'And me too!' cried little Ulysse, making a violent demonstration with his tiny blade, and so nearly poking out his uncle's eye that the article was relegated to the same hiding-place as 'Monsieur Arture's,' and the boy was assured that this was a proof of his manliness.

He had quite recovered his spirits, and as his mother and sister were still exhausted with weeping, he was not easy to manage, till Arthur took heart of grace, and offering him a perch on his knee, let him look out at the window, explaining the objects on the way, which were all quite new to the little Parisian boy. Fortunately he spoke French well, with scarcely any foreign accent, and his answers to the little fellow's eager questions interspersed with observations on 'What they do in my country,' not only kept Ulysse occupied, but gained Estelle's attention, though she was

too weary and languid, and perhaps, child as she was, too much bound by the requirements of sympathy to manifest her interest, otherwise than by moving near enough to listen.

That evening the party reached the banks of one of the canals which connected the rivers of France, and which was to convey them to the Loire and thence to the Rhone, in a huge flat-bottomed barge, called a *coche d'eau*, a sort of ark, with cabins, where travellers could be fairly comfortable, space where the berlin could be stowed away in the rear, and a deck with an awning where the passengers could disport themselves. From the days of Sully to those of the Revolution, this was by far the most convenient and secure mode of transport, especially in the south of France. It was very convenient to the Bourke party; who were soon established on the deck. The lady's dress was better adapted to travelling than the full costume of Paris. It was what she called *en Amazone*—namely, a clothe riding-habit faced with blue, with a short skirt, with open coat and waistcoat, like a man's, hair unpowdered and tied behind, and a large shady feathered hat. Estelle wore a miniature of the same, and rejoiced in her freedom from the whalebone stiffness of her Paris life, skipping about the deck with her brother, like fairies, Lanty said, or, as she preferred to make it, 'like a nymph.'

The water coach moved only by day, and was already arrived before the land one brought the weary party to the meeting-place —a picturesque water-side inn with a high roof, and a trellised passage down to the landing-place, covered by a vine, hung with

clusters of ripe grapes.

Here the travellers supped on omelettes and *vin ordinaire*, and went off to bed—Madame and her child in one bed, with the maids on the floor, and in another room the Abbé and secretary, each in a *grabat*, the two men-servants in like manner, on the floor. Such was the privacy of the eighteenth century, and Arthur, used to waiting on himself, looked on with wonder to see the Abbé like a baby in the hands of his faithful foster-brother, who talked away in a queer mixture of Irish-English and French all the time until they knelt down and said their prayers together in Latin, to which Arthur diligently closed his Protestant ears.

Early the next morning the family embarked, the carriage having been already put on board; and the journey became very agreeable as they glided slowly, almost dreamily along, borne chiefly by the current, although a couple of horses towed the barge by a rope on the bank, in case of need, in places where the water was more sluggish, but nothing more was wanting in the descent towards the Mediterranean.

The accommodation was not of a high order, but whenever there was a halt near a good inn, Madame de Bourke and the children landed for the night. And in the fine days of early autumn the deck was delightful, and to dine there on the provisions brought on board was a perpetual feast to Estelle and Ulysse.

The weather was beautiful, and there was a constant panorama of fair sights and scenes. Harvest first, a perfectly new spectacle

to the children and then, as they went farther south, the vintage.

The beauty was great as they glided along the pleasant banks of Rhone.

Tiers of vines on the hillsides were mostly cut and trimmed like currant bushes, and disappointed Arthur, who had expected festoons on trellises. But this was the special time for beauty.

The whole population, in picturesque costumes, were filling huge baskets with the clusters, and snatches of their merry songs came pealing down to the *coche d'eau*, as it quietly crept along.

Towards evening groups were seen with piled baskets on their heads, or borne between them, youths and maidens crowned with vines, half-naked children dancing like little Bacchanalians, which awoke classical recollections in Arthur and delighted the children.

Poor Madame de Bourke was still much depressed, and would sit dreaming half the day, except when roused by some need of her children, some question, or some appeal for her admiration.

Otherwise, the lovely heights, surmounted with tall towers, extinguisher-capped, of castle, convent, or church, the clear reaches of river, the beautiful turns, the little villages and towns gleaming white among the trees, seemed to pass unseen before her eyes, and she might be seen to shudder when the children pressed her to say how many days it would be before they saw their father.

An observer with a mind at ease might have been much entertained with the airs and graces that the two maids, Rosette

and Babette, lavished upon Laurence, their only squire; for Maître Hébert was far too distant and elderly a person for their little coquetries. Rosette dealt in little terrors, and, if he was at hand, durst not step across a plank without his hand, was sure she heard wolves howling in the woods, and that every peasant was '*ce barbare*;' while Babette, who in conjunction with Maître Hébert acted cook in case of need, plied him with dainty morsels, which he was only too apt to bestow on the beggars, or the lean and hungry lad who attended on the horses. Victorine, on the other hand, by far the prettiest and most sprightly of the three, affected the most supreme indifference to him and his attentions, and hardly deigned to give him a civil word, or to accept the cornflowers and late roses he brought her from time to time. 'Mere weeds,' she said. And the grapes and Queen Claude plums he brought her were always sour. Yet a something deep blue might often be seen peeping above her trim little apron.

Not that Lanty had much time to disport himself in this fashion, for the Abbé was his care, and was perfectly happy with a rod of his arranging, with which to fish over the side. Little Ulysse was of course fired with the same emulation, and dangled his line for an hour together. Estelle would have liked to do the same, but her mother and Mademoiselle Julienne considered the sport not *convenable* for a *demoiselle*. Arthur was once or twice induced to try the Abbé's rod, but he found it as mere a toy as that of the boy; and the mere action of throwing it made his heart so sick with the contrast with the 'paidling in the burns' of his

childhood, that he had no inclination to continue the attempt, either in the slow canal or the broadening river.

He was still very shy with the Countess, who was not in spirits to set him at ease; and the Abbé puzzled him, as is often the case when inexperienced strangers encounter unacknowledged deficiency. The perpetual coaxing chatter, and undisguised familiarity of La Jeunesse with the young ecclesiastic did not seem to the somewhat haughty cast of his young Scotch mind quite becoming, and he held aloof; but with the two children he was quite at ease, and was in truth their great resource.

He made Ulysse's fishing-rod, baited it, and held the boy when he used it—nay, he once even captured a tiny fish with it, to the ecstatic pity of both children. He played quiet games with them, and told them stories—conversed on Télémaque with Estelle, or read to her from his one book, which was Robinson Crusoe—a little black copy in pale print, with the margins almost thumbed away, which he had carried in his pocket when he ran away from school, and nearly knew by heart.

Estelle was deeply interested in it, and varied in opinion whether she should prefer Calypso's island or Crusoe's, which she took for as much matter of fact as did, a century later, Madame Talleyrand, when, out of civility to Mr. Robinson, she inquired after '*ce bon Vendredi*.'

She inclined to think she should prefer Friday to the nymphs.

'A whole quantity of troublesome womenfolk to fash one,' said Arthur, who had not arrived at the age of gallantry.

'You would never stay there!' said Estelle; 'you would push us over the rock like Mentor. I think you are our Mentor, for I am sure you tell us a great deal, and you don't scold.'

'Mentor was a cross old man,' said Ulysse.

To which Estelle replied that he was a goddess; and Arthur very decidedly disclaimed either character, especially the pushing over rocks. And thus they glided on, spending a night in the great, busy, bewildering city of Lyon, already the centre of silk industry; but more interesting to the travellers as the shrine of the martyrdoms. All went to pray at the Cathedral except Arthur. The time was not come for heeding church architecture or primitive history; and he only wandered about the narrow crooked streets, gazing at the toy piles of market produce, and looking at the stalls of merchandise, but as one unable to purchase. His mother had indeed contrived to send him twenty guineas, but he knew that he must husband them well in case of emergencies, and Lady Nithsdale had sewn them all up, except one, in a belt which he wore under his clothes.

He had arrived at the front of the Cathedral when the party came out. Madame de Bourke had been weeping, but looked more peaceful than he had yet seen her, and Estelle was much excited. She had bought a little book, which she insisted on her Mentor's reading with her, though his Protestant feelings recoiled.

'Ah!' said Estelle, 'but you are not Christian.'

'Yes, truly, Mademoiselle.'

'And these died for the Christian faith. Do you know mamma said it comforted her to pray there; for she was sure that whatever happened, the good God can make us strong, as He made the young girl who sat in the red-hot chair. We saw her picture, and it was dreadful. Do read about her, Monsieur Arture.'

They read, and Arthur had candour enough to perceive that this was the simple primitive narrative of the death of martyrs struggling for Christian truth, long ere the days of superstition and division. Estelle's face lighted with enthusiasm.

'Is it not noble to be a martyr?' she asked.

'Oh!' cried Ulysse; 'to sit in a red-hot chair! It would be worse than to be thrown off a rock! But there are no martyrs in these days, sister?' he added, pressing up to Arthur as if for protection.

'There are those who die for the right,' said Arthur, thinking of Lord Derwentwater, who in Jacobite eyes was a martyr.

'And the good God makes them strong,' said Estelle, in a low voice. 'Mamma told me no one could tell how soon we might be tried, and that I was to pray that He would make us as brave as St. Blandina! What do you think could harm us, Monsieur, when we are going to my dear papa?'

It was Lanty who answered, from behind the Abbé, on whose angling endeavours he was attending. 'Arrah then, nothing at all, Mademoiselle. Nothing in the four corners of the world shall hurt one curl of your blessed little head, while Lanty Callaghan is to the fore.'

'Ah! but you are not God, Lanty,' said Estelle gravely; 'you

cannot keep things from happening.'

'The Powers forbid that I should spake such blasphemy!' said Lanty, taking off his hat. "Twas not that I meant, but only that poor Lanty would die ten thousand deaths—worse than them as was thrown to the beasts—before one of them should harm the tip of that little finger of yours!'

Perhaps the same vow was in Arthur's heart, though not spoken in such strong terms.

Thus they drifted on till the old city of Avignon rose on the eyes of the travellers, a dark pile of buildings where the massive houses, built round courts, with few external windows, recalled that these had once been the palaces of cardinals accustomed to the Italian city feuds, which made every house become a fortress.

On the wharf stood a gentleman in a resplendent uniform of blue and gold, whom the children hailed with cries of joy and outstretched arms, as their uncle. The Marquis de Varennes was soon on board, embracing his sister and her children, and conducting them to one of the great palaces, where he had rooms, being then in garrison. Arthur followed, at a sign from the lady, who presented him to her brother as 'Monsieur Arture'—a young Scottish gentleman who will do my husband the favour of acting as his secretary.

She used the word *gentilhomme*, which conveyed the sense of nobility of blood, and the Marquis acknowledged the introduction with one of those graceful bows that Arthur hated, because they made him doubly feel the stiffness of his own

limitation. He was glad to linger with Lanty, who was looking in wonder at the grim buildings.

'And did the holy Father live here?' said he. 'Faith, and 'twas a quare taste he must have had; I wonder now if there would be vartue in a bit of a stone from his palace. It would mightily please my old mother if there were.'

'I thought it was the wrong popes that lived here,' suggested Arthur.

Lanty looked at him a moment as if in doubt whether to accept a heretic suggestion, but the education received through the Abbé came to mind, and he exclaimed—

'May be you are in the right of it, sir; and I'd best let the stones alone till I can tell which is the true and which is the false. By the same token, little is the difference it would make to her, unless she knew it; and if she did, she'd as soon I brought her a hair of the old dragon's bristles.'

Lanty found another day or two's journey bring him very nearly in contact with the old dragon, for at Tarascon was the cave in which St. Martha was said to have demolished the great dragon of Provence with the sign of the cross. Madame de Bourke and her children made a devout pilgrimage thereto; but when Arthur found that it was the actual Martha of Bethany to whom the legend was appended, he grew indignant, and would not accompany the party. 'It was a very different thing from the martyrs of Lyon and Vienne! Their history was credible, but this—'

'Speak not so loud, my friend,' said M. de Varennes. 'Their shrines are equally good to console women and children.'

Arthur did not quite understand the tone, nor know whether to be gratified at being treated as a man, or to be shocked at the Marquis's defection from his own faith.

The Marquis, who was able to accompany his sister as far as Montpelier, was amused at her two followers, Scotch and Irish, both fine young men—almost too fine, he averred.

'You will have to keep a careful watch on them when you enter Germany, sister,' he said, 'or the King of Prussia will certainly kidnap them for his tall regiment of grenadiers.'

'O brother, do not speak of any more dangers: I see quite enough before me ere I can even rejoin my dear husband.'

A very serious council was held between the brother and sister. The French army under Marshal Berwick had marched across on the south side on the Pyrenees, and was probably by this time in the county of Rousillon, intending to besiege Rosas. Once with them all would be well, but between lay the mountain roads, and the very quarter of Spain that had been most unwilling to accept French rule.

The Marquis had been authorised to place an escort at his sister's service, but though the numbers might guard her against mere mountain banditti, they would not be sufficient to protect her from hostile troops, such as might only too possibly be on the way to encounter Berwick. The expense and difficulty of the journey on the mountain roads would likewise be great, and

it seemed advisable to avoid these dangers by going by sea. Madame de Bourke eagerly acceded to this plan, her terror of the wild Pyrenean passes and wilder inhabitants had always been such that she was glad to catch at any means of avoiding them, and she had made more than one voyage before.

Estelle was gratified to find they were to go by sea, since Télémachus did so in a Phoenician ship, and, in that odd dreamy way in which children blend fiction and reality, wondered if they should come on Calypso's island; and Arthur, who had read the Odyssey, delighted her and terrified Ulysse with the cave of Polyphemus. M. de Varennes could only go with his sister as far as Montpelier. Then he took leave of her, and the party proceeded along the shores of the lagoons, in the carriage to the seaport of Cette, one of the old Greek towns of the Gulf of Lyon, and with a fine harbour full of ships. Maître Hébert was sent to take a passage on board of one, while his lady and her party repaired to an inn, and waited all the afternoon before he returned with tidings that he could find no French vessel about to sail for Spain, but that there was a Genoese tartane, bound for Barcelona, on which Madame la Comtesse could secure a passage for herself and her suite, and which would take her thither in twenty-four hours.

The town was full of troops, waiting a summons to join Marshal Berwick's army. Several resplendent officers had already paid their respects to Madame l'Ambassadrice, and they concurred in the advice, unless she would prefer waiting for the

arrival of one of the French transports which were to take men and provisions to the army in Spain.

This, however, she declined, and only accepted the services of the gentlemen so far as to have her passports renewed, as was needful, since they were to be conveyed by the vessel of an independent power, though always an ally of France.

The tartane was a beautiful object, a one-decked, single-masted vessel, with a long bowsprit, and a huge lateen sail like a wing, and the children fell in love with her at first sight. Estelle was quite sure that she was just such a ship as Mentor borrowed for Télémachus; but the poor maids were horribly frightened, and Babette might be heard declaring she had never engaged herself to be at the mercy of the waves, like a bit of lemon peel in a glass of *eau sucrée*.

'You may return,' said Madame de Bourke. 'I compel no one to share our dangers and hardships.'

But Babette threw herself on her knees, and declared that nothing should ever separate her from Madame! She was a good creature, but she could not deny herself the luxury of the sobs and tears that showed to all beholders the extent of her sacrifice.

Madame de Bourke knew that there would be considerable discomfort in a vessel so little adapted for passengers, and with only one small cabin, which the captain, who spoke French, resigned to her use. It would only, however, be for a short time, and though it was near the end of October, the blue expanse of sea was calm as only the Mediterranean can be, so that she trusted

that no harm would result to those who would have to spend the night on dock.

It was a beautiful evening which the little Genoese vessel left the harbour and Cette receded in the distance, looking fairer the farther it was left behind. The children were put to bed as soon as they could be persuaded to cease from watching the lights in the harbour and the phosphorescent wake of the vessel in the water.

That night and the next day were pleasant and peaceful; there was no rough weather, and little sickness among the travellers. Madame de Bourke congratulated herself on having escaped the horrors of the Pyrenean journey, and the Genoese captain assured her that unless the weather should change rapidly, they would wake in sight of the Spanish coast the next morning. If the sea were not almost too calm, they would be there already. The evening was again so delightful that the children were glad to hear that they would have again to return by sea, and Arthur, who somewhat shrank from his presentation to the Count, regretted that the end of the voyage was so near, though Ulysse assured him that '*Mon papa* would love him, because he could tell such charming stories,' and Lanty testified that 'M. le Comte was a mighty friendly gentleman.'

Arthur was lying asleep on deck, wrapped in his cloak, when he was awakened by a commotion among the sailors. He started up and found that it was early morning, the sun rising above the sea, and the sailors all gazing eagerly in that direction. He eagerly made his way to ask if they were in sight of land, recollecting,

however, as he made the first step, that Spain lay to the west of them—not to the east.

He distinguished the cry from the Genoese sailors, '*Ii Moro—Il Moro*,' in tones of horror and consternation, and almost at the same moment received a shock from Maître Hébert, who came stumbling against him.

'Pardon, pardon, Monsieur; I go to prepare Madame! It's the accursed Moors. Let me pass—*miséricorde*, what will become of us?'

Arthur struggled on in search of such of the crew as could speak French, but all were in too much consternation to attend to him, and he could only watch that to which their eyes were directed, a white sail, bright in the morning light, coming up with a rapidity strange and fearful in its precision, like a hawk pouncing on its prey, for it did not depend on its sails alone, but was propelled by oars.

The next moment Madame de Bourke was on deck, holding by the Abbé's arm, and Estelle, her hair on her shoulders, clinging to her. She looked very pale, but her calmness was in contrast to the Italian sailors, who were throwing themselves with gestures of despair, screaming out vows to the Madonna and saints, and shouting imprecations. The skipper came to speak to her. 'Madame,' he said, 'I implore you to remain in your cabin. After the first, you and all yours will be safe. They cannot harm a French subject; alas! alas would it were so with us.'

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.