VARIOUS

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, VOLUME 14, NO. 85, NOVEMBER, 1864

Various
The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 14, No. 85, November, 1864

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=35502043
The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 14, No. 85, November, 1864 / A Magazine of Literature, Art, and Politics:

Содержание

LEAVES FROM AN OFFICER'S JOURNAL 4
I 4
RICHES 26
THE VENGEANCE OF DOMINIC DE GOURGUES 28
LINA 47
CHARLES LAMB'S UNCOLLECTED WRITINGS 82
FOURTH PAPER 82
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента. 84

Various
The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 14, No. 85, November, 1864 / A Magazine of Literature, Art, and Politics

LEAVES FROM AN OFFICER'S JOURNAL

I

[I wish to record, as truthfully as I may, the beginnings of a momentous experiment, which, by proving the aptitude of the freed slaves for military drill and discipline, their ardent loyalty, their courage under fire, and their self-control in success, contributed somewhat towards solving the problem of the war, and towards remoulding the destinies of two races on this continent.

During a civil war events succeed each other so rapidly that these earlier incidents are long since overshadowed. The

colored soldiery are now numbered no longer by hundreds, but by tens of thousands. Yet there was a period when the whole enterprise seemed the most daring of innovations, and during those months the demeanor of this particular regiment, the First South Carolina, was watched with microscopic scrutiny by friends and foes. Its officers had reason to know this, since the slightest camp-incidents sometimes came back to them, magnified and distorted, in anxious letters of inquiry from remote parts of the Union. It was no pleasant thing to live in this glare of criticism; but it guarantied the honesty of any success, while fearfully multiplying the penalties, had there been a failure. A single mutiny, a single rout, a stampede of desertions,—and there perhaps might not have been, within this century, another systematic effort to arm the negro.

It is possible, therefore, that some extracts from a diary kept during that period may still have an interest; for there is nothing in human history so momentous as the transit of a race from chattel-slavery to armed freedom; nor can this change be photographed save by the actual contemporaneous words of those who saw it in the process. Perhaps there may also appear an element of dramatic interest in the record, when one considers that here, in the delightful regions of Port Royal, the descendants of the Puritan and the Huguenot, after two centuries, came face to face,—and that sons of Massachusetts, reversing the boastful threat which has become historic, here called the roll, upon South-Carolina soil, of her slaves, now freemen in arms.]

Camp Saxton, near Beaufort, S. C.
November 24, 1862.

Yesterday afternoon we were steaming over a summer sea, the deck level as a parlor-floor, no land in sight, no sail, until at last appeared one light-house, said to be Cape Romaine, and then a line of trees and two distant vessels and nothing more. The sun set, a great illuminated bubble, submerged in one vast bank of rosy suffusion; it grew dark; after tea all were on deck, the people sang hymns; then the moon set, a moon two days old, a curved pencil of light, reclining backwards on a radiant couch which seemed to rise from the waves to receive it; it sank slowly, and the last tip wavered and went down like the mast of a vessel of the skies. Towards morning the boat stopped, and when I came on deck, before six,—

> "The watch-lights glittered on the land,
> The ship-lights on the sea."

Hilton Head lay on one side, the gunboats on the other; all that was raw and bare in the low buildings of the new settlement was softened into picturesqueness by the early light. Stars were still overhead, gulls wheeled and shrieked, and the broad river rippled duskily towards Beaufort.

The shores were low and wooded, like any New-England shore; there were a few gunboats, twenty schooners, and some steamers, among them the famous "Planter," which Robert

Small, the slave, presented to the nation. The river-banks were soft and graceful, though low, and as we steamed up to Beaufort on the flood-tide this morning, it seemed almost as fair as the smooth and lovely canals which Stedman traversed to meet his negro soldiers in Surinam. The air was cool as at home, yet the foliage seemed green, glimpses of stiff tropical vegetation appeared along the banks, with great clumps of shrubs whose pale seed-vessels looked like tardy blossoms. Then we saw on a picturesque point an old plantation, with stately magnolia avenue, decaying house, and tiny church amid the woods, reminding me of Virginia; behind it stood a neat encampment of white tents, "and there," said my companion, "is your future regiment of negro soldiers."

Three miles farther brought us to the pretty town of Beaufort, with its stately houses amid Southern foliage. Reporting to General Saxton, I had the luck to encounter a company of my destined command, marched in to be mustered into the United States service. They were without arms, and all looked as thoroughly black as the most faithful philanthropist could desire; there did not seem to be so much as a mulatto among them. Their coloring suited me, all but the legs, which were clad in a lively scarlet, as intolerable to my eyes as if I had been a turkey. I saw them mustered; General Saxton talked to them a little, in his direct, manly way; they gave close attention, though their faces looked impenetrable. Then I conversed with some of them. The first to whom I spoke had been wounded in a small expedition

after lumber, from which a party had just returned, and in which they had been under fire and had done very well. I said, pointing to his lame arm,—

"Did you think that was more than you bargained for, my man?"

His answer came promptly and stoutly,—

"I been a-tinking, Mas'r, *dat's jess what I went for*."

I thought this did well enough for my very first interchange of dialogue with my recruits.

November 27, 1862.

Thanksgiving-Day; it is the first moment I have had for writing during these three days, which have installed me into a new mode of life so thoroughly that they seem three years. Scarcely pausing in New York or in Beaufort, there seems to have been for me but one step from the camp of a Massachusetts regiment to this one, and that step over leagues of waves.

It is a holiday wherever General Saxton's proclamation reaches. The chilly sunshine and the pale blue river seem like New England, but those alone. The air is full of noisy drumming and of gunshots; for the prize-shooting is our great celebration of the day, and the drumming is chronic. My young barbarians are all at play. I look out from the broken windows of this forlorn plantation-house, through avenues of great live-oaks, with their hard, shining leaves, and their branches hung with a universal drapery of soft, long moss, like fringe-trees struck with grayness. Below, the sandy soil, scantly covered with coarse grass, bristles

with sharp palmettoes and aloes; all the vegetation is stiff, shining, semi-tropical, with nothing soft or delicate in its texture. Numerous plantation-buildings totter around, all slovenly and unattractive, while the interspaces are filled with all manner of wreck and refuse, pigs, fowls, dogs, and omnipresent Ethiopian infancy. All this is the universal Southern panorama; but five minutes' walk beyond the hovels and the live-oaks bring one to something so un-Southern that the whole Southern coast at this moment trembles at the suggestion of such a thing,—the camp of a regiment of freed slaves.

One adapts one's self so readily to new surroundings that already the full zest of the novelty seems passing away from my perceptions, and I write these lines in an eager effort to retain all I can. Already I am growing used to the experience, at first so novel, of living among five hundred men, and scarce a white face to be seen,—of seeing them go through all their daily processes, eating, frolicking, talking, just as if they were white. Each day at dress-parade I stand with the customary folding of the arms before a regimental line of countenances so black that I can hardly tell whether the men stand steadily or not; black is every hand which moves in ready cadence as I vociferate, "Battalion! Shoulder arms!" nor is it till the line of white officers moves forward, as parade is dismissed, that I am reminded that my own face is not the color of coal.

The first few days on duty with a new regiment must be devoted almost wholly to tightening reins; in this process one

deals chiefly with the officers, and I have as yet had but little personal intercourse with the men. They concern me chiefly in bulk, as so many consumers of rations, wearers of uniforms, bearers of muskets. But as the machine comes into shape, I am beginning to decipher the individual parts. At first, of course, they all looked just alike; the variety comes afterwards, and they are just as distinguishable, the officers say, as so many whites. Most of them are wholly raw, but there are many who have already been for months in camp in the abortive "Hunter Regiment," yet in that loose kind of way which, like average militia-training, is a doubtful advantage. I notice that some companies, too, look darker than others, though all are purer African than I expected. This is said to be partly a geographical difference between the South-Carolina and Florida men. When the Rebels evacuated this region, they probably took with them the house-servants, including most of the mixed blood, so that the residuum seems very black. But the men brought from Fernandina the other day average lighter in complexion, and look more intelligent, and they certainly take wonderfully to the drill.

It needs but a few days to show up the absurdity of distrusting the military availability of these people. They have quite as much average comprehension as whites of the need of the thing, as much courage, (I doubt not,) as much previous knowledge of the gun, and, above all, a readiness of ear and of imitation, which, for purposes of drill, counterbalances any defect of mental training. To learn the drill, one does not want a set of college professors;

one wants a squad of eager, active, pliant school-boys; and the more childlike these pupils are, the better. There is no trouble about the drill; they will surpass whites in that. As to camp-life, they have little to sacrifice, they are better fed, housed, and clothed than ever in their lives before, and they appear to have fewer inconvenient vices. They are simple, docile, and affectionate almost to the point of absurdity. The same men who stood fire in open field with perfect coolness, on the late expedition, have come to me blubbering in the most irresistibly ludicrous manner on being transferred from one company in the regiment to another.

In noticing the squad-drills, I perceive that the men learn less laboriously than whites that "double, double, toil and trouble," which is the elementary vexation of the drill-master,—that they more rarely mistake their left for their right,—and are more grave and sedate while under instruction. The extremes of jollity and sobriety, being greater with them, are less liable to be intermingled; these companies can be driven with a looser rein than my former one, for they restrain themselves; but the moment they are dismissed from drill, every tongue is relaxed and every ivory tooth visible. This morning I wandered about where the different companies were target-shooting, and their glee was contagious. Such exulting shouts of, "Ki! ole man," when some steady old turkey-shooter brought his gun down for an instant's aim, and then unerringly hit the mark; and then, when some unwary youth fired his piece into the ground at half-cock, such

infinite guffawing and delight, such rolling over and over on the grass, such dances of ecstasy, as made the "Ethiopian minstrelsy" of the stage appear a feeble imitation.

Evening.—Better still was a scene on which I stumbled to-night. Strolling in the cool moonlight, I was attracted by a brilliant light beneath the trees, and cautiously approached it. A circle of thirty or forty soldiers sat around a roaring fire, while one old uncle, Cato by name, was narrating an interminable tale, to the insatiable delight of his audience. I came up into the dusky background, perceived only by a few, and he still continued. It was a narrative, dramatized to the last degree, of his adventures in escaping from his master to the Union vessels; and even I, who have heard the stories of Harriet Tubman, and such wonderful slave-comedians, never witnessed such a piece of acting. When I came upon the scene, he had just come unexpectedly upon a plantation-house, and, putting a bold face upon it, had walked up to the door.

"Den I go up to de white man, very humble, and say, would he please gib ole man a mouthful for eat?

"He say, he must hab de valeration of half a dollar.

"Den I look berry sorry, and turn for go away.

"Den he say, I might gib him dat hatchet I had.

"Den I say," (this in a tragic vein,) "dat I must hab dat hatchet for defend myself *from de dogs*!"

[Immense applause, and one appreciating auditor says, chuckling, "Dat was your *arms*, ole man," which brings down the

house again.]

"Den he say, de Yankee pickets was near by, and I must be very keerful.

"Den I say, 'Good Lord, Mas'r, am dey?'"

Words cannot express the complete dissimulation with which these accents of terror were uttered,—this being precisely the piece of information he wished to obtain.

Then he narrated his devices to get into the house at night and obtain some food,—how a dog flew at him,—how the whole household, black and white, rose in pursuit,—how he scrambled under a hedge and over a high fence, etc.,—all in a style of which Gough alone among orators can give the faintest impression, so thoroughly dramatized was every syllable.

Then he described his reaching the river-side at last, and trying to decide whether certain vessels held friends or foes.

"Den I see guns on board, and sure sartin he Union boat, and I pop my head up. Den I been-a-tink [think] Seceshkey hab guns too, and my head go down again. Den I bide in de bush till morning. Den I open my bundle, and take ole white shirt and tie him on ole pole and wave him, and ebry time de wind blow, I been-a-tremble, and drap down in de bushes,"—because, being between two fires, he doubted whether friend or foe would see his signal first. And so on, with a succession of tricks beyond Molière, of acts of caution, foresight, patient cunning, which were listened to with infinite gusto and perfect comprehension by every listener.

And all this to a bivouac of negro soldiers, with the brilliant fire lighting up their red trousers and gleaming from their shining black faces,—eyes and teeth all white with tumultuous glee. Overhead, the mighty limbs of a great live-oak, with the weird moss swaying in the smoke, and the high moon gleaming faintly through.

Yet to-morrow strangers will remark on the hopeless, impenetrable stupidity in the daylight faces of many of these very men, the solid mask under which Nature has concealed all this wealth of mother-wit. This very comedian is one to whom one might point, as he hoed lazily in a cotton-field, as a being the light of whose brain had utterly gone out; and this scene seems like coming by night upon some conclave of black beetles, and finding them engaged, with green-room and foot-lights, in enacting "Poor Pillicoddy." This is their university; every young Sambo before me, as he turned over the sweet-potatoes and peanuts which were roasting in the ashes, listened with reverence to the wiles of the ancient Ulysses, and meditated the same. It is Nature's compensation; oppression simply crushes the upper faculties of the head, and crowds everything into the perceptive organs. Cato, thou reasonest well! When I get into any serious scrape, in an enemy's country, may I be lucky enough to have you at my elbow, to pull me out of it!

The men seem to have enjoyed the novel event of Thanksgiving-Day; they have had company and regimental prize-shootings, a minimum of speeches and a maximum of

dinner. Bill of fare: two beef-cattle and a thousand oranges. The oranges cost a cent apiece, and the cattle were Secesh, bestowed by General Saxby, as they all call him.

December 1, 1862.

How absurd is the impression bequeathed by Slavery in regard to these Southern blacks, that they are sluggish and inefficient in labor! Last night, after a hard day's work, (our guns and the remainder of our tents being just issued,) an order came from Beaufort that we should be ready in the evening to unload a steamboat's cargo of boards, being some of those captured by them a few weeks since, and now assigned for their use. I wondered if the men would grumble at the night-work; but the steamboat arrived by seven, and it was bright moonlight when they went at it. Never have I beheld such a jolly scene of labor. Tugging these wet and heavy boards over a bridge of boats ashore, then across the slimy beach at low tide, then up a steep bank, and all in one great uproar of merriment for two hours. Running most of the time, chattering all the time, snatching the boards from each other's backs as if they were some coveted treasure, getting up eager rivalries between different companies, pouring great choruses of ridicule on the heads of all shirkers, they made the whole scene so enlivening that I gladly stayed out in the moonlight for the whole time to watch it. And all this without any urging or any promised reward, but simply as the most natural way of doing the thing. The steamboat-captain declared that they unloaded the ten thousand feet of boards

quicker than any white gang could have done it; and they felt it so little, that, when, later in the night, I reproached one whom I found sitting by a camp-fire, cooking a surreptitious opossum, telling him that he ought to be asleep after such a job of work, he answered, with the broadest grin,—

"Oh, no, Cunnel, da's no work at all, Cunnel; dat only jess enough *for stretch we*."

December 2, 1862.

I believe I have not yet enumerated the probable drawbacks to the success of this regiment, if any. We are exposed to no direct annoyance from the white regiments, being out of their way; and we have as yet no discomforts or privations which we do not share with them. I do not as yet see the slightest obstacle, in the nature of the blacks, to making them good soldiers,—but rather the contrary. They take readily to drill, and do not object to discipline; they are not especially dull or inattentive; they seem fully to understand the importance of the contest, and of their share in it. They show no jealousy or suspicion towards their officers.

They do show these feelings, however, towards the Government itself; and no one can wonder. Here lies the drawback to rapid recruiting. Were this a wholly new regiment, it would have been full to overflowing, I am satisfied, ere now. The trouble is in the legacy of bitter distrust bequeathed by the abortive regiment of General Hunter,—into which they were driven like cattle, kept for several months in camp, and then

turned off without a shilling, by order of the War Department. The formation of that regiment was on the whole a great injury to this one; and the men who came from it, though the best soldiers we have in other respects, are the least sanguine and cheerful; while those who now refuse to enlist have a great influence in deterring others. Our soldiers are constantly twitted by their families and friends with their prospect of risking their lives in the service, and being paid nothing; and it is in vain that we read them the instructions of the Secretary of War to General Saxton, promising them the full pay of soldiers. They only half believe it.[1]

Another drawback is that some of the white soldiers delight in frightening the women on the plantations with doleful tales of plans for putting us in the front rank in all battles, and such silly talk,—the object being, perhaps, to prevent our being employed on active service at all. All these considerations they feel precisely as white men would,—no less, no more; and it is the comparative freedom from such unfavorable influences which makes the Florida men seem more bold and manly, as they undoubtedly do. To-day General Saxton has returned from Fernandina with seventy-six recruits, and the eagerness of the captains to secure them was a sight to see. Yet they cannot deny that some of the very best men in the regiment are South Carolinians.

---

[1] With what utter humiliation were we, their officers, obliged to confess to them, eighteen months afterwards, that it was their distrust which was wise, and our faith in the pledges of the United States Government which was foolishness!

December 3, 1862.—7 p. m.

What a life is this I lead! It is a dark, mild, drizzling evening, and as the foggy air breeds sand-flies, so it calls out melodies and strange antics from this mysterious race of grown-up children with whom my lot is cast. All over the camp the lights glimmer in the tents, and as I sit at my desk in the open doorway, there come mingled sounds of stir and glee. Boys laugh and shout,—a feeble flute stirs somewhere in some tent, not an officer's,—a drum throbs far away in another,—wild kildeer-plover flit and wail above us, like the haunting souls of dead slavemasters,—and from a neighboring cook-fire comes the monotonous sound of that strange festival, half powwow, half prayer-meeting, which they know only as a "shout." These fires are usually inclosed in a little booth, made neatly of palm-leaves and covered in at top, a regular native African hut, in short, such as is pictured in books, and such as I once got up from dried palm-leaves, for a fair, at home. This hut is now crammed with men, singing at the top of their voices, in one of their quaint, monotonous, endless, negro-Methodist chants, with obscure syllables recurring constantly, and slight variations interwoven, all accompanied with a regular drumming of the feet and clapping of the hands, like castanets. Then the excitement spreads: inside and outside the inclosure men begin to quiver and dance, others join, a circle forms, winding monotonously round some one in the centre; some "heel and toe" tumultuously, others merely tremble and stagger on, others stoop and rise,

others whirl, others caper sideways, all keep steadily circling like dervishes; spectators applaud special strokes of skill; my approach only enlivens the scene; the circle enlarges, louder grows the singing, rousing shouts of encouragement come in, half bacchanalian, half devout, "Wake 'em, brudder!" "Stan' up to 'em, brudder!"—and still the ceaseless drumming and clapping, in perfect cadence, goes steadily on. Suddenly there comes a sort of *snap*, and the spell breaks, amid general sighing and laughter. And this not rarely and occasionally, but night after night,—while in other parts of the camp the soberest prayers and exhortations are proceeding sedately.

A simple and lovable people, whose graces seem to come by nature, and whose vices by training. Some of the best superintendents confirm the early tales of innocence, and Dr. Zachos told me last night that on his plantation, a sequestered one, "they had absolutely no vices." Nor have these men of mine yet shown any worth mentioning; since I took command I have heard of no man intoxicated, and there has been but one small quarrel. I suppose that scarcely a white regiment in the army shows so little swearing. Take the "Progressive Friends" and put them in red trousers, and I verily believe they would fill a guard-house sooner than these men. If camp-regulations are violated, it seems to be usually through heedlessness. They love passionately three things, besides their spiritual incantations, —namely, sugar, home, and tobacco. This last affection brings tears to their eyes, almost, when they speak of their urgent need

of pay: they speak of their last-remembered quid as if it were some deceased relative, too early lost, and to be mourned forever. As for sugar, no white man can drink coffee after they have sweetened it to their liking.

I see that the pride which military life creates may cause the plantation-trickeries to diminish. For instance, these men make the most admirable sentinels. It is far harder to pass the camp-lines at night than in the camp from which I came; and I have seen none of that disposition to connive at the offences of members of one's own company which is so troublesome among white soldiers. Nor are they lazy, either about work or drill; in all respects they seem better material for soldiers than I had dared to hope.

There is one company in particular, all Florida men, which I certainly think the finest-looking company I ever saw, white or black; they range admirably in size, have remarkable erectness and ease of carriage, and really march splendidly. Not a visitor but notices them; yet they have been under drill only a fortnight, and a part only two days. They have all been slaves, and very few are even mulattoes.

December 4, 1862.

"Dwelling in tents, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." This condition is certainly mine,—and with a multitude of patriarchs beside, not to mention Cæsar and Pompey, Hercules and Bacchus.

A moving life, tented at night, this experience has been

mine in civil society, if society be civil before the luxurious forest-fires of Maine and the Adirondack, or upon the lonely prairies of Kansas. But a stationary tent-life, deliberately going to housekeeping under canvas, I have never had before, though in our barrack-life at "Camp Wool" I often wished for it.

The accommodations here are about as liberal as my quarters there, two wall-tents being placed end to end, for office and bed-room, and separated at will by a "fly" of canvas. There is a good board floor and mop-board, effectually excluding dampness and draughts, and everything but sand, which on windy days penetrates everywhere. The office-furniture consists of a good desk or secretary, a very clumsy and disastrous settee, and a remarkable chair. The desk is a bequest of the slaveholders, and the settee of the slaves, being ecclesiastical in its origin, and appertaining to the little old church or "praise-house," now used for commissary purposes. The chair is a composite structure: I found a cane seat on a dust-heap, which a black sergeant combined with two legs from a broken bedstead and two more from an oak-bough. I sit on it with a pride of conscious invention, mitigated by profound insecurity. Bedroom-furniture, a couch made of gun-boxes covered with condemned blankets, another settee, two pails, a tin cup, tin basin, (we prize any tin or wooden ware as savages prize iron,) and a valise, regulation-size. Seriously considered, nothing more appears needful, unless ambition might crave another chair for company, and, perhaps, something for a wash-stand higher than a settee.

To-day it rains hard, and the wind quivers through the closed canvas, and makes one feel at sea. All the talk of the camp outside is fused into a cheerful and indistinguishable murmur, pierced through at every moment by the wail of the hovering plover. Sometimes a face, black or white, peers through the entrance with some message. Since the light readily penetrates, though the rain cannot, the tent conveys a feeling of charmed security, as if an invisible boundary checked the pattering drops and held the moaning wind. The front tent I share, as yet, with my adjutant; in the inner apartment I reign supreme, bounded in a nutshell, with no bad dreams.

In all pleasant weather the outer "fly" is open, and men pass and repass, a chattering throng. I think of Emerson's Saadi, "As thou sittest at thy door, on the desert's yellow floor,"—for these bare sand-plains, gray above, are always yellow when upturned, and there seems a tinge of Orientalism in all our life.

Thrice a day we go to the plantation-houses for our meals, camp-arrangements being yet very imperfect. The officers board in different messes, the adjutant and I still clinging to the household of William Washington,—William the quiet and the courteous, the pattern of house-servants, William the noiseless, the observing, the discriminating, who knows everything that can be got and how to cook it. William and his tidy, lady-like little spouse Hetty—a pair of wedded lovers, if ever I saw one—set our table in their one room, half-way between an unglazed window and a large wood-fire, such as is often welcome. Thanks

to the adjutant, we are provided with the social magnificence of napkins; while (lest pride take too high a flight) our table-cloth consists of two "New York Tribunes" and a "Leslie's Pictorial." Every steamer brings us a clean table-cloth. Here are we forever supplied with pork and oysters and sweet-potatoes and rice and hominy and corn-bread and milk; also mysterious griddle-cakes of corn and pumpkin; also preserves made of pumpkin-chips, and other fanciful productions of Ethiop art. Mr. E. promised the plantation-superintendents who should come down here "all the luxuries of home," and we certainly have much apparent, if little real variety. Once William produced with some palpitation something fricasseed, which he boldly termed chicken; it was very small, and seemed in some undeveloped condition of ante-natal toughness. After the meal, he frankly avowed it for squirrel.

December 5, 1862.

Give these people their tongues, their feet, and their leisure, and they are happy. At every twilight the air is full of singing, talking, and clapping of hands in unison. One of their favorite songs is full of plaintive cadences; it is not, I think, a Methodist tune, and I wonder where they obtained a chant of such beauty.

"I can't stay behind, my Lord, I can't stay behind!
Oh, my father is gone, my father is gone,
My father is gone into heaven, my Lord!
I can't stay behind!
Dere's room enough, room enough,

Room enough in de heaven for de sojer:
Can't stay behind!"

It always excites them to have us looking on, yet they sing these songs at all times and seasons. I have heard this very song dimly droning on near midnight, and, tracing it into the recesses of a cook-house, have found an old fellow coiled away among the pots and provisions, chanting away with his "Can't stay behind, sinner," till I made him leave his song behind.

This evening, after working themselves up to the highest pitch, a party suddenly rushed off, got a barrel, and mounted some man upon it, who said, "Gib anoder song, boys, and I'se gib you a speech." After some hesitation and sundry shouts of "Rise de sing, somebody," and "Stan' up for Jesus, brudder," irreverently put in by the juveniles, they got upon the John Brown song, always a favorite, adding a jubilant verse which I had never before heard,—"We'll beat Beauregard on de clare battle-field." Then came the promised speech, and then no less than seven other speeches by as many men, on a variety of barrels, each orator being affectionately tugged to the pedestal and set on end by his special constituency. Every speech was good, without exception; with the queerest oddities of phrase and pronunciation, there was an invariable enthusiasm, a pungency of statement, and an understanding of the points at issue, which made them all rather thrilling. Those long-winded slaves in "Among the Pines" seemed rather fictitious and literary in

comparison. The most eloquent, perhaps, was Corporal Prince Lambkin, just arrived from Fernandina, who evidently had a previous reputation among them. His historical references were very interesting: he reminded them that he had predicted this war ever since Fremont's time, to which some of the crowd assented; he gave a very intelligent account of that Presidential campaign, and then described most impressively the secret anxiety of the slaves in Florida to know all about President Lincoln's election, and told how they all refused to work on the fourth of March, expecting their freedom to date from that day. He finally brought out one of the few really impressive appeals for the American flag that I have ever heard. "Our mas'rs dey hab lib under de flag, dey got dere wealth under it, and ebryting beautiful for dere chilen. Under it dey hab grind us up, and put us in dere pocket for money. But de fus' minute dey tink dat ole nag mean freedom for we colored people, dey pull it right down, and run up de rag ob dere own." (Immense applause.) "But we'll neber desert de ole flag, boys, neber; we hab lib under it for *eighteen hundred sixty-two years*, and we'll die for it now." With which overpowering discharge of chronology-at-long-range, this most effective of stump-speeches closed. I see already with relief that there will be small demand in this regiment for harangues from the officers; give the men an empty barrel for a stump, and they will do their own exhortation.

RICHES

Pluck color from the morning sky,
And wear it as thy diadem;
Nor pass the wayside flowers by,
But star thy robes with them.

Far in the temple of the sun
The vestal fires of being burn;
Thence beauty's finest fibres run,
And weave where'er we turn.

Thy plumes are in the yellow corn,—
But chief the gold of priceless days
In bosom of thy friend is borne,
Coined in his kindly rays.

Here lies thy wealth, go gather it,—
The mine is near, its deeps explore,
And freely give love, metal, wit,—
Thine is the exhaustless ore:

Thine are the precious stones whereon
The weary pass grief's flooded ford,
And thine the jewelled pavement won
By those who love the Lord.

THE VENGEANCE OF DOMINIC DE GOURGUES

There was a gentleman of Mont-de-Marsan, Dominic de Gourgues, a soldier of ancient birth and high renown. That he was a Huguenot is not certain. The Spanish annalist calls him a "terrible heretic"; but the French Jesuit, Charlevoix, anxious that the faithful should share the glory of his exploits, affirms, that, like his ancestors before him, he was a good Catholic. If so, his faith sat lightly upon him; and Catholic or heretic, he hated the Spaniards with a mortal hate. Fighting in the Italian wars,—for, from boyhood, he was wedded to the sword,—they had taken him prisoner near Siena, where he had signalized himself by a fiery and determined bravery. With brutal insult, they chained him to the oar as a galley-slave. After long endurance of this ignominy, the Turks had captured the vessel and carried her to Constantinople. It was but a change of tyrants; but, soon after, putting out on a cruise, Gourgues still at the oar, a galley of the Maltese knights hove in sight, bore down on the prize, recaptured her, and set the prisoner free. For several years after, his restless spirit found escape in voyages to Africa, Brazil, and regions yet more remote. His naval repute rose high, but his grudge against the Spaniards still rankled within him; and when, returned from his rovings, he learned the tidings from Florida, his hot Gascon

blood boiled with fury.

The honor of France had been foully stained, and there was none to wipe away the shame. The faction-ridden King was dumb. The nobles who surrounded him were in the Spanish interest. Then, since they proved recreant, he, Dominic de Gourgues, a simple gentleman, would take upon him to avenge the wrong, and restore the dimmed lustre of the French name. He sold his inheritance, borrowed money from his brother, who held a high post in Guienne, and equipped three small vessels, navigable by sail or oar. On board he placed a hundred arquebusiers and eighty sailors, prepared to fight on land, if need were. The noted Blaise de Montluc, then lieutenant for the King in Guienne, gave him a commission to make war on the negroes of Benin, that is, to kidnap them as slaves, an adventure then held honorable.

His true design was locked within his own breast. He mustered his followers, feasted them,—not a few were of rank equal to his own,—and, on the twenty-second of August, 1567, sailed from the mouth of the Charente. Off Cape Finisterre, so violent a storm buffeted his ships that his men clamored to return; but Gourgues's spirit prevailed. He bore away for Barbary, and, landing at the Rio del Oro, refreshed and cheered them as he best might. Thence he sailed to Cape Blanco, where the jealous Portuguese, who had a fort in the neighborhood, set upon him three negro chiefs. Gourgues beat them off, and remained master of the harbor; whence, however, he soon voyaged onward to

Cape Verd, and, steering westward, made for the West Indies. Here, advancing from island to island, he came to Hispaniola, where, between the fury of a hurricane at sea and the jealousy of the Spaniards on shore, he was in no small jeopardy,—"the Spaniards," exclaims the indignant journalist, "who think that this New World was made for nobody but them, and that no other man living has a right to move or breathe here!" Gourgues landed, however, obtained the water of which he was in need, and steered for Cape San Antonio, in Cuba. There he gathered his followers about him, and addressed them with his fiery Gascon eloquence. For the first time, he told them his true purpose. He inveighed against Spanish cruelty. He painted, with angry rhetoric, the butcheries of Fort Caroline and St. Augustine.

"What disgrace," he cried, "if such an insult should pass unpunished! What glory to us, if we revenge it! To this I have devoted my fortune. I relied on you. I thought you jealous enough of your country's glory to sacrifice life itself in a cause like this. Was I deceived? I will show you the way; I will be always at your head; I will bear the brunt of danger. Will you refuse to follow me?"

At first his startled hearers listened in silence; but soon the passions of that adventurous age rose responsive to his words. The sparks fell among gunpowder. The combustible French nature burst into flame. The enthusiasm of the soldiers rose to such a pitch that Gourgues had much ado to make them wait till the moon was full before tempting the perils of the Bahama

Channel. His time came at length. The moon rode high above the lonely sea, and, silvered in its light, the ships of the avenger held their course.

But how, meanwhile, had it fared with the Spaniards in Florida? The good-will of the Indians had vanished. The French had been obtrusive and vexatious guests; but their worst trespasses had been mercy and tenderness, to the daily outrage of the new-comers. Friendship had changed to aversion, aversion to hatred, hatred to open war. The forest-paths were beset; stragglers were cut off; and woe to the Spaniard who should venture after nightfall beyond call of the outposts! Menendez, however, had strengthened himself in his new conquest. St. Augustine was well fortified; Fort Caroline, now Fort San Mateo, was repaired; and two redoubts were thrown up to guard the mouth of the River of May. Thence, on an afternoon in April, the Spaniards saw three sail steering northward. Unsuspicious of an enemy, their batteries boomed a salute. Gourgues's ships replied, then stood out to sea, and were lost in the shades of evening.

They kept their course all night, and, as day broke, anchored at the mouth of a river, the St. Mary's or the Santilla, by their reckoning fifteen leagues north of the River of May. Here, as it grew light, Gourgues saw the borders of the sea thronged with savages, armed and plumed for war. They, too, had mistaken the strangers for Spaniards, and mustered to meet their tyrants at the landing. But in the French ships there was a trumpeter who had been long in Florida, and knew the Indians well. He

went towards them in a boat, with many gestures of friendship; and no sooner was he recognized than the naked crowd, with yelps of delight, danced for joy about the sands. Why had he ever left them? they asked; and why had he not returned before? The intercourse thus auspiciously begun was actively kept up. Gourgues told the principal chief—who was no other than Satouriona, of old the ally of the French—that he had come to visit them, make friendship with them, and bring them presents. At this last announcement, so grateful to Indian ears, the dancing was renewed with double zeal. The next morning was named for a grand council. Satouriona sent runners to summon all Indians within call; while Gourgues, for safety, brought his vessels within the mouth of the river.

Morning came, and the woods were thronged with congregated warriors. Gourgues and his soldiers landed with martial pomp. In token of mutual confidence, the French laid aside their arquebuses, the Indians their bows and arrows. Satouriona came to meet the strangers, and seated their commander at his side, on a wooden stool, draped and cushioned with the gray Spanish moss. Two old Indians cleared the spot of brambles, weeds, and grass; and, their task finished, the tribesmen took their places in a ring, row within row, standing, sitting, and crouching on the ground, a dusky concourse, plumed in festal array, waiting with grave visages and eyes intent. Gourgues was about to speak, when the chief, who, says the narrator, had not learned French manners, rose and anticipated

him. He broke into a vehement harangue; and the cruelty of the Spaniards was the burden of his words.

Since the French fort was taken, he said, the Indians had not had one happy day. The Spaniards drove them from their cabins, stole their corn, ravished their wives and daughters, and killed their children; and all this they had endured because they loved the French. There was a French boy who had escaped from the massacre at the fort. They had found him in the woods, and though the Spaniards, who wished to kill him, demanded that they should give him up, they had kept him for his friends.

"Look!" pursued the chief, "here he is!"—and he brought forward a youth of sixteen, named Pierre Debré, who became at once of the greatest service to the French, his knowledge of the Indian language making him an excellent interpreter.

Delighted as he was at this outburst against the Spaniards, Gourgues by no means saw fit to display the full extent of his satisfaction. He thanked the Indians for their good-will, exhorted them to continue in it, and pronounced an ill-merited eulogy on the greatness and goodness of his King. As for the Spaniards, he said, their day of reckoning was at hand; and if the Indians had been abused for their love of the French, the French would be their avengers. Here Satouriona forgot his dignity, and leaped up for joy.

"What!" he cried, "will you fight the Spaniards?"

"I came here," replied Gourgues, "only to reconnoitre the country and make friends with you, then to go back and bring

more soldiers; but when I hear what you are suffering from them, I wish to fall upon them this very day, and rescue you from their tyranny." And, all around the ring, a clamor of applauding voices greeted his words.

"But you will do your part," pursued the Frenchman; "you will not leave us all the honor."

"We will go," replied Satouriona, "and die with you, if need be."

"Then, if we fight, we ought to fight at once. How soon can you have your warriors ready to march?"

The chief asked three days for preparation. Gourgues cautioned him to secrecy, lest the Spaniards should take alarm.

"Never fear," was the answer; "we hate them more than you do."

Then came a distribution of gifts,—knives, hatchets, mirrors, bells, and beads,—while the warrior-rabble crowded to receive them, with eager faces, and tawny arms outstretched. The distribution over, Gourgues asked the chiefs if there was any other matter in which he could serve them. On this, pointing at his shirt, they expressed a peculiar admiration for that garment, and begged each to have one, to be worn at feasts and councils during life, and in their graves after death. Gourgues complied; and his grateful confederates were soon stalking about him, fluttering in the spoils of his ravished wardrobe.

To learn the strength and position of the Spaniards, Gourgues now sent out three scouts; and with them went Olotoraca,

Satouriona's nephew, a young brave of great renown.

The chief, eager to prove his good faith, gave as hostages his only son and his favorite wife. They were sent on board the ships, while the savage concourse dispersed to their encampments, with leaping, stamping, dancing, and whoops of jubilation.

The day appointed came, and with it the savage army, hideous in war-paint and plumed for battle. Their ceremonies began. The woods rang back their songs and yells, as with frantic gesticulations they brandished their war-clubs and vaunted their deeds of prowess. Then they drank the black drink, endowed with mystic virtues to steel them against hardship and danger; and Gourgues himself pretended to swallow the nauseous decoction.

These ceremonies consumed the day. It was evening before the allies filed off into their forests, and took the path for the Spanish forts. The French, on their part, were to repair by sea to the rendezvous. Gourgues mustered and addressed his men. It was needless: their ardor was at fever-height. They broke in upon his words, and demanded to be led at once against the enemy. Francis Bourdelois, with twenty sailors, was left with the ships. Gourgues affectionately bade him farewell.

"If I am slain in this most just enterprise," he said, "I leave all in your charge, and pray you to carry back my soldiers to France."

There were many embracings among the excited Frenchmen, —many sympathetic tears from those who were to stay behind, —many messages left with them for wives, children, friends, and mistresses; and then this valiant handful pushed their boats

from shore. It was a hare-brained venture, for, as young Debré had assured them, the Spaniards on the River of May were four hundred in number, secure behind their ramparts.

Hour after hour the sailors pulled at the oar. They glided slowly past the sombre shores by the shimmering moonlight, the sound of the murmuring surf and the moaning pine-trees. In the gray of the morning, they came to the mouth of a river, probably the Nassau; and here a northeast wind set in with a violence that almost wrecked their boats. Their Indian allies were waiting on the bank, but for a while the gale delayed their crossing. The bolder French would lose no time, rowed through the tossing waves, and, landing safely, left their boats, and pushed into the forest. Gourgues took the lead, in breastplate and back-piece. At his side marched the young chief Olotoraca, a French pike in his hand; and the files of arquebuse-men and armed sailors followed close behind. They plunged through swamps, hewed their way through brambly thickets and the matted intricacies of the forests, and, at five in the afternoon, wellnigh spent with fatigue and hunger, came to a river or inlet of the sea, not far from the first Spanish fort. Here they found three hundred Indians waiting for them.

Tired as he was, Gourgues would not rest. He would fain attack at daybreak, and with ten arquebusiers and his Indian guide he set forth to reconnoitre. Night closed upon him. It was a vain task to struggle on, in pitchy darkness, among trunks of trees, fallen logs, tangled vines, and swollen streams. Gourgues

returned, anxious and gloomy. An Indian chief approached him, read through the darkness his perturbed look, and offered to lead him by a better path along the margin of the sea. Gourgues joyfully assented, and ordered all his men to march. The Indians, better skilled in woodcraft, chose the shorter course through the forest.

The French forgot their weariness, and pressed on at speed. At dawn they and their allies met on the bank of a stream, beyond which, and very near, was the fort. But the tide was in. They essayed to cross in vain. Greatly vexed,—for he had hoped to take the enemy asleep,—Gourgues withdrew his soldiers into the forest, where they were no sooner ensconced than a drenching rain fell, and they had much ado to keep their gun-matches burning. The light grew apace. Gourgues plainly saw the fort, whose defences seemed slight and unfinished. He even saw the Spaniards at work within. A feverish interval elapsed. At length the tide was out,—so far, at least, that the stream was fordable. A little higher up, a clump of woods lay between it and the fort. Behind this friendly screen the passage was begun. Each man tied his powder-flask to his steel cap, held his arquebuse above his head with one hand and grasped his sword with the other. The channel was a bed of oysters. The sharp shells cut their feet as they waded through. But the farther bank was gained. They emerged from the water, drenched, lacerated, bleeding, but with unabated mettle. Under cover of the trees Gourgues set them in array. They stood with kindling eyes, and hearts throbbing,

but not with fear. Gourgues pointed to the Spanish fort, seen by glimpses between the bushes and brown trunks. "Look!" he said, "there are the robbers who have stolen this land from our King; there are the murderers who have butchered our countrymen!" With voices eager, fierce, but half suppressed, they demanded to be led on.

Gourgues gave the word. Cazenove, his lieutenant, with thirty men, pushed for the fort-gate; himself, with the main body, for the glacis. It was near noon; the Spaniards had just risen from table, and, says the narrative, "were still picking their teeth," when a startled cry rang in their ears,—

"To arms! to arms! The French are coming! the French are coming!"

It was the voice of a cannoneer who had that moment mounted the rampart and seen the assailants advancing in unbroken ranks, with heads lowered and weapons at the charge. He fired his cannon among them. He even had time to load and fire again, when the light-limbed Olotoraca bounded forward, ran up the glacis, leaped the unfinished ditch, and drove his pike through the Spaniard from breast to back. Gourgues was now on the glacis, when he heard Cazenove shouting from the gate that the Spaniards were escaping on that side. He turned and led his men thither at a run. In a moment, the fugitives, sixty in all, were inclosed between his party and that of his lieutenant. The Indians, too, came leaping to the spot. Not a Spaniard escaped. All were cut down but a few, reserved by Gourgues for a more inglorious

end.

Meanwhile the Spaniards in the other fort, on the opposite shore, cannonaded the victors without ceasing. The latter turned four captured guns against them. One of Gourgues's boats, a very large one, had been brought along-shore. He entered it, with eighty soldiers, and pushed for the farther bank. With loud yells, the Indians leaped into the water. From shore to shore, the St. John's was alive with them. Each held his bow and arrows aloft in one hand, while he swam with the other. A panic seized the garrison as they saw the savage multitude. They broke out of the fort and fled into the forest. But the French had already landed; and throwing themselves in the path of the fugitives, they greeted them with a storm of lead. The terrified wretches recoiled; but flight was vain. The Indian whoop rang behind them; war-clubs and arrows finished the work. Gourgues's utmost efforts saved but fifteen,—saved them, not out of mercy, but from a refinement of vengeance.

The next day was Quasimodo Sunday, or the Sunday after Easter. Gourgues and his men remained quiet, making ladders for the assault on Fort San Mateo. Meanwhile the whole forest was in arms, and, far and near, the Indians were wild with excitement. They beset the Spanish fort till not a soldier could venture out. The garrison, conscious of their danger, though ignorant of its extent, devised an expedient to gain information, and one of them, painted and feathered like an Indian, ventured within Gourgues's outposts. He himself chanced to be at hand,

and by his side walked his constant attendant, Olotoraca. The keen-eyed young savage pierced the cheat at a glance. The spy was seized, and, being examined, declared that there were two hundred and sixty Spaniards in San Mateo, that they believed the French to be two thousand, and were so frightened that they did not know what they did.

Gourgues, well pleased, pushed on to attack them. On Monday evening he sent forward the Indians to ambush themselves on both sides of the fort. In the morning he followed with his Frenchmen; and as the glittering ranks came into view, defiling between the forest and the river, the Spaniards opened on them with culverins from a projecting bastion. The French took cover in the forest with which the hills below and behind the fort were densely overgrown. Here, ensconced in the edge of the woods, where, himself unseen, he could survey the whole extent of the defences, Gourgues presently descried a strong party of Spaniards issuing from their works, crossing the ditch, and advancing to reconnoitre. On this, returning to his men, he sent Cazenove, with a detachment, to station himself at a point well hidden by trees on the flank of the Spaniards. The latter, with strange infatuation, continued their advance. Gourgues and his followers pushed on through the thickets to meet them. As the Spaniards reached the edge of the clearing, a deadly fire blazed in their faces, and before the smoke cleared, the French were among them, sword in hand. The survivors would have fled; but Cazenove's detachment fell upon their rear, and all were killed

or taken.

When their comrades in the fort beheld their fate, a panic seized them. Conscious of their own deeds, perpetrated on this very spot, they could hope no mercy. Their terror multiplied immeasurably the numbers of their enemy. They deserted the fort in a body, and fled into the woods most remote from the French. But here a deadlier foe awaited them; for a host of Indians leaped up from ambush. Then rose those hideous war-cries which have curdled the boldest blood and blanched the manliest cheek. Then the forest-warriors, with savage ecstasy, wreaked their long arrears of vengeance. The French, too, hastened to the spot, and lent their swords to the slaughter. A few prisoners were saved alive; the rest were slain; and thus did the Spaniards make bloody atonement for the butchery of Fort Caroline.

But Gourgues's vengeance was not yet appeased. Hard by the fort, the trees were pointed out to him on which Menendez had hanged his captives, and placed over them the inscription,—"Not as Frenchmen, but as Lutherans."

Gourgues ordered the Spanish prisoners to be led thither.

"Did you think," he sternly said, as the pallid wretches stood ranged before him, "that so vile a treachery, so detestable a cruelty, against a King so potent and a nation so generous, would go unpunished? I, one of the humblest gentlemen among my King's subjects, have charged myself with avenging it. Even if the Most Christian and the Most Catholic Kings had been enemies,

at deadly war, such perfidy and extreme cruelty would still have been unpardonable. Now that they are friends and close allies, there is no name vile enough to brand your deeds, no punishment sharp enough to requite them. But though you cannot suffer as you deserve, you shall suffer all that an enemy can honorably inflict, that your example may teach others to observe the peace and alliance which you have so perfidiously violated."

They were hanged where the French had hung before them; and over them was nailed the inscription, burned with a hot iron on a tablet of pine,—"Not as Spaniards, but as Traitors, Robbers, and Murderers."

Gourgues's mission was fulfilled. To occupy the country had never been his intention; nor was it possible, for the Spaniards were still in force at St. Augustine. His was a whirlwind-visitation,—to ravage, ruin, and vanish. He harangued the Indians, and exhorted them to demolish the fort. They fell to the work with a keen alacrity, and in less than a day not one stone was left on another.

Gourgues returned to the forts at the mouth of the river, destroyed them also, and took up his march for his ships. It was a triumphal procession. The Indians thronged around the victors with gifts of fish and game; and an old woman declared that she was now ready to die, since she had seen the French once more.

The ships were ready for sea. Gourgues bade his disconsolate allies farewell, and nothing would content them but a promise to return soon. Before embarking, he addressed his own men:—

"My friends, let us give thanks to God for the success He has granted us. It is He who saved us from tempests; it is He who inclined the hearts of the Indians towards us; it is He who blinded the understanding of the Spaniards. They were four to one in forts well armed and provisioned. We had nothing but our right; and yet we have conquered. Not to our own strength, but to God only, we owe our victory. Then let us thank Him, my friends; let us never forget His favors; and let us pray that He may continue them, saving us from dangers, and guiding us safely home. Let us pray, too, that He may so dispose the hearts of men that our perils and toils may find favor in the eyes of our King and of all France, since all we have done was done for the King's service and for the honor of our country."

Thus Spaniards and Frenchmen alike laid their reeking swords on God's altar.

Gourgues sailed on the third of May, and, gazing back along their foaming wake, the adventurers looked their last on the scene of their exploits. Their success had had its price. A few of their number had fallen, and hardships still awaited the survivors. Gourgues, however, reached Rochelle on the day of Pentecost, and the Huguenot citizens greeted him with all honor. At court it fared worse with him. The King, still obsequious to Spain, looked on him coldly and askance. The Spanish minister demanded his head. It was hinted to him that he was not safe, and he withdrew to Rouen, where he found asylum among his friends. His fortune was gone; debts contracted for his expedition weighed heavily

on him; and for years he lived in obscurity, almost in misery. At length a dawn brightened for him. Elizabeth of England learned his merits and his misfortunes, and invited him to enter her service. The King, who, says the Jesuit historian, had always at heart been delighted with his achievement, openly restored him to favor; while, some years later, Don Antonio tendered him command of his fleet to defend his right to the crown of Portugal against Philip II. Gourgues, happy once more to cross swords with the Spaniards, gladly embraced this offer; but, on his way to join the Portuguese prince, he died at Tours of a sudden illness. The French mourned the loss of the man who had wiped a blot from the national scutcheon, and respected his memory as that of one of the best captains of his time. And, in truth, if a zealous patriotism, a fiery valor, and skilful leadership are worthy of honor, then is such tribute due to Dominic de Gourgues, despite the shadowing vices which even the spirit of that wild age can only palliate, the personal hate that aided the impulse of his patriotism, and the implacable cruelty that sullied his courage.

Romantic as his exploit was, it lacked the fulness of poetic justice, since the chief offender escaped him. While Gourgues was sailing towards Florida, Menendez was in Spain, high in favor at court, where he told to approving ears how he had butchered the heretics. Borgia, the sainted General of the Jesuits, was his fast friend; and two years later, when he returned to America, the Pope, Paul V., regarding him as an instrument for the conversion of the Indians, wrote him a letter with

his benediction. He reëstablished his power in Florida, rebuilt Fort San Mateo, and taught the Indians that death or flight was the only refuge from Spanish tyranny. They murdered his missionaries and spurned their doctrine. "The Devil is the best thing in the world," they cried; "we adore him; he makes men brave." Even the Jesuits despaired, and abandoned Florida in disgust.

Menendez was summoned home, where fresh honors awaited him from the crown, though, according to the somewhat doubtful assertion of the heretical Grotius, his deeds had left a stain upon his name among the people. He was given command of the armada of three hundred sail and twenty thousand men, which, in 1574, was gathered at Santander against England and Flanders. But now, at the climax of his fortunes, his career was abruptly closed. He died suddenly, at the age of fifty-five. What caused his death? Grotius affirms that he killed himself; but, in his eagerness to point the moral of his story, he seems to have overstepped the bounds of historic truth. The Spanish bigot was rarely a suicide, for the rights of Christian burial and repose in consecrated ground were denied to the remains of the self-murderer. There is positive evidence, too, in a codicil to the will of Menendez, dated at Santander on the fifteenth of September, 1574, that he was on that day seriously ill, though, as the instrument declares, "sound of mind." There is reason, then, to believe that this pious cut-throat died a natural death, crowned with honors, and compassed by the consolations of his religion.

It was he who crushed French Protestantism in America. To plant religious freedom on this Western soil was not the mission of France. It was for her to rear in Northern forests the banner of Absolutism and of Rome; while, among the rocks of Massachusetts, England and Calvin fronted her in dogged and deadly opposition.

Civilization in North America found its pioneer, its forlorn hope, less in England than in France. For, long before the ice-crusted pines of Plymouth had listened to the rugged psalmody of the Puritan, the solitudes of Western New York and the shadowy wilderness of Lake Huron were trodden by the iron heel of the soldier and the sandalled foot of the Franciscan friar. They who bore the fleur-de-lis were always in the van, patient, daring, indomitable. And foremost on this bright roll of forest-chivalry stands the half-forgotten name of Samuel de Champlain.

LINA

The evenings were always dull and long to those of us who were too far from home to make it worth while to leave the school for the eight weeks of holiday. It was dreary indeed sitting in the great school-room, with its long rows of empty desks, with nothing before one to break the monotony of the four walls but the great map of France and the big dusty cross with its dingy wreath of *immortelles*. It is true, we did not bewail the absence of our companions. In fact, it was with a tranquil sense of security that I began my work every morning in vacation, knowing that I should find all my books in my desk, and my pens and pencils undisturbed; for among the *pensionnaires* there existed a strong tendency to communistic principles. Still, when all the noisy crew had departed, the house seemed lonely, the dining-room with its three bare tables looked desolate, and an unnatural stillness reigned in the shady pathways of the garden. You might wander from room to room, and up and down the stairs, and to and fro in the long passages, and meet no one. Fräulein Christine was with her "*Liebes Mütterchen*" in Strasburg, and Mademoiselle had left her weary post in the middle of the school-room for her quiet village-home in Normandy. Madame herself remained almost entirely invisible, shut up in the sanctity of her own rooms; and so the whole house had a sense of stillness that seemed only heightened by the glory of the autumn sunshine, and the hum of

bees and rustle of leaves that filled the air outside.

The house was old; it had been a grand mansion once, before the days of the Revolution, and had probably been the residence of some of the stiff old worthies whose portraits hung in dreary dignity in the disused dusty galleries of the *château*, which now, turned into a *citadelle*, stood upon a high point of the cliffs commanding the town. The term *rambling* might well be applied to this house, for in its eccentric construction it seemed to have wandered at will half-way up the hill-side on which it was built. It had wings and abutments, and flights of stone steps leading from one part to another. There was "*la grande maison de Madame*," "*la maison du jardin*," and "*la maison de Monsieur*." This last, half hidden in trees, was *terra incognita* to the girls; but often in an evening, after we had seen him wending his way across the garden with his lantern from *la grande maison*, where he had been spending the evening with Madame, did we hear Monsieur playing on his organ glorious "bits" of Cherubini and Bach.

We were conscious that this odd little man carried on a system of espionage through the half-closed slats of his shutters, the effects of which we were continually made to feel; this, and the mystery that enveloped his small abode, where he worked all day among his bottles and retorts, made Monsieur appear somewhat of an ogre in our eyes. There was always a sense of freedom in the upper garden, which was out of the range of his windows, and where he never came. That pleasant upper garden, what a paradise it was, with its long sunny walks within the shelter

of high walls! The trim stateliness of the ancient splendor had run to luxuriant disorder, and thick tangles of rare roses swung abroad their boughs above great beds of lilies-of-the-valley and periwinkle which had overrun their borders and crept into the walks.

During the vacation, we who stayed had the privilege of going into the upper garden. Obtaining the key from Justine, we would wander first along the shady pathways of the lower garden, past the flower-beds where the girls during recess-times worked and gossiped and quarrelled,—their quick French tongues reminding one of a colony of sparrows,—then, turning the stubborn lock of the heavy door that opened on the flight of mossy steps, we came into that region of stillness and delight, the upper garden.

Oh, the pleasant autumn afternoons spent sitting together on the mossy walk between the box-hedges, the hum of bees and the scent of roses filling the air, and the sweet monotonous murmur of the sea on the shingly beach in our ears! For, mounting still higher by terraces and another flight of steps through a tumble-down gateway, you came upon the open cliffs; and the long blue line of the sea and the fresh sea-breeze greeted you with a thousand thoughts of home. For England lay beyond the trembling blue line.

I remember it was one of these autumn afternoons, that, coming down from practising, with my music-books under my arm, I met Justine, the genius of the *ménage*, cook and housekeeper in one, a shrewd woman, who had three objects in

life,—to manage *les bêtes*, as she condescendingly termed the other servants, to please Madame, whom she adored, and to go to church every Sunday and *grande fête*. Justine was coming in from the garden, with a basket on her arm, in which lay two pigeons that she had just killed. On her fingers she twirled the gory scissors with which she had performed the deed.

"Good day, Justine! How is Madame?"

"Madame is well, thank you, Mademoiselle,—a little headache, that is all,—that comes of so much learning and writing at night. *Mais voilà une femme superbe!* I go to make her a little dinner of these," pointing to the pigeons.

"Justine, *ma bonne*, won't you give us the key this afternoon?"

Justine stops suddenly and clasps her fat hands emphatically over the lid of her basket.

"I had almost forgotten, Mademoiselle. Madame desired me to tell the *demoiselles* that she comes down this evening to sit in the *cabinet de musique*."

I was delighted with this piece of intelligence, and ran to tell the others. It was not often that Madame deigned to come downstairs of an evening, and were always glad when she did. In the first place, it was a pleasant break in the monotony of the general routine to sit and work and draw, instead of studying in the empty school-room; and secondly, it was delightful to be with Madame, when she threw off the character of preceptress,—for at such times she was infinitely agreeable, entertaining us in her bright French manner as if we had been her guests.

Madame had a way of charming all who approached her, from Adelaide Sloper's rich, vulgar father, who, when he came to see his daughter, was entertained by Madame *au salon*, and who was overheard to declare, as he got into his grand carriage, that "that Frenchwoman was the finest woman, by Jove, he'd ever seen!" to the tiny witch Élise, whom nobody could manage, but who, at the first rustle of Madame's gown, would cease from her mischief, fold her small hands, and, sinking her bead-like black eyes, look as demure as such a sprite could. We all adored Madame,—not that she herself was very good, though she was pious in her way, too. She fasted and went regularly to confession and to all the *offices*, and sometimes at the passing of the Host I have seen her kneeling in the dusty street in a new dress, and I don't know what more you could expect from a Frenchwoman.

Then she was so pretty, and there was a nameless grace in her attitude. She seemed to me so beautiful, as she stood at her desk, with one hand resting on her open book, tall, with something almost imperious in her figure, her head bent, but her deep, lovely gray eyes looking quietly before her and seeming to take in at once the whole school-room with an expression of keen intelligence. She was highly cultivated, and had read widely in many languages; but she wore her learning as gracefully as a bird does its lovely plumage.

There was a latent desire for sway in her character. She delighted in the homage of those about her, and seldom failed to win it from any one with whom she came in contact.

Mademoiselle, who did all the hard work of the teaching, and was only half paid for it, wore out her strength and energy and youth day by day at her desk in the middle of the school-room, and thought Madame the perfection of women; and her sallow, thin face would flush with pleasure, if Madame gave her a look or one of her soft smiles in passing.

At half-past seven that evening we were seated round the table with our work, awaiting the entrance of Madame. Presently she glided in, holding in her arms a bureau-drawer filled with piles of letters.

"I propose to tell you a story, *mes chères*," she said, as she seated herself and folded her white hands over one of the thick bundles that she had taken from the drawer.

"You have all heard me speak of Lina Dale, my English governess before I had Mary Gibson. Mary Gibson is an excellent girl, but she has not the talent that Lina had. Lina's father was a Captain Dale, a half-pay officer, whom I had once seen on business about a pupil of mine who had crossed the Channel under his care. A surly, morose man he appeared to me, rough towards his wife, a meek, worn-out looking old lady, who spoke with a hesitating, apologetic manner and a nervous movement of the head,—a habit I thought she must have contracted from a constant fear of being pounced upon, as you say, by her husband. I always pitied her *de tout mon cœur*, but she possessed neither tact nor intellect, and was *très ennuyeuse*.

"It was one cold day in winter that Justine told me there was

a *demoiselle au salon* who wished to see me. I found standing by the table a young lady,—a figure that would strike you at once. She turned as I entered the room, and her manner was dignified and self-possessed. She was not pretty, but her face was a remarkable one: thick dark hair above a low forehead, the eyelids somewhat too drooping over the singular dark eyes, that looked out beneath them with an expression of concentrated thought. 'That girl is like Charlotte Corday,' I said to Monsieur afterwards: 'it is a character of great energy and enthusiasm, frozen by the hardness and uncongeniality of her fate.' For in this interview she told me that she sought a situation in my school, and that she felt confidence in offering herself,—that the state of her father's affairs did not render this step necessary, but that circumstances of which she would not speak made her home unhappy and most unattractive to her. All this she said in a calm and perfectly unexcited manner, as if relating the details of a matter of business. For a moment I trembled lest she had come to make me her confidante in a family-quarrel; but I was soon relieved from this apprehension, for, after she had stated the fact, she referred to it no more, but went on to speak upon general subjects, which she did with great intelligence. Her good sense impressed me so much that before she left the house I had engaged her.

"A few days afterwards she was established here, and had adapted herself to all our modes of life in a way that astonished me. She went about all her duties quietly, and with the greatest

order and precision. Her classes were the most orderly in the school, and in a short time her authority was acknowledged by all the girls. There were few who did not admire her, and not one who dared to set her at defiance. By degrees her quiet, unobtrusive industry won upon my confidence; I felt glad to show by charges of responsibility my regard for a person of so sound a judgment and so reserved a temper, and very soon I had given over to her care the supervision of English books for the girls' reading, the posting and receiving from the post-office of all the English letters, both my own and those of the English girls in the *pension*. During the two years and a half of her stay here, these duties were fulfilled by Lina with unremitting care and punctuality.

"About this time I had commenced a correspondence, through Lina, with a Mrs. E. Baxter, of Bristol, in England, who had, it seemed, known Lina for many years, and who, understanding, as she mysteriously hinted, how unhappy her home must be, begged her to come and live with her and undertake for a time the education of her little girl, a child of ten. Here are her letters; this is one of the first: you see how warmly, how affectionately, she speaks of Lina, and how delicately she made this proposal, 'so that dear Lina's sensitive, proud nature might not be able to imagine itself wounded.'

"As Mrs. Baxter offered her a much larger salary than I gave her, I told Lina that I thought she ought to accept the offer of her friend. She quietly and firmly declined.

"'Miss Dale,' I said, 'you must not stand in the way of your own good out of any sense of obligation to me. I cannot allow you to do so.'

"'I do not do so, Madame La P–re,' she answered. 'I prefer to stay with you to going even to Mrs. Baxter's, whom I love sincerely. She is an excellent and most faithful friend, but I am better and safer here with you.'

"She looked steadily at me as she began the sentence, but dropped her eyes suddenly as she said the last words.

"'Lina,' I said, (it was in the evening, as I was leaving the class-room, and all the *élèves* had already gone,) 'carry me up some of these books to my room,—I have more than usual to-night'; for I saw there was something hidden behind this reserved manner, and felt interested.

"She took the books, and followed me. As she laid them down and arranged them in order on the table, I closed the door and said,—

"'Miss Dale, you have not looked very well lately, I think; I have several times intended to tell you, that, if you would like to go home some Saturday and spend the Sunday with your parents, you can do so.' (Her family was then living at Kenneville, a village about twelve miles from here.) 'I have noticed that you have never asked permission to do this, and thought you might be waiting till I mentioned it myself.'

"She started as I said the word 'home.'

"'No, no,' she said, almost vehemently, 'I cannot go home,

I do not wish to'; and then she continued, in her usually cold, quiet manner,—'You remember, perhaps, Madame, that I am not happily circumstanced at home.'

"She pondered a moment, and then said, as if she had made up her mind about something,—

"'After all, I may as well tell you, Madame, all about it, as by doing so some things in my conduct that may have seemed strange to you will be cleared up,—that is, if you choose to hear?'

"'Certainly, *ma chère*,' I replied. 'I should be glad to hear all you have to tell me. Sit down here.'

"She still remained standing, however, before me, her eyelids drooping,—not shyly, for her eyes had a steady, abstracted expression, as if she were arranging her facts in systematic order so as to tell me her story in her usual clear, business-like manner.

"'You know, Madame, my father is guardian to two brothers, the sons of an old army-friend of his, who died in India when his two sons were quite boys, leaving his cousin, Colonel Lucas, together with my father, joint guardians of his children. The boys, during school or college vacations, spent the time partly at our house and partly at the house of Colonel Lucas. They both seemed like brothers to me. As time went on, Frank, the elder, began to spend all his vacations with us; and when he left Oxford, and ought to have commenced his studies for the bar, he continually put off the time of going up to London, where he was to enter the office of a lawyer, and stayed on from week to week at home, to teach me German, as he said. I knew he was rich,

and that in three years he would come into the possession of a large fortune; but I knew also how bad it was for a young man to have no profession; and when I saw my father seemed indifferent on the subject, I used to urge Frank the more not to waste his time. But he generally only laughed, though at times he would seem vexed at my earnestness, and would ask me why I should wish him to do what he did not want to do; and then,—and then,—this was one evening after we had been on the boat together all the afternoon, and were walking up home,—then, Madame, he told me he loved me, that he would go to London, study law, or do anything I said, if I would marry him. Oh, Madame, this was dreadful to me! I was stunned and bewildered. I had never fancied such a thing possible; the very idea was unnatural. I had thought of Frank as a boy always; now, in a moment, he was converted into a man, full of the determination of a selfish purpose. I could not answer him composedly, and entreated him to leave me. He misinterpreted my dismay, and went at once to my father. When I came in, that evening, having somewhat regained my composure, though with a sick feeling of dread and bewilderment in my heart, my father met me with unusual kindness, kissed me as he had not done for years, and led me towards Frank, who was standing near my mother. She had been crying, I saw, and her face wore a strange expression of anxiety and nervous joy as she looked at me. I turned away from Frank, and threw myself down on the floor by my mother.

"'"Thank Heaven, Lina!" I heard her whisper; "God bless you,

my child! you have saved me years of bitterness."

"'I exclaimed,—"I cannot marry Frank,—I don't love him, mother,—don't try to make me!"

"'Ah, Madame, it was dreadful! I don't know how I bore it. My father stormed, and my mother cried, and poured forth such entreaties and persuasions,—telling me I mistook my heart, and that I should learn to love Frank, and about duty as a daughter to my father, and, oh, I don't know what beside!—and Frank stood by, silent and pale, and with a look I had never seen before of unrelenting, passionate, pitiless love.

"'Oh,' sighed Lina, 'it was hard, with no one to take my part! but the hardest was yet to come.

"'Days and weeks passed on, and I was miserable beyond what I can tell you. Nothing more was said on the subject, however, except by Frank, who tortured me by alternate entreaties and reproaches, and sometimes by occasional fits of thoughtfulness and kindness, in which he would leave me to myself, only appealing to me by unobtrusive acts of courtesy and devotion, which gave me more pain than either reproach or entreaty. But if it had not been for these days of comparative calm and quiet, I should hardly have been able to bear what followed. As it was, I had time to collect my strength and plan my line of conduct.

"'One night my father called me into his room. I saw by his manner that he was much excited. My mother was there also; she looked alarmed, and glanced from my father to me anxiously and inquiringly. You know mamma has very little strength of

character, Madame. I could not hope for help from her; so I called up all my resolution, knowing that some trial was before me. I can hardly tell you what I heard then, Madame, it was such disgrace,' said Lina, raising her eyes slowly and fixing them a moment on mine, while a sudden, curious, embarrassed expression passed over her face, such as is accompanied in other persons by a painful flush, but which left her face pale and cold, causing no change in color.

"'My father told me, Madame, that some unfortunate speculations which he had undertaken, and in which he had used the fortune of Frank intrusted to his care, had failed, and that, when Frank became four-and-twenty, at which time, according to his father's will, he was to enter upon his property, his own wrong-doing would be discovered, and thence-forward he would be at the mercy of his ward. Frank had, indeed, already learned how great a wrong had been done him. My mother clung to me, weakly pouring forth laudations on the generosity of Frank, who, through his affection for me, was willing to forgive all this injury. Was I not grateful? Why did I not go to him and tell him that the devotion of my life would be a poor recompense for such generosity? Oh, Madame, it was dreadful! I was not grateful at all; I hated him; and the misery of having to decide thus the fate of my father was intolerable.'

"'But what did the young man himself say to all this, Lina?' I inquired; 'did he never speak to you on the subject?'

"'Yes,' she replied; and after he had spoken quite bitterly

against my father, (they never liked each other,) he said, that, however he might feel towards him as his guardian, there was nothing that he could not forget and forgive in the father of his wife,—which did not make me respect him any more, you may be sure, and showed me that it was useless to appeal to his generosity. My life now was miserable indeed.

"'About this time, my aunt in Scotland sent for me to pay her a visit. She was in failing health, and wanted cheerful companionship, and I had always been a favorite with her as a child. She lived alone with a couple of old servants in a small village far in the wilds of –shire. My father, of course, opposed my going, alleging, as his reason, the long journey (we were then living in W–, in Shropshire) that I should have to take alone. To my astonishment, Frank took my part, insisting on my being allowed to go. Whether it was that he thought that when far away from home, in the seclusion of the Scotch village where my aunt lived, I should think more kindly of him, or whether he wished to touch me by a show of magnanimity, I cannot tell; but so it was, and I went.'

"Lina here paused a moment, thoughtfully.

"'But, Lina,' I said, 'if the young man was well educated, rich, and seemed only to have the one fault of loving you so well, why would you not marry him? *Ma chère*,' I said, 'you throw away your good fate. You see what a service it would be to your family. (I speak as your friend, you comprehend.) You save your father; you make the young man happy; all could be arranged so

charmingly! I should like to see you married, *ma chère*; and then, your duty as a daughter!'

"'Oh, yes, yes! she cried; 'I would do, oh, anything almost, to shield my poor father and mother! Perhaps once, *once*, I might; but it is too late now. I cannot marry Frank. Oh, Madame, it is as impossible as if I were dead!'

"'This is a strange story, Lina,' I said. 'What do you mean? Tell me, my child, or I shall think you crazy.'

"She laid her head on her hands, which were clasped on the top of the escritoire, and half whispered,—

"'I am engaged,—I am married to some one else.'

"I sprang from my seat, and caught her hands.

"'You married, Lina? you? the quiet girl who has been teaching the children so well all these months?'

"'Yes, Madame,' she said, with all her usual composure, 'and to a man I love with my whole soul, with my whole life. The future may seem dim, but I have little fear when I remember I am Arthur's wife, and that his love will be strong to help me whenever I relieve him of the promise I have obliged him to make not to reveal our marriage. Frank will be three-and-twenty in one year and a half from now; till then, he cannot, without great difficulty, harm my father, and by that time I trust his fancy for me will have passed away, and he will be willing to treat with my father about his property without personal feeling to aggravate his sense of the wrong that has been done him. He is in the East now with Colonel Lucas, his other guardian, who has not been

without his suspicions of Frank's liking for me, and is not at all unwilling, I think, to keep him out of the way for a while.'

"'Does no one know of this, Lina?' I asked, 'no one suspect it?'

"'Only two persons,' she replied,—'indeed, I may as well tell you at once, Madame,—beside Mrs. Baxter and her husband, at whose house the ceremony took place. They were then staying in the neighborhood of H–, a few miles from my aunt's house. It was at Mrs. Baxter's I first met Arthur: he was a distant connection of hers. He and his Cousin Marmaduke had come up for the shooting and fishing for a few weeks in the autumn. My aunt was a genial, bright old lady, fond of the society of young people, spite of her ill health, and invited the young men frequently to her house. In that way I saw a great deal of them both.'

"'Who was the gentleman, Lina? Had you seen him before this visit? But,' seeing she hesitated, 'if you do not wish to disclose more, say so frankly; what you have already told me I will guard as a secret,—you need not fear.'

"'Oh, Madame,' interrupted Lina, suddenly throwing herself on the floor at my feet, 'it's not that,—do not say that, dear Madame! It is a great comfort to me to tell you all this; sometimes I feel so lonely when by any chance I do not get a letter from him the day I expect one.'

"Her voice faltered, and she leaned forward, burying her face in her hands; I saw her breast shaken with weeping.

"'Tell me all, *ma pauvre petite*!' I said; 'tell me everything.'

"Then seeing she still continued weeping, I said, playfully,—

"'So you get letters from him, do you? I have never known this. You know, *ma chérie*, that that is against the rules of my *pension*; but when people are married,—*c'est une autre chose*! But how is it that I have never found this out? Ah, because you have charge of all the letters to and from the post!'

"'Yes, Madame,' she said, looking up with a smile. 'I have sometimes felt so unhappy, because I seemed to be doing a *dishonest* thing; but it would have been so hard to go without them, and I knew how kind and good you were. If you would like to see one of his letters,' she continued, half shyly, but with dignified gravity, 'I have one here'; and she drew a large letter from her pocket and handed it to me.

"Here it is," said Madame, taking the first from the bundle in her hand.

The handwriting was firm and regular; the letter was long, but, though the whole breathed but one feeling of the deepest and tenderest affection, it was hardly what would be called a "love-letter." There were criticisms of new works, and further references to books of a kind that showed the writer to be a man of scholarly tastes. After we had looked at this one, Madame handed us others from the packet, all marked by the same characteristics as the first. Here and there were little pictures of the writer's every-day life. He told of his being out on the moors at sunrise shooting with his Cousin Marmaduke, or riding round the estate giving orders about the transplanting of certain trees, "which are set as you have suggested, and are growing as fast as

they can till you come to walk under their shade," or in the library at evening, when the place beside him seems so void where she should be. Then there were other letters, speaking of – –, the poet, who was coming down to spend a few weeks with him, and write verses under his elms at Aylesford Grange; but in one and all Lina was the central idea round which all other interests merely turned, and the source from which all else drew its charm.

"As soon," said Madame, continuing her narration, "as I had finished reading the letter, I entreated Lina to go on with her curious history.

"'I met Arthur,' she said, 'first at Mrs. Baxter's, as I said before. He is the noblest man I have ever known,—so good, so clever, so pure in heart! His Cousin Marmaduke, who was there at the same time, paid me great attention, but I never liked him; there was always something repulsive to me in his black eyes; I never trusted him; and beside Arthur,—oh, it seemed like the contrast between night and day! I don't know why it was, Madame, but I never felt that he loved Arthur really, though Arthur had done a great deal for him, got him his commission in the army, and paid off some of his debts; but he never seemed as if he quite forgave Arthur for standing in the way of his being the lord of the manor himself and possessor of Aylesford. There are some mean-spirited people who are proud too. They can receive favors, while they resent the obligation. He was of that kind, I think, and hated Arthur for his very generosity.

"'One evening, as I was walking up the shrubbery, I met

Marmaduke. He had ridden over with Arthur, as they often did, to spend the evening. He had caught sight of me, he said, as they came up the avenue, and, under pretext of something being wrong with his horse's bridle, had stopped, and let Arthur go on to the house alone. He had long waited for this opportunity of speaking to me alone, he said, as I must have known. Then, amid the basest of vague insinuations against Arthur, he dared to proffer me his odious love. Oh, Madame, I was angry! A woman cannot bear feigned love,—it stings like hatred; still less can she bear to hear one she loves spoken of as I had heard him speak of Arthur. I hardly know what I said, but it must have expressed my feeling; for he tried to taunt me in return with being in love with Arthur and *Aylesford*. I only smiled, and walked on. Then he sprang after me, and vowed I should not leave him so,—that he loved me madly, spite of my scorn, spite of my foolish words. He knew well I did not love Arthur, that I was ambitious only. So was he,—and so determined in his purpose, that he was sure to succeed in it, spite of everything. "For there are few things," he added, "that can stand against my settled will. Beware, then, how you cross it, sweet Lina!" I shook my cloak loose from his hand, for his words sent a thrill of horror through me, and rushed on, speechless with indignation, to the house. Two days after this I became engaged to Arthur. How happy we were!' said Lina, a dreamy expression passing over her face at the retrospect.

"'I told Arthur everything about my home; but I did not tell him of my conversation with Marmaduke in the shrubbery,

because I could not bear to give him the pain which a discovery of his cousin's baseness would have caused him. Marmaduke, I perceived, knew that I had not betrayed him; for one night, as I was sitting at the piano, he thanked me hastily, as he turned over the leaf of my music-book, for a generous proof of confidence. I took no notice of these words, but was conscious of a flush of indignation at the word *confidence*.

"'Arthur and I were always together; we read together, and talked over our past and future lives. Nothing now troubled me. He took all the burden and anxiety of my life to himself, and with his love added a sense of peace and security most exquisite to me.

"'I told him all the miserable story of Frank, and he listened gravely; but though it certainly troubled him, it never seemed to daunt him for an instant. So gentle as he is, nothing ever could shake him. I was so happy then, that I could not feel angry even with Marmaduke; and as he seemed to be willing to forget the past, we became somewhat more friendly towards each other. But if I ever happened to be alone with him, even for a moment, the recollection of our talk in the shrubbery would come to my mind, and the old feeling of anger would spring up again, the effort to suppress which was so painful that I always avoided being with him, unless Arthur were by also.

"'One day there came a letter from my father,—and what its character was you may suppose, when I tell you that it made me utterly forget my present happiness. At the end of the letter he commanded me to return home immediately. It came one

evening: I read and re-read its cruel words till I could bear no more. I saw Arthur standing in the twilight below my window, and went down and laid the letter silently in his hands. When he had finished reading it, he came slowly towards me. I shall never forget his look as he took my hands in his and drew me to him, looking into my face so earnestly. Then he said, in a low, grave voice, "Lina, do you love me? Then we must be married at once, —do not be afraid,—perhaps to-night. I fear your father may follow that letter very soon. You have suffered too much already. You have no one but me to look to. Heaven knows I do not think alone of my own happiness."'

"Lina paused a moment. 'I yielded,' she said. 'I could have followed him blindly then anywhere! So that evening, in the drawing-room, with Mr. and Mrs. Baxter and Marmaduke as witnesses, we were married by a Scotch clergyman (there was no clergyman of our own Church within twenty miles). The ceremony was very simple. As the last words were being pronounced, some one entered the room hastily, and there was whispering and confusion for a moment or two, and when I rose from my knees the first words that greeted me were the intelligence that my aunt was dangerously ill, and had sent a special messenger for me. Late as it was, I prepared instantly to accompany the man back to H–. I was stung with self-reproaches at the thought of my aunt lying, as I fancied, dying without me near her, and peremptorily refused to allow Arthur to accompany me on my long drive.

"'That was the last time I saw him. The next day he was called away on important business, which admitted of no delay. I remained with my poor aunt till her death, which took place at the end of that week, three days after my marriage. Then my parents came for me. My father's manner was unusually kind; my poor mother's expressions of love went to my heart. Frank was not at home, they said, but had gone up to London to prepare for his journey to the East. They had determined to reside for a while in France, and they promised that he should not be informed of my being with them, if I would consent to accompany them. I yielded to their solicitations, parted with my true friend Mrs. Baxter, and crossed the Channel with them. At the end of three weeks I discovered that my father had broken his word and informed Frank by letter of my being with them. Then I fled to you, having heard of the position vacant in your *pension*. I have tried to do my duty here, and to merit in some degree your kindness. With you I am happier than I could be with any one but Arthur. Arthur has learned to love you too: will you read this letter speaking of you?' drawing a letter from her pocket.

"This is it," said Madame, taking one from the pile, and pointing out the passage.

"I am weary of my life, sometimes, without you,—here, where you ought to be,—*your home*, Lina! I wander through the rooms that I have prepared with such delight for you, and think of the time when you will be here,—mistress of all!… When will you come, my wife? I think and dream in this way till I am haunted

by the ghost of the future. I get morbid, and fancy all kinds of dangers that may happen to my darling, so far away from me; and then I am ready to go at once to you and break down all barriers and bear you away.... I thank Heaven you have so good a friend in '*Madame*.' I long for the time to come when I may greet her as one of my best friends for your sake. In the mean time, I have selected an Indian cabinet, the grotesque delicate work of which would please your quaint fancy, which I trust she will accept, if you will join me in the gift. I shall have an opportunity of sending it in a few weeks.... Mrs. Eldridge, my dear old housekeeper, has just been in. She wishes to know whether the new curtains of the little library are to be crimson or gray. She little knows what confusion she causes me! She knows not that I am no longer master here! I tell her I will deliberate on the point, and she retires mystified by my unusual indecision. So write quickly and make known your desires, if you wish to save me from an imputation of becoming, as the good old-lady says, 'a little set and bachelor-like in my ways.' Marmaduke and – come down next week to shoot.... You say, wait till spring, when things will be more propitious for disclosing our marriage. I have also another scheme which will be ripened by spring. I shall disclose our marriage, and propose to your father to make him independent of his ward. No one, certainly, has a better right to do this than his son-in-law; and then–But I hardly dare to think of the happiness that will be mine when nothing but death can part us any more!"

"One evening about this time," continued Madame, "about a

week after Lina had shown me this letter, I came down into the *cabinet de musique* on my way to the garden to take my usual evening walk on the terrace, and saw Lina standing by the piano with her bonnet on and her shawl laid beside her. In her hand she held letters, one of which she had that moment unsealed. She had, I knew, just returned from the post-office.

"'I have a letter here from Mrs. Baxter, Madame,' she said. 'She writes to me in great distress; the two children, Minnie and Louisa, whom she was so anxious to send here, are both ill with scarlet-fever. But here is your letter; she will no doubt tell you everything herself.'

"I took the letter and seated myself, and was soon absorbed in the poor mother's hurried and almost incoherent relation, when suddenly I was startled by a gesture or sound from Lina that made me look up hastily. She stood with the letter she had been reading crushed in her hand, her face wearing an expression of agony. For a moment she swayed to and fro with her hand outstretched to catch a chair for support, but before I could reach her she had fallen heavily to the floor. I called Justine, and we raised her to a chair. I stood by her supporting her head on my breast, while Justine ran for camphor and *eau-de-vie*. It was some time before she recovered her consciousness; she then slowly opened her eyes and fixed them wonderingly on me, but with no look of recognition in them. A long shiver passed over her, and she sighed heavily once or twice as she looked vacantly at the letter on the floor. I was terrified, and seized the letter, to gain, if possible,

some explanation of the miserable state of the poor girl.

"I found that the envelope contained three letters: one from Marmaduke Kirkdale; one from the housekeeper, Mrs. Eldridge; and this scrap from Arthur.

"LETTER OF MARMADUKE.

"'My Dear Madam,—I have heavy tidings to send you. While out shooting yesterday morning in the Low Copse, Mr. –, Arthur, and myself became separated: Mr. –, who had been my companion, keeping on an open path; I going down towards the pool to beat up a thicket and start the game. Arthur I supposed was with the gamekeeper, a little distance in advance of us. Would that it had been so! As I came up to join the others I heard the report of a gun, and hastening towards the spot whence the sound seemed to come, I found my poor cousin lying upon the ground, and at first supposed, that, in leaping the fence, he had received a sudden blow from a branch, which had stunned him; but on kneeling down to raise him, I perceived he was bleeding profusely from a wound in the throat, and was perfectly unconscious. Mr. – came up almost at the moment, and while the gamekeeper and I bore Arthur to a farm-house hard by, he went off to call the nearest doctor. Everything has been done that skill and care could devise. The physician from B– is here, besides Mr. Gordon, the village-surgeon. They pronounce the wound very serious, but still hold out hopes that with great care he may yet recover. There is no doubt that in leaping the hedge, and holding his gun carelessly, my cousin had inflicted this terrible injury on

himself. He is, however, too weak to make it safe to ask him any explanation of the accident. The doctors insist on perfect quiet and rest, and say, that, owing to the unremitting care we have been able to give him, he has done much better than they could have hoped for. If fever can be prevented, all may yet go well; for myself, I believe strongly in Arthur's robust constitution.

"'*Friday night.*—Arthur was doing very well till about two o'clock this morning. The housekeeper and I were with him. Mr. – had gone to take some rest. Suddenly Arthur raised himself, and asked for paper and pencil. I remonstrated with him, fearing the effects of exertion. When, however, I found Mr. –(who had been called in by Mrs. Eldridge) declared his judgment in favor of compliance, I yielded, and, supported by the housekeeper, my cousin wrote a few almost illegible words. He had scarcely signed his name when he fell back,—the exertion, as I had feared, had been too much for him. After this he sank rapidly. He died at six o'clock this morning.

"'I hold my cousin's place now by his death. I am ready to do so fully.

'"I am yours as you will,
'"Mar'ke C. Kirkdale.'

"LETTER OF THE HOUSEKEEPER.

"'Respected Madam—I do not know that I have any right presuming to meddle with affairs that don't belong to my walk in life, far be it from me to do so, especially to one that whatever

they may say seems always like my mistress to me—owing to the last words my poor dear Mr. Arthur ever spoke was, She is my wife, my own wife, let no one gainsay it, which at the time I did not take in fairly, being almost broken down with sorrow, for I had nursed him as a baby, Madam, and loved him humbly as my own son, no lady could have loved him better, which having lost him and all this trouble (my heart seeming fairly broke) makes me write, respected Madam, worse than usual, never having been a scholar, he always wrote them for me, God bless him. You won't think me presuming, Madam, when I say these things never having had the honour of seeing you, but you are the only person who can feel for me under these circumstances of trial more than any others. For to see them going through the house looking into precious drawers and burning papers in the library fire and turning on a person like a Tiger, though he may be a gentleman (though how of that family that always was remarkable gentle spoken I cannot tell.) There never were two cousins differenter. I never can regard him as my master, never. I would sooner leave the old place and beg my bread than feel *him* master after my blessed Mr. Arthur, not that I'd speak evil of the family. But God Almighty reads the hearts of men, and I only hope some may come out clear in appearing at the Judgment, and mayn't disgrace the Family then—for to say that my Mr. Arthur never made a will when twice he's spoke to me upon the subject, always trusting me, Madam, telling me where he kept it in the library, and though it's not to be found the house through, still I know it

must be somewhere, for I'd trust his word against a thousand. I shall ask Mr. – to forward this present not knowing your address, he is a kind gentleman and a true friend. I send you the little scrap of paper with the last words he ever wrote. *Some* may say it's no good and unreadable, but I took care that them that didn't value it didn't get it, though they did search everywhere, and looked so black when it couldn't be found being in my pocket at the time. I present my services, honoured Madam, and my dutiful affection for the sake of him that's gone.

"'Elizabeth Eldridge.'

"LETTER OF ARTHUR.

"'Only a moment or so left to me. Goodbye, my Lina! I am dying—and without you near me. We have waited so long! It is hard to leave you alone in the world, darling. Come and live here—your own home. If you had been here but one day, things might have been otherwise. Take care of the poor—keep Mrs. Eldridge with you, she is faithful and true—true—she knows—God keep you, darling. I am so weak—there is no hope.

"'Arthur Kirkdale.'

"For three days Lina lay on her bed almost without giving a sign of life,—her face rigid and colorless. She refused to eat, and only when I myself used my authority with her did any nourishment pass her lips. On the evening of the third day I became alarmed, and determined to send for a physician. I told Justine to despatch one of the servants for Dr. B–, but to request

him to come after five o'clock, when I should have returned from vespers, as I wished to see him myself. I gave my directions to Justine as we stood together at the foot of Lina's bed, in so low a whisper as to prevent, as I thought, the possibility of her hearing me. Great, then, was my astonishment, when, on leaving my room, ready for church, I met Lina on the staircase. Her face was very pale, and she clung to the banisters for support as she descended. Before I could express my surprise, she said,—

"'I feel very much better, Madame, and if you please will call the class for English lesson at six.'

"I told her she must go back to her room,—that she should not have risen without my knowledge.

"'I must have occupation,' she replied; 'it is much better for me.'

"I felt she was right, and let her go down,—and that evening she held her class as usual. So she continued, day after day, her accustomed round of duties, with all her usual precision and care. Her self-control annoyed me. She passed to and fro in the house, her face pale and wan, though with a composed expression, and all my earnest entreaties that she should seek rest or relaxation were met by the same calm refusal. Saturday came, and I was glad to see she showed something like interest in the prospect of the letters from England that would arrive that day, and begged me to allow her to go as usual to get them at the post-office. I willingly acceded to her request, thinking the fresh air and sea-breeze would do her good. She returned with several letters,

and brought them to me, seeming to desire my company while she read them. One was from Marmaduke, one from Mr. R–, her husband's lawyer in Lincoln. The former puzzled me; it was vague and threatening, and yet there were expressions in it almost befitting a love-letter. Lina read it to me with hardly any change of expression, but dropped it from her fingers as she finished it, with a look of mingled indifference and disgust. The grave, business-like letter of the lawyer had still less effect upon her. I read it to her,—for, although in English, I had no difficulty in making out every syllable, so distinctly was it written, and with such legal precision. It informed Lina that Mr. R–felt some apprehension of her having trouble in substantiating her marriage, that his conversation with Mr. Marmaduke Kirkdale had been (although somewhat vague on the part of the latter) wholly unsatisfactory. This, and the fact that no will had as yet been found among her husband's papers, made him fear that she might be involved in lengthy and perhaps annoying legal proceedings. At the close, he desired her to write out a careful account of all the circumstances of her marriage, as it was most important that he should know all the details of the case.

"'These things weary me so!' said Lina; 'but it does not matter,' she added, sighing; 'for *his* sake I must do this.'

"The few contemptuous words in answer to Marmaduke's letter were soon written, and she then began her reply to the letter of her lawyer. This seemed to cost her a great effort; she sighed frequently as she wrote, and at the end of two hours, as

she finished the last words, her head fell on the sheet of paper before her, and she burst into tears. I could not try to check this outburst of grief, knowing that it must be a great relief to her overtaxed system after the strain of the last few days. She was soon again calm, and resumed her writing. A letter to her parents, informing them of her secret marriage and sudden widowhood, was next written, and Lina, in her plain bonnet and shawl and closely veiled, set off with the three letters to the post-office."

Here Madame paused. She smiled faintly.

"I find that I have become again unconsciously, interested in Lina, as I have told her story, and I hesitate to approach the *dénoûment*; but"—and she sighed delicately, not sufficiently to disperse the smile—"I must go through with this, as Lina herself used to say. One night about this time I had been writing late, and it was past midnight when I descended with my lamp in my hand to go the round of the class-rooms, as is my wont before retiring to rest. I paused, as I passed down the school-room, opposite the *Sainte Croix*, and repeated my *salut* before the Holy Emblem. As I finished the last words, my eyes fell on a small slip of paper lying on Lina's desk, on which my own name was written three times, in what appeared my own handwriting,—Jeanne Cliniè La P–re. A cold shudder ran through me, as if I had heard my name in the accents of my *double*. Obeying a sudden impulse, I opened Lina's desk, and seized the papers within. Uppermost lay a thick *cahier*, in which, in Lina's writing, were what at first seemed copies of all the letters she had received from England within

the last few months. There were also facsimiles of letters to me from Mrs. Baxter, Mr. A. Kirkdale, and others. Then there were draughts of the same letters, written in the various handwritings with which I had become familiar, as those of Lina's and my own English correspondents. Here and there were improvements and corrections in Lina's own writing. Below these lay piles of letters,—a bundle of ten letters of my own, forming part of my correspondence with Mrs. Baxter, and which I had intrusted to Lina at various times to post. These were without envelopes, and simply tied together. I sat there for more than an hour, stupefied by this strange revelation; and then, taking the bundle of my own letters addressed to Mrs. Baxter, I went to my room.

"Next morning, when I descended to the school-room, I glanced, in passing, at Lina, and thought I perceived a slightly fluttered, disturbed expression in her face; but I continued the usual routine of the morning's work without speaking to her. After class was over, I sent for her to come to my room. I myself was much disturbed; *she* was perfectly calm and collected; but as I laid the bundle of my own letters to Mrs. Baxter on the table, and demanded an explanation of their being found in her desk, she turned pale, and snatched up the packet and held it tightly. To my question, she answered that I evidently did her great wrong, but she was used to being misunderstood; that the kindness I had shown her entitled me to an explanation, which she would not otherwise have given.

"'It is a weakness that I am ashamed of that has caused this

trouble,' she said. 'I have sat up in the lonely nights and read and re-read my letters, and then I began to copy them, copied even the handwriting, till I grew very perfect in it, and then I could not bear to destroy any of those precious words, but kept them, as I thought, in secret,—but now some one has *basely taken them from my desk*, and brought them to you. As for your letters to Mrs. Baxter, there are, I see, only one or two here. Give me only time and you shall have that cleared up also. I will write to Mrs. Baxter, beg her to explain how she let these letters get out of her possession, and ask her to inclose all the rest of your letters to her. I will take care that her answer shall come *through the post-office*, and not, as heretofore, inclosed in a letter to *me*; so that you may feel quite sure that there is no mistake, Madame La P–re.'

"I felt baffled and guilty before her; and the next three days were most uncomfortable. I could not but feel *gênée* with Lina, while she maintained the character of wounded innocence. The evening of the third day, Justine handed to me a large packet which the postman had just brought, and upon which there were ten francs to pay. It was directed to me in Mrs. Baxter's well-known handwriting. I tore open the cover, and a shower of letters fell on the table. *All* my letters to Mrs. Baxter, and one from herself, entreating to know the reason of this 'singular request of dear Lina's.' I was disconcerted and relieved at once, when, turning the wrapper listlessly in my fingers, my eye suddenly caught, on the reverse side, and *printed* in large letters, these

words,—'This packet was sent to the Postmaster in Bristol to be reposted to –.' That was the end of it. I had paid ten francs for learning the agreeable fact that I had been duped,—for the satisfaction of knowing that for two years and a half I had been wasting my sympathy and even tears on a set of purely imaginary characters and the little *intrigante* who had befooled me.

"When I showed Lina the printed words on the wrapper, she turned very pale, but maintained a stubborn silence to all my reproaches.

"'How could you deceive me so?'

"'I don't know.'

"'What reason *could* you have?'

"'None.'

"'Lina! was there a particle of truth in anything you have told me?'

"'No, Madame.'

"This was all I could get from her; but as she left the room, she turned and said, looking at me half reproachfully, half maliciously,—

"'I suppose we had better part now. At any rate, you will at least own that I have interested you, Madame!'

"She left me two days afterwards, and the last I heard of her was in the situation of companion to a Russian Countess, with whom she was an immense favorite. She made some effort to gain possession of these letters; but I reminded her, that, as they had been written exclusively for my benefit, I considered I had

a right to keep them. To this she simply answered, 'Very well, Madame.'"

It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to add that the story of Lina Dale is told here precisely as related to us by Madame La P–re, of course excepting the necessary changes in the names of places and persons. The three letters are not copies of the original ones in the possession of Madame La P–re, but a close transcript of them from memory,—the substance of them is identical, and in many instances the words also. The extraordinary power shown by Lina Dale in maintaining the character she had assumed and sustained during two years and a half was fully carried out by the skill and cleverness of her pretended correspondence; and in reading over these piles of letters, so full of originality, one could not but feel regret at the perversion of powers so remarkable,—powers which might have been developed by healthy action into means of usefulness and good.

CHARLES LAMB'S UNCOLLECTED WRITINGS

FOURTH PAPER

Lamb's time, after his manumission from India-House, seems to have hung rather heavily upon his hands. Though the "birds of the air" were not so free as he was then, I fear they were a great deal happier and vastly more contented than our liberated and idle old clerk. Though in the first flush and excitement of his freedom from his six-and-thirty years' confinement in a counting-house,—(he entered the office a dark-haired, bright-eyed, light-hearted boy; he left it a decrepit, silver-haired, rather melancholy, somewhat disappointed man, whose spirits, as he himself confesseth, had grown gray before his hair,)—though, when in the dizzy and happy early hours of his freedom, Elia exultingly wrote (and felt) that "a man can never have too much time to himself," the honeymoon (if I may so express it) of his emancipation from the

> "Dry drudgery at the desk's dead wood"

was not fairly over before he felt that man's true element is

labor,—that occupation, which in his younger days he had called a "fiend," was in very truth an angel,—the angel of contentment and joy. Doctor Johnson stoutly maintained by both tongue and pen, that, in general, no one could be virtuous or happy who was not completely employed. Not only the bread we eat, but the true pleasures and real enjoyments of life, must be earned by the sweat of the brow. The poor old mill-horse, turned loose in the pasture on Sundays, seems sadly to miss his accustomed daily round of weary labor; the retired tallow-chandler, whose story has pointed so many morals and adorned so many tales, would have died of inertia and ennui in less than six months after his retirement from business, had not his successor kindly allowed him to help on melting-days; and methinks the very ghosts of certain busy and energetic men must fret and fume at the idle and inactive state of their shadowy and incorporal selves; nor, unless—as some hope and believe—we are to have our familiar and customary tasks and duties to perform in heaven, could their souls be happy and contented in Paradise.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.