

pointed heirs keeps him long out of his inheritance. As probably but few of our readers are familiar with George Sand's style, we give an extract which will be sufficient to give an idea of it. This occurs when the hero himself, unable to obtain his baronetcy, is earning his living by working in the mines:—

Christian tried to make himself happy by working hard, and doing good to others; for happiness is what man always seeks, even when he sacrifices himself. He took care of the sick and wounded in the mine. When accidents occurred, he, with heroic courage, was always the first to hasten to the spot, and he taught the workmen, moreover, to guard against these terrible dangers by exerting ordinary common sense and prudence. He tried to refine their manners, and to cure them of their fatal passion for brandy, the too fruitful source of quarrels and fights that often terminated in the terrific duel with knives in vogue in this part of the country. They both loved and esteemed him; but, since he devoted all his wages to helping cripples, orphans and widows, he remained poor.

"Decidedly," he often said to himself, as he stepped into the bucket to descend to the bottom of the immeasurable shaft, "I was born a seigneur—that is to say, as I understand it, the protector of the feeble—and for that reason I am not permitted to live in the light of the sun."

"Christian," cried the inspector, one day, through the speaking-tube at the frightful mouth of the mine, "stop working for a while, and go to the bottom of the inclines, to receive some visitors, who want to see the large halls. Show them round in my place—I have no time to come down."

As usual, Christian lighted the great resinous torches which are kept ready in all parts of the excavations, and went to meet the visitors. But when he recognized Minister Akerstrom and his family, and Lieutenant Osburn with his young bride, Martina, leaning upon his arm, Christian handed his torch to an old miner whom he knew, and, saying that he had been seized with cramp, begged him to conduct the visitors in his stead. Pulling down his tarred cap over his eyes, he stepped back, rejoicing in his inmost heart to see his friends happy, but unwilling to be recognized, lest they should be distressed about him, and should make known his situation to Margaret.

He was about to withdraw, after having listened for a moment to their cheerful and animated conversation, when Madame Osburn turned saying:

"Why does not Margaret come? The little coward will never dare cross that plank bridge!"

"Oh, you were very much afraid yourself, my dear Martina!" replied the lieutenant. "But you need not be anxious; M. Stangstadius is with her."

Christian, forgetting all about his cramp, ran swiftly along the steep, vaulted passage that led to the plank bridge, which was really very dangerous, and which Margaret was to cross in company with M. Stangstadius, the man of all the world who knew best himself how to fall to advantage, but not, perhaps, the most capable person in the world of protecting others.

Margaret was really there, hesitating and dizzy, together with Mademoiselle Potin, who, hoping to encourage her young friend, had already crossed the planks quite bravely, with the assistance of M. Stangstadius. The lieutenant returned to assist them, and to quiet his wife; but, before he could reach the spot, Christian stepped up, took Margaret in his arms, and crossed the subterranean torrent in silence.

Certainly Margaret did not recognize him, for she shut her eyes tightly to avoid beholding the chasm beneath. He put her down near her friends, intending to make his escape as quickly as possible, but Margaret, who was still frightened, tottered, and he was obliged to take her hand, and to draw her away from the precipice. His fingers, blackened by his work, left a mark upon the young girl's delicate green gloves, and he saw her, a moment afterwards, wipe it off carefully with her handkerchief, while saying to her governess:

"Give some money quickly to that poor man who carried me."

The poor man had run away with his heart a little swollen; he was not angry with the young countess for liking clean gloves, but he said to himself that it was quite impossible for him, for his part, to have white hands.

He returned to the forge, where he was having some tools made after an improved pattern, suggested by himself and approved of by the inspectors; but after an hour's labor, for he often lent a hand himself to help on his men, he heard the visitors returning, and could not resist his desire of again seeing the young countess. She had seemed to him a little taller, and greatly improved; beautiful enough, indeed, to madden the blindest and sulkiest of the Cyclops.

As the voices again became more distant, he entered, without any precaution, a gallery through which the party would be obliged to pass, when suddenly, in a brightly-lighted hall, he met Margaret face to face. Now that she had become a little accustomed to the terrific noises and gloomily sublime aspect of this subterranean world, she had recovered her courage, and was coming forward alone in advance of the others. She trembled on seeing him;