

I own it was wrong. Then, in a feigned voice, I said, 'I have come far, very far!' 'Holy father!' said my uncle; 'Heaven preserve my senses, he died long ago!' 'Can I sleep in peace? Think of the pains of purgatory!' 'Alas! alas! I will have masses said! All shall yet be well!' again spoke my uncle. 'It is necessary,' I replied; 'give me my money, the fifty thousand francs of my mother's estate.' He started—ghosts are not often money-seekers; but rising, he placed the key in the iron safe, and counted the *billetes de Banque* upon the table. I continued the extravaganza. Getting them into a heap, I took the whole and withdrew backwards, closing the doors carefully behind me. All this was wrong, very wrong, doubtless; but the folly of old Thérèse put the farce into my head, and my uncle is perchance to blame that I carried it on."

"Bah!" said the uncle, "you tell a good story, Hyppolite, but you don't tell the whole story; but I will say nothing further about the matter. Let Mr. Vandeweyer draw the quittance."

The Communal Judge was now called to the table, and the charges against the Captain being formally withdrawn, a discharge for fifty thousand francs was legally given and attested.

"Now, then, said the soldier, "we are once more friends. Let us have breakfast." He held his hand to his uncle, who shook it heartily.

"This is to be a day of forgiveness," remarked the Priest, "*beati sunt pacificati*. Your uncle asks your pardon. The old man has done you much wrong; his intentions were, however, good."

"*Mille tonneurs!* what now!" exclaimed the Captain, "more explanations?"

"Yes," pursued the Priest, "prepare for a surprise."

"Another ghost," chimed in the uncle.

"A restoration," said the Priest.

"A discovery," said the Judge.

The Captain turned from the one to the other to catch, if possible, in the changes of feature, the key to the joke, but all looked sadly serious—truthfully serious. "*Sacre!*" said he, at last, jumping up and stumping round on his wooden leg, "here's a precious riddle."

"Wait a while," said the Priest, solemnly, "and we will solve it for you. The mercies of God are great, my son; he has preserved to you—"

"*Au nom de Diable*, out with it!" burst in the irritable soldier.

"Swear not," continued the Priest, "but down on your knees and thank God, the saints, and the blessed Virgin," (here he devoutly crossed himself and looked upward,) "for the past, and prepare to receive your daughter."