

luxuriant climbing roses. In Barbe's garden the air is sweet with the breath of the great variety of flowers, which in this climate unfold with a tropical profusion; and even as I write, there comes to me on the breeze the intoxicating fragrance of the white jasmine. The palisade, also of stout cypress wood, is overshadowed here and there by the dark plumes of the palmetto, the paler green of the banana-tree, and the gray-tinted foliage of the oak. In the near-by orchard grow fine pomegranates, peaches, figs, and pears, while around about, almost as far as the eye can reach, extends my rich farm.

Within, the house is brightened by the happy faces of young people, — a fair half-dozen, ranging in age from our eldest son, who reached his majority awhile ago, to the little Babette, who is as like to Barbe in her childhood as is one sweet spray of arbutus like to another.

As the years pass, however, it seems to me that ever my Barbe grows more beautiful, and so I tell her.

Thereat she laughs, and shows me how the elves of time have stolen the gold from her hair, leaving in its place a sheen of silver; and how the first silken gowns I bought her will not now meet by a good two inches around her ample waist, the fabrics of Atlas which, by my order, were sent down for her from Quebec to Le Détroit, and which, woman-like, she has treasured to this day.

But what though 't is as she says! If her soft hair wants something of its olden brightness and luxuriance, and her whilom youthful grace is merged in a matronly comeliness, still to-day she is far handsomer than she has ever been.

For with the coming of every little child to our