

proportion to the danger she dreaded. Her nights were often sleepless, or disturbed with frightful visions, in which her father or lover were presented to her in situations of frightful horror, and when the day returned, it usually brought with it such tidings from abroad, as put to flight all the little calmness she had struggled to acquire.

It was towards the close of a dark November day that she had sat long at her chamber window, watching intently the windings of the distant road, for the return of Léon, who had been absent from home since morning, and she longed for his cheering presence, to relieve her anxious and oppressed heart. The gathering dusk of twilight soon rendered every object indistinct, and with a feeling of disappointment, she arose and descended the stairs.

When she reached the hall, she saw with dismay that it was filled with men, and that in their midst stood her father, distributing to each, arms and a quantity of ammunition. They were his tenants, and had come hither to receive from the hands of their seigneur, those weapons, which once raised in open warfare, were to produce a train of consequences, fearful, and terrible indeed. Millicent heard her father enjoin upon them secrecy for the present, and firmness when the moment of action should arrive; she marked the excited and savage countenances of the peasants, hitherto so quiet and inoffensive, and as her ear caught their low, muttered threats, she shuddered with undefined terror, and hastily entering the library, sat down in the deep recess of a window and burst into tears.

There she wept long and silently, but her bursting heart felt relieved by her tears. Suddenly she was aroused from her grief by the sound of horses' hoofs galloping rapidly up the long avenue of elms that led to the house, and the next moment she heard the voice of Léon greeting her father in the hall. The peasants had departed to their homes and for a few minutes St. Vallery and Léon remained in low and earnest conversation, then together entered the apartment where Millicent sat, hidden within the folds of the crimson window curtain, from observation. The first words which her father said, in reply to a previous observation of Léon, electrified her.

"We must arm and join them Léon, and that too without delay."

"There seems, indeed, no other alternative," Léon replied; "but in my opinion this premature resort to open hostilities will prove the ruin of our cause."

"Tush, boy!" exclaimed St. Vallery impatiently, "name not ruin with a cause like ours.

Utter but the cry of liberty, and look which way you will, a host of patriots answer to the call!"

"Yes," said Léon, "and were they armed, disciplined, and experienced, as are those whom we oppose we might be sure of victory. But now—"

"And what now?" interrupted St. Vallery. "With all their ignorance and destitution, have you not told me that these valiant patriots beat back the trained soldiers of England from the attack of St. Denis?"

"It was no attack, sir; I do not think it was intended as such," answered Léon. "They were fired upon from the houses as they marched into the village, which was no fair combat; besides this, the soldiers were in a sad plight—worn out by a dreadful night march, in which they were exposed to cold and rain—and many of them were literally barefooted, having lost their boots in the mire of the roads."

"I cannot but admire your eloquent defence of those friends of peace and justice who came to enforce their oppression at the point of the bayonet," replied St. Vallery with a sarcastic sneer. "But let it pass—we are discussing the question of to go, or not to go, and methinks as we have taken hold of the ark of liberty, it becomes us through weal and woe to 'grip fast.' The war has unquestionably commenced, whether prematurely or not, future events must decide—but the time has come for all true lovers of freedom to buckle on their armour, and declare themselves soldiers of the Republic."

A suppressed sob from Millicent at this moment betrayed her presence, and while her father with a look of annoyance paused in his rapid walk through the apartment, Léon, pale with emotion, raised the heavy folds of the window curtain, and drawing forth the weeping girl, led her gently to a sofa. The startling intelligence, now first made known to her, that open hostilities had actually commenced, proved too much for her fortitude. Dwelling as she did in the midst of discontents and party excitement, she had heard much to alarm her, but she had never seriously apprehended the extremity which had now been resorted to. She trembled at the result, and seemed to see as with a prophetic eye, the ruin of her father's fortunes, the destruction of Léon's hopes, of her own happiness, and a train of appalling evils which she dared not contemplate.

Thus suffering with all the acuteness of a tender and loving heart, she could not cease to weep—while Léon bent fondly over her, soothing her with gentle and endearing words, and praying her to be comforted. St. Vallery, on the contrary,