

the Calais dépôt at the same hour; the passengers for both were in the same waiting-room; I was excited by the novelty of the situation — was less occupied with the distinction of trains than with the remembrance of the happiness that had filled my childhood, and the sorrow that had withered it in this pleasant land of France. But, when one is in a dépôt, with a journey in prospective, one must think of nothing but getting into one's compartment. As it happened, most unusually, the tickets had not been inspected before the train left, and my first intimation was the polite English-French query of M. Le Conducteur (the politeness was the French, you understand; the wording, English). I felt myself wronged. What right had the train to go to Amiens, when my through ticket was for Paris? What protection was there for the travelling public, if conductors lingered at the dépôt café, where I certainly had seen this one drinking, and flirting with a waiting-girl? How, and when, was I to get to Paris on an errand where life and death might be concerned? French is almost my native tongue; Fenton and I always speak it; my questions were pointed and energetic. In answer to the first two, a polite bow, a non-committal '*Ah! mere, ne sais pas.*' To the last a suggestion that I should stop at Ste. Cécile, where there was a good inn, and where I could soonest take a train for Paris. Of course the 'Fates had uttered' it, and the 'fixed destiny of things confirmed it.' That night, instead of being in Paris with my father, I was at Ste. Cécile with my dead mother. I stood before a blazing fire in the low, many cornered kitchen. I was drying my clothes, wet through by the rain through which I, accompanied by the Aubergiste, had walked from the dépôt. The old life all came back to me the moment we entered the court-yard; I saw it in the smooth round stones, the old chestnut, the withered grape-vines. An almost irresistible inclination seized me to run out by the orchard, down the bank, and look for the moss and ferns I had left by the Somme so long ago. The waves of memory, surging stronger and stronger, dragged up in a tangled mass scene upon scene of a life which I seemed to have lived ages ago, with the wonder at the changes. Where was Francis? where Dame Lucille? Surely that little, thin, middle-aged man was the same Baptiste who had carried Mignonne on his shoulders. Surely the rosy-cheeked woman, who had gone to prepare my room, was the saucy Céleste. And I so changed, they did not know me. All had changed; all