

heterogeneous old iron. In justice to Sauviat, it should be said that he never knew how large and how notorious the association became; he only profited by it to the extent of the capital which he invested with the famous firm of Brézac.

At last the Auvergnat grew tired of roaming from fair to fair and place to place, and settled down in Limoges, where, in 1797, he had married a wife, the motherless daughter of a tinner, Champagnac by name. When the father-in-law died, he bought the house in which he had, in a manner, localized his trade in old iron, though for some three years after his marriage he had still made his rounds, his wife accompanying him. Sauviat had completed his fiftieth year when he married old Champagnac's daughter, and the bride herself was certainly thirty years old at the least. Champagnac's girl was neither pretty nor blooming. She was born in Auvergne, and the dialect was a mutual attraction; she was, moreover, of the heavy build which enables a woman to stand the roughest work; so she went with Sauviat on his rounds, carried loads of lead and iron on her back, and drove the sorry carrier's van full of the pottery on which her husband made enormous profits, little as his customers imagined it. La Champagnac was sun-burned and high-colored. She enjoyed rude health, exhibiting when she laughed a row of teeth large and white as blanched almonds, and, as to physique, possessed the bust and hips of a woman destined by Nature to be a mother. Her prolonged spinsterhood was entirely due to her father; he had not read Molière, but he raised Harpagon's cry of "*Sans dot!*" which scared suitors. The "*Sans dot*" did not frighten Sauviat away; he was not averse to receiving the bride without a portion; in the first place, a would-be bridegroom of fifty ought not to raise difficulties; and, in the second, his wife saved him the expense of a servant. He added nothing to the furniture of his room. On his wedding day it contained a four-post bedstead hung with green serge curtains and a valance with a scalloped edge; a dresser, a chest of drawers, four easy-chairs, a table, and a looking-glass all bought at different times and from different places; and till