

chose for his manorial residence, one of the most picturesque, but also one of the most secluded islands of the group, and thereon built not a crenelated tower, not a baronial castle of the middle ages, but a plain, massive stone house,—a prison, as it proved subsequently, either for himself or for his son; tradition has failed to elucidate this point. There, for many a long year, far from the eyes of men, a solitary prisoner was immured. His keeper, perhaps his friend, his relative, for aught that can be stated to the contrary,—was a woman, a woman of rank and wealth. The prisoner, it was said, was insane. The question was often asked, “Was he born so, or if not, what produced or led to his insanity? Were there no Lunatic Asylums in France fit to receive him? The replies to these queries are likely to remain for ever amongst the unfathomed secrets of the past. Dark surmises were circulated. Who was this new *Masque de Fer*? Why was he immured between four massive walls, with no sweet sounds to beguile captivity’s lonely hours, save the voice of the pitiless north easterly storm or the monotonous murmur of the waves on the granite rock wherein he was entombed, in a living grave? The name of the fair occupant of the Manor was Madame or Made-moiselle de Granville.* The prisoner was

* His patent runs thus:—“To the Sieur de Granville.