

LITERATURE.

THE GARLAND OF HOPS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

CHAPTER I.

THE TEACHER.

The modest and virtuous Frederick Hermann, teacher in the Commune of Rochemont, passed a happy and tranquil life in the faithful discharge of the meritorious duties of his profession. He was much delighted with the children, and took great pleasure in trying to instil into their young hearts a love for virtue and religion, at the same time that he instructed them in all things suited to their capacities. Content with scanty emoluments, he would not have exchanged his humble dwelling for a palace; everything around him told of the benevolence of his heart; and his zeal for the progress of his pupils knew no bounds.

The village of Rochemont is situated in a gorge, between two lofty, noble looking mountains.—When the virtuous teacher first came to the place, and from afar off beheld the blackened spire of the Church rise sadly into the sky, out of the midst of rocks, trees, and scattered cottages, he experienced a very painful sensation; but his surprise was increased, when he beheld the school house, which was in a dilapidated and ruinous condition, with a pond before the door, through which those who would enter, must pass on stepping-stones.

The interior of the building was in perfect keeping with the outside; the ceiling was blackened with smoke, the floor dirty and disgusting; numerous spider-webs tapestried the walls; the window-glass had not been washed for years, and now scarcely admitted the struggling day-light; a mephitic odor reigned throughout the apartments, and seemed to repel any who might enter with a view of taking up their abode in this abandoned dwelling. The garden, which surrounded the house, had also been neglected, and its poor soil, producing only some useless weeds, scarcely furnished nurture to a few old fruit trees, which stood here and there, with shattered branches, covered with moss and worm-eaten.

At the aspect of a house so filthy and dilapidated, Hermann recoiled with disgust; but nevertheless, he was not entirely discouraged. He exhibited so much prudence and zeal in the discharge of his duties, and in his relations with the inhabitants of the commune, that in a short time he won their affections; the children particularly cherished him as a father. The people were soon able to institute a comparison between his method and that of his

predecessor, and with unanimity they resolved to rebuild the school-house.

Touched by this proof of their approbation and kindness, the teacher redoubled his exertions, and devoted himself still to his labors, with a view to the progress of the children and content of the parents. In his leisure moments, he occupied himself in the garden; he cut down the old trees, planted others of a better kind, dug up the ground, sowed flowers and vegetables, and thus derived advantage from the whole enclosure. He drained away the waters of the pond, and converted the ground into parterres, where, in a short time, the eye was charmed by a carpet of green verdure, and a variety of beautiful flowers. The work of this industrious man was crowned with great success. Being the son of a gardener, he had acquired some knowledge of that profession, and consequently, succeeded far better than he could have done under any other circumstances.

Three years had glided by since his arrival at Rochemont, when, at the time of the vintage, he went back to the city, in order to unite his fortunes with a young woman, by name of Theresa Hilmer, who was virtuous, intelligent, and had a good trade. Her father was employed in some public service, and had been able to confer a useful education upon his daughter. The marriage, for which both parties had prepared themselves by confession and a devout reception of holy communion, was blessed by the curate of the city, and after the religious ceremony, Hermann and his young bride went to partake of a frugal but cheerful repast at the house of Theresa's uncle, who was first singer of the parish church. They did not give way to any extravagant display, deeming it more prudent to keep their money for future use, than to spend it for a costly supper and a dance.

The young wife, who remembered to have seen the old school-house at Rochemont in which her husband lived, felt some repugnance at the idea of departing to shut herself up in that unhealthy and filthy dwelling; but when she beheld it, she was filled with surprise and delight.

Every thing was changed; the windows, increased in number and enlarged, shone with the brightness of crystal; the walls white as snow, were ornamented with several pictures, of which one represented Jesus Christ blessing a group of children, another St Cecilia patroness of music, a third the holy family. The floor had been well washed and covered with a fine yellow sand.—Against the wall and between the two windows, stood a secretary surmounted with a glass book-case, and containing the little library of the teacher. In front, stood a beautiful piano, made like the secretary, of walnut wood, a table covered with a cloth, six straw bottomed chairs, and other objects,