

shone out ; and we entered a room that seemed, with its bare walls and rafters, its scanty stool and table and lamp, the very counterpart of that other room. In one wall appeared the dingy curtains of an alcove, closely drawn ; and the shutter stood open, until, at the child's request, expressed in the same words, I went to it and closed it.

We were both so well muffled up and disguised, and the light of the lamp shining upwards so completely distorted the features that I had no fear of recognition, unless the King's voice betrayed him. But when he spoke, breaking the oppressive silence of the room, his tone was as strange and as hollow as I could wish.

"The shutter is closed," he said ; "but the shutter of God's mercy is never closed !"

Still, knowing that this was the crucial moment, and that we should be detected now if at all, I found it an age before the voice behind the curtains answered "Amen !" And yet another age before the hidden speaker continued, "Who are you ?"

"The cure of St. Germain," Henry responded.

The man behind the curtains gasped, and they were for a moment violently agitated as if a hand had seized them and let them go again. But I had reckoned that the unknown, after a pause of horror, would suppose that he had heard amiss, and continue his usual catechism. And so it proved. In a voice that shook a little, he asked, "Whom do you bring to me ?"

"A sinner," the King answered.

"What has he done ?"

"He will tell you."

"I am listening," the unknown said.