

slept in the schoolmaster's hut, and the two ladies in the schoolroom. It was luckily fine weather, and they were not very uncomfortable, and I had not had such a treat for a long time. Three masses were said the next morning in our poor little chapel. It was the first time such a thing had happened. And they were all such kind and pleasant people."

Little did the good father guess, as he good-humoredly talked on in this manner, what anguish he was causing his guest, who, in a voice which any one who had known him would have thought strangely altered, inquired the names of these travellers.

"Father Poisson and Father Roussel, and M. and Madame Latour, and M. Macon. I did not catch the name of the other lady."

"Was she tall and fair?"

"Yes, I should say so—tall, certainly."

"Young and pale?"

"Rather pale, I think; but about ladies' ages I never know—yes, I suppose she was quite young. Are you acquainted with them, my dear sir?"

"I know some of them by name," d'Auban answered pushing away the dish which had been set before him; he could not have swallowed a morsel. There are circumstances which heighten singularly the acuteness of certain trials. He knew that he might still have to part from Madame de Moldau, though during the last few days hope had been gradually gaining ground in his mind; but he had never anticipated that such a separation would take place in an unexpected and abrupt manner. That she should leave St. Agathe during his absence, and that he should thus lose the opportunity of speaking a few parting words to her, was more than he could endure; it almost upset his fortitude. The father noticed his paleness and want of appetite, and the way in which he unconsciously pressed his hand against his temples, as if to hold their throbbing.

"I am sure you have a bad headache," he kindly said; "come out into the air and take a stroll—it is a beautiful night,"

D'Auban accepted the proposal, for the hut was very close. The fresh air did him good. He took off his hat, to let it blow on his forehead. He tried to think that the second lady of the party might not, after all, be Madame de Moldau,

though the others were the people she was to travel with; and only one lady had been mentioned by Father Maret's correspondent.

As they passed a small cluster of cabins the priest pointed to one of them, and said, "Ah! there is the bedroom of our ladies. They had to sleep on mats with a bundle of moss for a pillow."

The door was open. D'Auban stood on the threshold, and gazing into it, thought: "Did she indeed sleep in this spot two days ago, worn out by fatigue and sorrow, or did she lie awake thinking of the past and of the future, without a friend near her? Or is she now glad to escape from that love I could not conceal, and which perhaps frightens her away? Perhaps she is seeking other assistance than mine to recover her position. She will not, I suppose, accept the services of one who has dared to love her. It would not have been wrong, however, to wait for my return. . . . She might have spared me this suffering." Absorbed in these musings he was forgetting his companion, and was only roused by hearing him exclaim, "Ah! what have we here! See, one of those poor ladies has dropped her neck-handkerchief. It will be no easy matter to restore it, seeing we have no postal service in this part of the world!" D'Auban till that moment had had a lingering hope that Madame de Moldau had not after all been one of the ladies of that party; but now he could no longer have a doubt on the subject. The blue and black silk handkerchief in the hands of priest was the very one he had often and often seen round her neck. He mechanically stretched out his hand for it. It was one of those little things connected with the remembrance of past happiness which affect the heart so deeply.

When the evenings grew chilly after hot sunny days, or when in the boat or the sledge on bright frosty nights, he used to remind her to tie her handkerchief round her throat—her white, slender, swan-like throat. It had a trick of slipping off. He saw her in fancy smiling as she was wont to do, on these occasions. So vivid was this recollection that a deep sigh burst from him.

"You are suffering very much; I am certain of it," said his companion. "you must let me prescribe for you; like most