

CHAPTER XXXII

MADAME D'ANGUILHON was too much a woman not to know that the neighbourhood of Christiane's house was very bad for her son just then. She asked the doctor to order him away to Blonay at once, and Jacques did not raise any objection.

His convalescence had been interrupted by the shock he now had, so that for some weeks neither the open air nor the forces of the spring season took any effect on him.

Jacques had seen Madame de Blanzac for the last time in excellent health. Her death seemed to him, at times, impossible, and at other times, mysterious. He did not believe in the alleged congestion of the lungs. The more he reread her farewell letter, the more convinced he was that she had tried to die, and that something was being concealed from him. He could see her distinctly, as she was after that terrible scene. He saw her walk away through the long suite of reception rooms, gradually look smaller, and then disappear altogether. This impression, standing out so curiously in his brain, gave him a sensation of utter desolation. He did not know that his love had then received its death-blow and that he would never have found the same happiness again with Christiane. He did not know how merciful God had been in calling her back to Him. He could not possibly know