

ing to Herbert Melfast—and take thy poignard with thee! I love Dilah, who is more beautiful than the daughters promised for the eternal pleasure of the faithful; I was loved by her. We were about to be united. Dilah shed tears that my burning lips tried to dry up. The master said to me, if thou returnest with the blood of the king upon thine hands, I will watch over Dilah for thee."

The eyes of Mahmoud turned towards heaven, and he still spoke more to himself than to his two companions, as he continued—

"I went to Dilah, at the hour when the great trees cast their shadows on the terraces of the City of the Pure, and said to her, I will return—wilt thou wait me! Dilah gave me her timid brow and replied—I will wait for thee."

"And as I left the next day, at the rising of the sun, I heard the voice of Dilah murmuring behind the flowery hedge, 'return quick!'"

"From that day," continued Mahmoud el Reis turning towards the Englishman and the Frenchman, "I am a body without a soul—my spirit remains in the shady gardens of the Pure. When the sun sets my eye seeks the same cherished star in the sky that Dilah watches, while waiting for me; but you have nothing of ours here,—not even our stars. If the blood of the queen will give me the blood of the king, then the queen must die, in order that I may return to my betrothed!"

Amaury was about to reply, but Melfast restrained him quickly.

"He has allowed us to speak," whispered Melfast, and he is noble among his brothers.

"I have promised to the priest with white hairs," continued the Syrian, "to carve him a statue; eight days are necessary to enable me to keep my promise. In eight days, if I have finished my statue, and if the queen is dead, thou shalt show me by what road I may arrive at the breast of the king!"

Eight days, for men of the temper of Amaury Monteul is an age—they reckon on the events of the day, without a thought of the day after.

"In eight days," replied Amaury, "if the Danish woman is no more, I will do what thou askest me."

At Monteul's gate there stood a horse of the purest Arab blood, richly caparisoned, in the Persian style; two black slaves waited at the stirrups. Mahmoud leaped into the saddle, and gently stroked the shining neck of his horse, while the slaves handed him his stone-cutter's tools, and then took the road to the purlieus of Notre Dame.

All Paris was waiting, with curious anxiety, the arrival of the celebrated image-cutter that had been engaged by Maurice de Sally to sculpture a statue of the Virgin—to complete the twelve signs of the Zodiac, which were to ornament the chief portals of the cathedral. As soon as Mahmoud made his appearance, the crowd became more dense and tumultuous than in the morning.

"Jean Cador! Jean Cador!" they shouted on all hands, "that's the good artisan who is going to give us an image of our lady!"

The Syrian, on his magnificent Arab, and followed by his black slaves, passed through the press of his admirers, taciturn and proud. On the arrival of Jean Cador at the chief door of the church, two deacons presented themselves and conducted him to a temporary atelier that had been constructed for him on a level with the first gallery; Cador entered it with his two negroes—the doors were closed—leaving the disappointed crowd grumbling like the audience of a theatre upon whom the curtain has been let down too soon.

"I suppose that's too great a lord to work in the open air, like ordinary people," said one.

"Does he think we want to learn in his school?" said a jealous artisan.

"We have not been among the Pagans," said a third; "we work as our forefathers worked, and without the assistance of apprentices like demons. I hope that man will bring no misfortune on the church, or on those who are building it!"

At that moment they could hear from the little work cabin the dry noise of the hammer on

the granite, and the splinters of stone flying off in every direction, striking sharply against the sonorous wooden partition; it was as though twenty men were working there with all their might. Artisans and bourgeois looked at each other, and more than once crossed themselves, repeating the words of the stone-cutter, "God forbid that that man bring us any misfortune!"

CHAPTER VII.

Through the large trees of a vast and irregular garden, planted on the side of a hill, might be seen the towers of an immense old abbey. It was at that season of the year when the large trees are still bare, but in which the shrubs are just putting forth their verdure. Wandering through the parterres whose compartments represented hideous monsters and and fabulous animals—might be seen a young damsel walking slowly, and followed by two women in the costume of nuns.

The latter had their faces covered with long veils—they spoke not a word, and regulated their steps by those of the young girl who preceded them. The young girl had just descended the moss-grown and half-ruined steps which led from the cloisters of the abbey into the narrow paths that wound through the bushy parterres. She appeared a little older than the sister of Eric, the mason; but she was at that time of life when a few years only add additional charms to beauty: and she was therefore, by so much, more beautiful than our pretty Eve. If we were not afraid of perpetrating a comparison too academical we should say that Eve was the rose-bud and the other the full-blown flower; further, we may say that there was a resemblance between our charming unknown, and if not strictly a family resemblance, they were unmistakably of the same country.

Both were blondes, with the same soft golden hair—both had blue eyes—both were slender and well formed; Eve's figure was perhaps the stronger—but the recluse of the convent was more graceful and high-bred. For this delightful unknown was a recluse, and the two nuns who accompanied her, might well pass for her jailors.

The cloisters, towers, and vast dwellings, whose austere profiles could be traced through the trees, belonged to the abbey St. Martin-hors-de-Murs—the nuns were there only by a favour granted to royal authority, for the convent belonged to the monks of St. Benoit, whose severe rules forbid the presence of women within their abbeys.

The beautiful young girl was the sister of Canute, King of Denmark, and was the wife of Phillip Augustus, King of France, Queen Ingeburge.

And yet, though we have called her a young girl, it was not from forgetfulness, for Ingeburge was as much a maiden as on the day when she quitted the old forests of her native country, and sailed for the land of France, with a heart full of hope and pride.... to be the queen.... to be the well-beloved wife of the most glorious sovereign in the universe!

It was only necessary to see her to read in her face the virgin purity of her soul. The poor queen had wept much; but she still preserved a little of that childish *insouciance* which can sometimes smile through its tears. It was early in the morning and the sun was playing over the newly-opened leaves of the lilies and white thorns.

On first coming out of her cell the head of the young girl-queen was bowed sorrowfully upon her breast, as though she was overwhelmed with her grief and solitude. History has told us that she loved her ungrateful husband with a profound and undivided love. And even those who have elevated the coarse Agnes into a heroine of romance, have never been able to tear from the truthful brow of poor queen Angel the sweet and poetic aureole that adorned it.

And for all the scorn, and all the injustice, and all the honors which were heaped upon her unworthy rival, and which were so many bleeding outrages, the loving young queen had always, in the depths of heart, pardon and devotion for her lawful lord. She loved: and in that slow martyrdom, which was consuming her youth—

one word could re-animate—one caress would have made her happy.

She thought, alas! by times, of the fate of other women who were wives and mothers, and of the smiles of their cradled infants, while she, though queen, was neither a wife or mother.

In days gone by, she had her brother, her companions, her country. Phillip Augustus had robbed her of all these, and had given her, instead, a solitary and cold prison.

And wherefore? what had she done to that king? At the first call she had thrown herself into his arms, all radiant with joy. She had brought him her youth, her beauty, and all the exquisite perfections of her heart and soul;—and in return for these priceless gifts—the king had struck her down, without anger as without pity, and given her a living death.

And still she loved the king.

We have said that she was sad on leaving her cell, but as she left the gloomy arches of the cloisters, the fresh air struck her bent brow and she raised her beautiful blue eyes, full of melancholy, and when her pretty foot had once touched the gravel of the parterre, a smile already shone through her sadness.

Like those first flowers, called by the country people "pierce snow"—which, by the aid of the sun, thrust their heads through the frozen ground, queen Angel raised her head, and her lungs drew in that sweet air so different from the air of her prison. She gave an involuntary start, and seemed about to run over the grass plats, still wet with dew.

The two nuns gave a cough, which reminded poor Angel that she was the queen, and she resumed her slow and measured step.

But the breeze shook gently the branches of the odoriferous cytises—the amorous birds were singing in the green bushes—and the heart of Angel expanded in spite of herself, and in spite of her two austere duennas—a voice seemed to speak to her from the depth of her soul and promised her happiness.

Alas! if she believed in these promises it was the hopefulness of childhood—hoping ever. What happiness could the inhospitable and treacherous land of France give her—that land which, instead of the promised power and felicity, had given her death and abandonment?

All at once she uttered a cry—a veritable cry of joy.

The discreet nuns gave another warning cough; but the queen gave a spring light as that of a fawn and cleared at one bound the wide border which separated the parterre from the grass plat.

"Madame! madame!" shrieked the two nuns. But the young girl run over the grass, with her hair flowing over her shoulders, and her white robe streaming in the wind. She was no longer queen Ingeburge, but Angel, daughter of the North, and free, as formerly, in the fields and woods of her own country.

The two nuns, who had quickened their steps to overtake her, found her kneeling on the grass, and as they were opening with a duet of reproaches, she turned towards them with a smile on her lips and tears in her eyes, and in her hands she held a bouquet of small blue flowers.

"Pardon me, my sisters," said she, with the gentleness of an infant, "I could not resist; for I saw from afar, that my *vennen* (forget-me-nots) had blown."

"What does that signify," began one of the duennas, and the other supported her companion's question by a sharp glance.

Angel looked at them with astonishment.

"What signifies my *vennen*!" exclaimed she, clasping her beautiful white hands, "can you ask me that, my sisters? You know not, then, that this is the first flower which makes its appearance upon the terrace of our palace at Copenhagen; it is the flower of souvenir—it is the flower of our country." Her voice trembled as she bore the bouquet to her lips.

"Oh! my poor country!" she murmured, "oh! my cherished flowers; see how weak they are, and how their stems bend. That is because they are not the native flowers of France. They are exiles, like me; perhaps they suffer like me. Oh! my sisters," she added, bursting into tears, "your