

announcing victory and defeat—burst not on the ear; but then the billiard-room was crowded—the newspapers and periodicals, profuse as was the supply, were nearly all engaged—every one found amusements suited to their tastes.

Some dozens, remembering the claims of friendship neglected for the pleasures of preceding days, devoted the morning to writing. Several ladies had recourse to needlework; and two very gifted persons employed their pencils—Miss F—, in finishing a picturesque view, with Mr. P—'s handsome cottage in the foreground—the other, Madame La Marquise de Lisle, painted wild flowers she had collected in the woods; specimens, she told me, to be exhibited, at a future day, in her saloon, at Paris.

Never was there being more formed to cheat time of weariness, and make life a pleasant holiday, than this lovely French woman. The brilliancy of her conversational powers, joined to manners the most *séduisant*, made me forgetful of all else. I passed the morning beside her, and was delighted with the originality and piquancy of her remarks, and the vividness of the descriptions she gave of the different countries she had visited. The anecdotes related by her, illustrative of the peculiar customs of the South Americans, were most amusing; but what particularly gained my attention was a sketch of her own life. On expressing admiration of the beauty and perfection of her style in painting, she carelessly said, in reply to my compliment:

"Yes, the flowers are well enough. I have learned to paint; but the acquirement will never repay the cost. The price, do you know, was tears. At twenty I knew little of drawing, or indeed of any thing else. Hundreds of pounds had been lavished on my education; yet at that age I had to learn assiduously the little I know, that I might earn my daily bread."

I could with difficulty restrain a start of surprise at such an avowal. I knew, as a matter of history, that the French noblesse had suffered the darkest reverses of fortune; but the vicissitudes of the early revolution had passed, and society had regained its equilibrium, long before Madame La Marquise made her appearance on the stage of life. It was probably in reply to my look of extreme astonishment, that she continued:

"You are surprised, my dear friend. Well, as I have excited your curiosity, I must gratify it. What do you say to a glance over my little history? it will serve, at least, to pass the morning; but, that you may have it in your power to reconcile apparent inconsistencies, I must, like all autobiographers, begin with my father."

LIFE OF MADAME LA MARQUISE DE LISLE.

"My father was an officer in the French army. He passed his best days in the service of his country, and bore with him, in after years, honorable testimony to the gratitude with which she repaid the devotion of her sons. As a simple soldier, he had commenced his military career; but whilst Napoleon's star was in the ascendant, he was raised, through the usual gradations, to the rank of colonel. A short time previous to the invasion, he married a dowerless orphan, and love cemented a union, which was, unhappily, of short duration. My mother died, whilst I, her only child, was but a few days old. My father promised to remain faithful to the memory of a wife he had tenderly loved, and to consecrate his days to the daughter she had left him. But, though religiously adhering to his vow, the first years of my childhood were passed far from his presence, under the eye of his aged mother: there was bestowed on me all the affectionate care that the concentrated love for her absent son and helpless granddaughter could inspire. I had just attained my seventh year, at the period of the second restoration. My father, on that event, was dismissed the service, and came to reside at his maternal home. Of course, his person was unknown to me; but his inexhaustible tenderness soon created a corresponding love in my tender mind, and it was not without shedding a deluge of tears, that I was separated from him, when it became necessary to place me at school. He had chosen one of the most celebrated seminaries in Paris—recommended me particularly to the care of the mistress, with instructions to procure for me the best masters in every branch of education. My kind old grand-mamma died: he then came to live in Paris. I was now the only object of his affection, and his love became an idolatry. He took up his abode, as near as possible, to my school, so that he might have the satisfaction of seeing me every day; and every day he made me recount to him all my little joys and sorrows, delighting in whatever delighted me, and sympathizing in all my childish griefs. The complaints sometimes made of my want of application were coldly listened to by him; but the slightest praise sent the flush of pleasure to his brow, and his eyes would sparkle with paternal pride. The most trivial restraint imposed upon me appeared to him an act of barbarity: he could not support the thought of my suffering in any way. Truth to say, the great affair of his life was my happiness, my immediate, my instant happiness. Proud of the little I knew, he allowed me to learn just what I pleased, without reflecting on the effect this injudicious indulgence must have on my future life.