

SPRING TIME

of Roche-de-Frêne's princess. That great lady took it with her enigmatical smile.

In the castle-garden Alazais watched the crocus bloom, the hyacinth and the daffodil. Gilles de Valence sang to her, and sometimes Raimon de Saint-Rémy, or, when no troubadour was there, Elias of Montaudon was brought upon the greensward to sing other men's verses. Knights came and went. Her ladies made a bright half-ring about her, and she and they and the knights and poets discussed the world under the star of Love.

Sometimes Audiart came into the garden, but not often. There was much that yet was to be done. . . . She was oftener in the town than in the castle, often away from both, riding far and near in her domain, to other towns and villages and towers. But as the spring increased and the green leaves came upon the trees, order was regained. The sap of life returned to the veins that had been drained, time and place knew again hope and power. The princess looked upon a birthland that had lifted from a pit, and now was sandalled and ready for further journeying. She came oftener now to the garden, and at night, from her chamber in the White Tower, she watched the stars.

In the town whose roofs lay below her, the craftsmen were back at their crafts. Again they were dyeing scarlet and weaving fine webs and working in leather and wax and metal and stone. Merchant and trader renewed their life. Roche-de-Frêne once more hummed as a nive that produced, not destroyed. It produced values dense and small, but so it