

classical, it was at least sound and practical. From that time my lot was cast. The proprietor had a daughter. He gave her to me in marriage. The firm name became 'Bernard et Pomereul.' It continued so for three years. Then Bernard died, and my name alone was on books or invoices. I succeeded him. I had three children, and our happiness was, indeed, enviable, when the greatest grief of my life came upon me. My wife died. I thought at first I should never be consoled for her loss, but though I have never forgotten her, time has softened my sorrow. My children remain to me—Sulpice, whose intellect is far in advance of his age, Xavier, whose good heart redeems his folly, and Sabine, the angel of our house."

"Ah, yes," said Nicois, "you are a happy father."

Pomereul sighed, and resumed.

"What was done for me, the poor child of Paris, without any other recommendation than his own desire to do right; I have always tried to do for others. I have striven to be rather the father than the master of my workmen. If I do all that is necessary in paying them their salary, I love to do more for my own satisfaction. You must see some time how I have organized their dwellings at Charenton, near the factory. Each family has its own house, which is simple and comfortable. There is water to purify and take away the bad properties of the gas, which gives it warmth and light; a little plot of ground to supply it with vegetables and to grow flowers; the children can likewise raise rabbits there, and the good wife, chickens. I have, besides, a hospital for the sick, a crib for nursing infants, a workroom for girls, an infant school for the little ones. My factory really includes a complete city, of which I am chief magistrate."

"And of which your son Sulpice is the apostle," said Nicois.