

neyman who had worked at handicraft twenty years before in their mansion. Delacour received them with all the attention which their generous solitude deserved.

Still he was uncertain what judgment to give; but the discussion of the case, particularly the examination of the officer, convinced the Elector, not only that he had not the least part in the firing of the pistol, but that it was an accident, caused by the double trigger of the fire-arm, which Delacour presented to the jury for inspection; and being himself an excellent mechanic, he was able to explain its make to them, and prove that the slightest motion was sufficient to discharge it. This opinion, expressed with candor and honesty, prevailed over the doubts entertained in regard to the innocence of the accused; and, according to the authentic proof given by his advocate, that the two champions had not known each other before their quarrel; and that by this means the officer could have had no personal interest in depriving his adversary of life. No one could look upon a truly brave man, as the author of an assassination, and his acquittal was voted unanimously.

Many persons observed, when Mr. Delacour pronounced, in presence of God and man, that the accused was innocent, a lively and deep-felt emotion of joy beamed in his countenance. This decision was confirmed by the clamorous applause of the people, who are often in such cases the most honest and enlightened judges. Early the next morning, the Marquis, accompanied by Theodore, who was then seventeen years of age, went in a carriage and four, to see Mr. Delacour, and thank him, and express their deep-felt gratitude. They were ushered by an old French domestic, named Francis, into a dining room, where the father and mother, with their children, were finishing an excellent breakfast, with that contentment and innocent gaiety which ever characterize a family living in perfect harmony. Delacour offered a seat to the Marquis, and received him with the deference due to his rank.

He at first received from him all those protestations of esteem and attachment, so familiar in the mouth of a great lord who thinks he humbles himself, and then a pressure of the hand, which produced a slight convulsive movement, that Delacour tried to conceal by smiling, not yet daring to purify by water this new plebeian touch. In a short time the conversation became animated, and the honest Philip showed such frankness and dignity that the Marquis, carried away by this irresistible

ascendancy of the truly good man, pressed anew Delacour's hand, and, rising to leave him, threw his arms round his neck and embraced him. The moment had now come—it was impossible to let so favourable an opportunity pass. Addressing the old servant, he said,

"Francis, give the gentleman water, and all that is necessary for him to wash his hands."

The old man left the room, and soon returned, bringing with him a basin with water, and a napkin on his arm.

"What does that man mean?" said the Marquis, stupified, and suspecting him for having been the author of the trick at election time.—"I cannot imagine upon my honour."

"It is a law which you imposed upon yourself," answered Delacour, smiling, "and you have made me feel but too well the distance that exists between us, for me ever to forget it."

"How is that? On the honour of an honest man I do not yet understand."

"Do you not remember that you were one day seen washing your son's face, to wash away the disgrace of a kiss given by a young journeyman, named Philip?"

"Heavens! if it were he," cried out Theodore, regarding him attentively from head to foot.

"The lesson, you will agree, was too severe to be forgotten, and fearing lest the kiss you have just given me should tarnish your noble blood, and that your gentleman's skin should be tainted by my plebeian hide, I thought it my duty to make you atone, by this purification, such a forgetfulness on your part—which the shades of your ancestors might murmur at."

These words, pronounced with a frank and cunning gaiety, caused the Marquis a strange surprise. He was forced to recognize the young carpenter in this wealthy man, who was honoured with public esteem, and had become one of the members of parliament.

Motionless, and with downcast eyes, he knew not what to answer, but Theodore, coming towards Delacour, and pressing him to his arms, returned the kiss he had received, and, pledging him eternal friendship, repaired the fault committed by his father. The prisoner whom Delacour had with such joy released, embraced him in his turn; crying,

"Heaven owed you so just a satisfaction."

The Marquis himself was obliged to confess that he had deserved such a lesson, when Delacour, pressing his hand with affection, begged that all might be forgotten; then, turning towards his children, he said,