

and wrong, and you must be aware that policy sometimes renders a disguise expedient, and harmless too, if neither honor nor principle are compromised."

"I like a disguise occasionally, of all things," said the boy archly; "are you quick at detecting one?"

"Sometimes I am," returned De Valette; "but—now by my troth!" he exclaimed, starting and gazing intently on him—"is it possible you have again deceived me?"

"Nothing more likely," answered the other carelessly. "But hush! M. La Tour and the stranger with him are observing us. See! they come this way, not a word more, if you wish to please me."

"Stay but one moment," said De Valette; "I must know for what purpose you are thus attired, and bearing this grotesque part."

"Well, I will tell you the whole, though you might suppose it was only some idle whim. I wished to see Antoinette married, and as Madame La Tour thought it would be out of character for me to appear in a catholic assembly, I prevailed on one of the torch-bearers to transfer his dress and office to me: this is all,—and now are you satisfied?"

"Better than I expected to be, I assure you; but for the love of the saints be careful, or this whimsical fancy of yours may lead to some unpleasant consequences."

"Never fear; I enjoy this Proteous sort of life exceedingly, and you may expect to see me in some new shape before long."

"Your own shape is far lovelier than any you can assume," said De Valette; "and by these silken locks, which, if I had looked at them, I must have known, you cannot impose on me again."

"Twice deceived, beware of the third time," he said laughing; "and breaking from De Valette, he was in a moment on the threshold of the door."

"Here is a newly made priest, as I live!" said La Tour, catching him by the arm, and drawing him back a few paces. "But methinks your step is too quick and buoyant, my gentle youth, for your vocation."

The boy made no reply, but drooping his head, suffered a profusion of dark ringlets to fall over his face, as if purposely to conceal his features.

"This would be a pretty veil for a girl," said La Tour, parting the glossy ringlets on his brow; "but, by our Lady! these curls are out of place on the head of a grave churchman; the shaven crown would better become a disciple of the austere Father Gilbert. What! mute still, my little anchorite. Speak, if thou hast not a vow of silence on thee!"

"And if I have," he replied, pettishly; "I must break it, though it should cost me a week's penance!"

"Ha! my lady's *soi-disant* page!" exclaimed La Tour, struck by the voice, which in the momentary excitement he had not attempted to disguise; and drawing him towards a light, he bent his searching eye full upon the blushing face.

"I pray you let me begone, my lady waits for me," said the page, impatiently.

"A pretty antic trick," continued La Tour, without regarding his entreaty, "and played off, no doubt, for some sage purpose. Look, Eustace!" he added, laughing; "but have a care that you do not become enamored of the holy order!"

"Look till you are weary!" he exclaimed with vexation; and dashing his scarf and rosary to the ground, he hastily unfastened the collar of his long, black vestment, and, throwing it from him, stood before them dressed as a page, in proud and indignant silence.

"Why, you blush like a girl, Hector," said La Tour tauntingly, "though I think, by the flashing of your eyes, it is rather from anger than shame. Look, Mr. Stanhope, what think you of our gentle page, and *ci-devant* priest?"

Mr. Stanhope was already regarding him with an interest which rendered him heedless of the question: he met the eye of Hector, whose cheeks were instantly blanched to a deadly paleness, rapidly succeeded by a glow of the deepest crimson. An exclamation trembled on Stanhope's lips, but he repressed it, and their embarrassment was unobserved. The page quickly resumed his usual manner, and turning to La Tour, gaily said—

"I have played my borrowed part long enough for this evening, and if your own curiosity is satisfied, and your freinds are sufficiently amused at my expense, I would again crave permission to retire."

"Go, foolish child," said La Tour, "and doff your silly disguises; it is indeed time to end this whimsical farce." With this permission, the page gladly retired.

The Fort of St. John's, on that evening, presented a scene of unusual festivity. Mons. La Tour permitted his soldiers to celebrate the marriage of their comrade, as best suited their own inclinations, and their mirth was the more exuberant, from the privations they had of late endured. Even the joy which the return of their commander, with supplies, a few days previous, naturally inspired, had been restrained within due bounds, while the New-England vessels were unloading their supplies, from respect to the peculiar feelings of the people who had afforded them so much friendly assistance. These vessels had