

signification, ledges. I have various and places they promise, and king is precisely giving has given yellines who pose of an angel, and crows. As to her, Neuville-le- not a clump of to shield it from the heat of the country is as bare and in its vicinity half-league, you an oak. How- es they show a

and her guide led and penetrat- scape gradually more joyous ours' walking, oods of Val- horizon. In spite his aunt, Pierrot thinking of his that he foresaw take part in the mp. Although limbs, at inter- d to ask mercy, deafened his ear course. Going a mournful eye t the sun began in the surround- s of his heart he e went as far as his Sunday joys. forest an infernal and of this young

ly, putting upon e held under his follow this wide ou right to the n hour you will

l to escape; a having detached e which did not g girl drew from she courteously ing him for his generosity, upon g, Pierrot felt and perhaps he a cry of his cou- dered in the dis- le of Neuville-le-

Bois, like the mast of a ship aground upon a beach. By an effect of mirage that fancy alone can explain, he believed he saw upon the church square a dozen comrades playing at pitch-pennies and quoits. At this, Pierrot held back no longer. He took the piece of silver, thrust it into his pocket and took to his heels as if the arch-fiend pursued him.

Passing under the branches, the young girl felt that sensation of delight that is experienced on going out of an oven and plunging into a bath of cool water. Her first movement was to thank God, who had sustained and protected her in the long journey that she had just accomplished, and to pray Him to render hospitable the door at which she was about to knock. As she did not doubt that the chateau was close at hand, she seated herself at the foot of an oak and speedily allowed herself to be diverted by the enchantments of the forest; for, indulgent and good-tempered, thou art the friend of all ages; thou consolest the aged; even children, when thou smilest upon them, forget a parent's loss. All around her was harmony, freshness and perfume. The slanting rays that through the foliage the sun sent expiring at her feet, admonished her that night was approaching. She rose and followed the path, expecting to see appear at every instant facade and turrets. But she found that this path which Pierrot said led to the avenue of the chateau, in reality only opened into a transverse path. The child listened attentively to hear some sounds of a neighbouring habitation; she heard only the dull hum which runs in the depth of the woods at the close of day. She ascended a knoll and saw around her only a vast ocean of verdure. Committing herself to the care of Providence, she continued her walk. When, disheartened and confused, she wished to return upon her steps, it was impossible to recognize the footpath through which she had passed. Although the sun had not yet left the horizon, the forest was already filled with shadow and mystery. The birds no longer sung, the moths beat the air with their downy wings; the sinister concert of the osprays commenced. It is especially in such an hour as this that despair, sorrow and solitude weigh with all their force upon the soul of the unfortunate. Discouraged, besides powerless to help herself, the poor little one threw herself upon the grass and her tears flowed afresh. She had untied the black ribbons of her straw bonnet; while she wept, the wanton wind played with her blonde hair that a last lingering ray gilded.

She remained in this position some min-

utes, overwhelmed with despair, when she perceived a beautiful horse of Limousin breed, which she had not heard approach, and which remained at the distance of a few steps, motionless as at the time of stopping; in the saddle was a rider who regarded her with the surprised air of a man who is not accustomed to such meetings, at such an hour and such places. She arose by an abrupt movement; then she was immediately reassured by the smiling kindness of the look thrown upon her.

'Monsieur,' said she, 'God has sent you to my assistance. If you are of this country, you must have already seen that I am a foreigner. For two hours I have wandered aimlessly in this forest, without being able to get out or knowing where I am going; perhaps you can do me the favour of putting me on my way.'

'No doubt, mademoiselle,' answered a voice almost as soft as that of the young girl; 'but then I must know where you wish to go.'

'To Valtravers, monsieur.'

'To the chateau?'

'Yes, to the chateau of Valtravers.'

'You could not have made a luckier application, mademoiselle, for I myself am going in that direction; and, if you please, I shall have the pleasure of accompanying you.'

At these words, without waiting an answer, the rider sprang lightly from his saddle. He was a young man in all the glow of the spring-time of life, slender, graceful, with an eye proud and gentle; over all he possessed an indescribable grace of bearing. His hair, shining like jet, in excessive luxuriance, curled naturally about his temples. Carelessly knotted around his neck, his cravat of gray silk streaked with blue, instead of concealing, only heightened the ivory purity of his complexion. A brown riding-coat clasped his slender and supple form; his white pantaloons fell in ample folds about a small boot, arched and slender, armed with a heel of shining and sounding steel. His bearing was at once unaffected and charming.

'Does this belong to you, mademoiselle, he inquired, pointing with the end of his riding-whip at the humble package resting upon the grass.

'Yes, monsieur, it is my whole fortune,' responded the stranger, with a sad smile.

The young man took the bundle and fastened it securely to his horse's saddle; that done, he offered his arm to the child, and they both proceeded in the direction of the chateau, followed by the beautiful and