

girl to postpone her peregrinations until nightfall. A lamp was always sent in with her supper, and without an instant's delay, she set forward upon an adventure which she trusted would enable her to quit for ever a roof which had now become odious. The stairs conducted her to a considerable depth below the surface of the earth, and ended in a passage which she imagined, from the direction it took, must lead across the street. Advancing along this path, she was excessively alarmed by a noise which seemed to proceed from the very bowels of the earth; she paused,—her heart palpitated, and the lamp nearly dropped from her hand; but reflecting that the din of the city, the tramp of horses, and the roll of carts, would come with a strange and deadened sound upon her ears, she soothed her apprehensions by attributing the extraordinary clamour to natural and common causes. Somewhat re-assured, she moved forward, and arriving at the end of the passage, another flight of stairs presented itself: these she ascended, and arrested a second time by an alarming sound, she clearly distinguished the hum of voices now close beside her. She paused again, and perceiving a chink in the wall, discovered that she was close to the forge. The stairs ran along the side of a subterranean apartment immediately behind the blacksmith's shop; and Linda was now a witness of a secret assembly in which the blacksmith himself, divested of his beard and other disguises, appeared to be the principal personage. A large excavation yawned in one corner of the room, through which the party ascended and descended, apparently giving orders to workmen below. Linda listened breathlessly to the debate, and stood aghast with horror at the words which struck upon her ear.

"Dolts! cravens! drones!" exclaimed the blacksmith, "had ye possessed the spirit of your brave comrades who work from the Burgundian camp, we should have had the mine completed, and the two avenues joined long ago. Tell me not of obstacles! I never found one yet. 'Death! the duke our master will escape the toils of Louis, and be at the gates to wrest the glory of the enterprise from our too tardy hands. By the eleven thousand virgins, and the three Kings of Cologne, I swear, that if the city be won without the assistance of the troops of Charles, I will make you dukes and princes in the land; ye shall drink the health of Lothaire Lechtveldten from golden goblets,—ay and that of the blacksmith's bride. So bestir yourselves, ye loitering knaves; give me the splendid prize I pant to grasp. Here's to Liege and Linda!"

The terrified girl heard no more, but fled in haste from the spot, resting not a moment until she gained her own chamber; and now at no loss to account for the noise made by the pick-axes and spades, which were cutting a passage through the solid earth. Filled with tumultuous emotions, she was distracted by the multiplicity of feelings contending for mastery. Until this moment she never suspected that the slightest danger threatened Liege; she, in common with the other inhabitants, considered the attempt of Lothaire in the light of an idle bravado, undertaken merely to annoy the citizens; for even in the event of the hostile approach of the Duke of Burgundy, no one apprehended any serious evil, since all previous quarrels between that prince and his fickle subjects had been made up, after a little bloodshed, by the payment of a heavy subsidy; the duke taking care to exact no more than the city was very well able to give. But now if Lothaire should be permitted to execute his project unmolested, Liege would be sacked and placed at the mercy of a triumphant and relentless foe. Could she look tamely on and witness the destruction of a town which had given her shelter in her adversity?—the plunder of its sanctuaries, and the massacre of its inhabitants? No, no; she would fly to the council and apprise them of their danger; her hand was already raised to give the alarm; but the image of Lothaire, pale, bleeding, expiring, by cruel and lingering torture, swam before her, and she paused. Was there no means of saving him from an infamous and painful death? Must he be cut off in the career of his glory,—he whose gay sallies had made her smile when smiles were strangers to her lips?—he who was so beautiful, and so valiant, whose kindness and courtesy she had so much admired, and who had, even while anticipating the consummation of all his hopes of conquest, pronounced her name with tenderness? She could not, would not betray him. Yet, again, how could she answer it to her conscience to allow him to proceed unchecked in his ambitious purpose? Blood would be upon her soul,—the cry of the widow and the orphan would rise up in accusation to heaven against her: she must be answerable for all the violence committed by exasperated and brutal victors, and she sickened at the bare imagination of all the horrors which would befall the hapless wretches sacrificed to her affection for a man, perchance unworthy of her love. Pressing one hand upon her forehead, and the other over her heart, to still the throbbing pulses which caused its deep emotion, she strove to collect her scattered thoughts, and endeavoured to strike out some middle course by which she might preserve the city, and secure the life of the gallant Burgundian. Plan after plan presented itself, only to be rejected. Linda knew that she dared not trust to the most solemn oaths taken by the rulers of Liege; they had been too often perjured and forsworn to regard the disgrace and infamy attached to their broken pledges, and she

dared not hope that they would forego their long baffled revenge upon one whom they feared and hated more deeply and more bitterly than the prince of darkness himself.

Morning came, and found the agitated girl still undecided how to act: but an incident occurred which determined her to trust to the foes who threatened the gates, rather than to the ungrateful people of Liege.

Franz, whose greatest fault consisted in his too ardent zeal in the service of the government, was arrested at break of day, and dragged to prison upon some frivolous charge; his false friend, Wilkin de Retz, being the accuser. Aware that the disgrace of a person who had been entrusted with a share in the administration, was invariably followed by death, Linda felt assured that her only chance of rescuing her kinsman from the block, rested in a successful negotiation with Lothaire. She was fortunately not ignorant of the art of writing,—an accomplishment rather uncommon in that period,—and she therefore needed no assistance in her communication with the Burgundian. She acquainted him with the extent of the knowledge which she had acquired, taking care to conceal the means, and the circumstance of its being limited to her own breast; as she justly deemed that if he knew that his secret had been penetrated by one person alone, and that a woman, he would contrive some means to prevent it from spreading further. She proceeded to declare her resolution to divulge the whole affair to the council, unless he and his followers would sign a solemnly attested treaty, guaranteeing the security of all personal property, and the safety of the inhabitants from injury and insult; which document she required should be deposited at the shrine of the Virgin in the church of Notre Dame.

Determined not to make a confidant, Linda prepared to be the bearer of her own despatch; and attiring herself in the garb of a page, she threw a cloak over her shoulders, and taking a lance in her hand under the pretence of getting a new point, she stole out of the house, of which she was now sole mistress, and repaired to the forge. The anvil sounded loudly as she approached the shop, in which, as usual, half a dozen men were hard at work. The delicate appearance of the new customer,—an appearance which no art could conceal, although Linda had disguised herself cleverly enough,—excited the merriment of the boors who were busy at the forge.

Somewhat abashed by this reception, yet resolved to stand her ground, Linda looked anxiously towards the master smith, and catching his eye, made him an expressive sign. The workmen laughed, and whispered among themselves, repressing however the jests which sprang to their lips; and Lothaire stepping forward, started with dismay and surprise as Linda, in a low distinct voice, pronounced his name, and putting a roll of paper in his hand, retreated; the knight not daring to arrest her passage, lest he should be betrayed by the idlers in the street.

Linda had prepared for every thing; she would not return home lest her footsteps should be watched, but entered a church in which she had already hidden a second disguise. Arraying herself in a cloak and veil, which rendered one female only distinguishable from another by the height and size of the wearer, she proceeded to Notre Dame, and stationed herself at a convenient distance from the shrine, choosing a spot in which she was not exposed to observation.

Many persons passed and repassed during the period of her anxious vigil, and having performed their orisons, before the altar, withdrew. At length the clock struck the appointed hour; she tremblingly approached the spot, and, deposited in the niche which she had named, she discovered and drew forth the answer of the Burgundian. It contained the pledge which she demanded, and although evidently wrung reluctantly from the knight's hand by the exigence of the moment, it was full, complete, and satisfactory; and Linda doubted not that it would be held inviolate, since the honour of Lothaire de Lechtveldten, whose name engrossed the parchment, had ever been unstained.

Returning to her solitary home, Linda, aware that the crisis was at hand, stationed herself at a window to watch the event; having, without exciting any attention, taken care to provide for the security of the house. The usual evening crowd had assembled round the forge, and the same bustle and activity as heretofore prevailed; the blacksmith himself was absent: nevertheless, there was no lack of gaiety,—the loud laugh and the oft repeated burden of some old song, resounded to the clank of the anvil, and the fall of the sledge-hammer. Gradually, as upon former occasions, the assembly dropped off, the fires decayed, and at length all was silent and deserted; the Cyclops, apparently tired of their work, withdrawing to seek a few hours of repose.

Midnight approached, was passed, and all remained still and solitary as the grave. Shortly after the clock had struck the half hour, Linda's eyes piercing the deep shade, detected groups of two and three together stealing out under the shade of the overhanging wall, and dispersing themselves noiselessly throughout the city. As the night advanced, the numbers thus emerging from the forge, and one figure taller, and more commanding than the rest, betrayed the disguised noble to the anxious girl. Soon afterwards a signal struck the watchful Linda's ear: the

chimes of the cathedral had been changed; all still remained profoundly tranquil, and as the silvery sounds floated through the calm night-air, they seemed to speak of peace and security, strongly at variance with the coming strife.

Another hour nearly passed; but then there arose a tumult in the city, at first faint, and apparently no more than might be occasioned by some drunken brawl, but afterwards of a more alarming nature; bells tolled, and were suddenly stopped; windows and doors rattled; a cry of "Treason" ran through the streets, mingled with the clashing of swords and the groans of the wounded. Many who would have bestirred themselves, had they known the real cause, believed it to be a popular tumult, and remained quiescent.

At length the drums beat to arms, the trumpets sounded, but all too late; day dawned, and the bewildered Liegeois found the arsenal and all the principal place in the hands of Count Lothaire's men-at-arms, the garrison disarmed, and the magistrates in prison. The duke's banners waved from every tower, steeple, and pinnacle; and, before ten in the morning, two of the most factious of the burgesses, men who had burned the Duke Philip and his son in effigy, reversing their arms as those of traitors, had been tried, condemned, and executed, by their fellow-citizens, now anxious to make a grand display of loyalty. The heads of these men, mounted upon poles, were stuck up at the principal gates also at the instigation of their late colleagues. No other person suffered, and Franz, liberated from prison by the hand of Count Lothaire, led his deliverer to his sister's feet, and gladly gave his consent to her union with the "Blacksmith of Liege."

THE INFLUENCE OF COOKERY.—"Much, in matters of opinion, depends upon digestion and culinary arrangements. Drinking now is quite out of fashion, and eating is all the rage. By the way, why does not some spirited publisher undertake to put forth a culinary library, in monthly parts? It would do uncommonly well. The English people learned drinking of the Dutch, and now they learn eating of the French. We must take care, that with French cookery we do not imbibe French principles. It is a certain fact, that since French cookery has been so prevalent, the taste for poetry has abated, or rather the poetic genius of the country has been in abeyance. The connexion between cookery and opinions is obvious and clear. I would not carry the refinement so far as the running footman, who lived upon hares' flesh to make him run fast. But is it not a fact that similarity of food produces similarity of opinion? There is an attraction of affinity effected by cookery: they who dine much together generally assimilate much in opinion. It is not an easy matter to dine frequently with a man, especially if he have a good cook, without coming into some or most of his ways of thinking. Furthermore, how observable is the unanimity produced by a public dinner at a tavern. It seems an established fact, a generally recognized opinion, that the English people may be dined into anything. They are dined into liberty, they are dined into loyalty, they are dined into charity, they are dined into piety, they are dined into liberality, they are dined into orthodoxy, and they are dined into heresy. From dinner to digestion the transition is natural. And how much are opinions influenced by, and dependent upon digestion."—*W. P. Scargill.*

TACT AND TALENT.—"Talent is something, but tact is everything. Talent is serious, sober, grave, and respectable; tact is all that, and more too. * * For all the practical purposes of life tact carries it against talent—ten to one. * * Take them to the bar, and let them shake their learned curls at each other in legal rivalry: talent sees its way clearly, but tact is first at its journey's end. Talent has many a compliment from the bench, but tact touches fees from attorneys and clients. Talent speaks learned and logically; tact triumphantly. Talent makes the world wonder that it gets on so fast, tact excites astonishment that it gets on so fast; and the secret is, that it has no weight to carry; it makes no false steps; it hits the right nail on the head; it loses no time; it takes all hints; and by keeping its eye on the weathercock, is ready to take advantage of every wind that blows. Take them into the church. Talent has always something worth hearing, tact is sure of abundance of hearers. Talent may obtain a living, tact will make one. Talent gets a good name, tact a great one. Talent convinces, tact converts. Talent is an honour to the profession, tact gains honour from the profession. Take them to court. Talent feels its weight, tact finds its way. Talent commands, tact is obeyed. Talent is honoured with approbation, and tact is blessed by preferment. Place them in the senate. Talent has the ear of the house, but tact wins its heart and has its votes. Talent is fit for employment, but tact is fitted for it. It has a knack of slipping into place with a sweet silence and glibness of movement, as a billiard ball insinuates itself into the pocket. It seem to know everything without learning anything. It has served an invisible and extemporary apprenticeship. It wants no drilling. It never ranks in the awkward squad. It has no left hand, no deaf ear, no blind side. * * Talent is certainly a very fine thing to talk about, a very good thing to be proud of, a