

Two evenings later, and before I had found leisure to read all of it, François said to me, "Does monsieur think to give my poor little account to the world?" I said I did not. At this I saw his very expressive face assume a look which I took to mean some form of regret. As he spoke he was standing in the doorway, and was now and then mechanically passing a brush over my dress-coat. Presently he said: "I only desired not to have set forth in France, when I am gone, such things as might give concern to M. des Illes, or trouble him if he should outlive me."

I replied that it should never be published; and when, after this, he lingered, I added, "Is that as you desire?" It was not. His reply was simple and childlike, but immense.

"Monsieur will find it entertaining," he said; and I, that this was sure to be the case, and that it were a pity the world should lose so valuable a work. At this his lean face lighted up. Perhaps in English it might some day be of interest to monsieur's friends; and as he understood that the English were given to stealing whole countries belonging to feeble folks, it might seem to them less unusual than it would to people like those of France. But monsieur was not English. He asked my pardon. I kept a grave face, and inquired if it were a treatise on the art of theft.

This embarrassed him a little, and he made answer indirectly: did monsieur entirely disapprove this form of transfer? He seemed to regard it as merely a manner of commercial transaction by which one man alone profited. I returned that as to this na-