

be ascertained at the distant time at which I write, did the suspicions which the night of the Escalade found in the bud survive it. Probably the Corraterie and the neighbouring quarter, ay, and the whole city of Geneva, had for many a week to come matter for gossip and to spare. It is certain, at any rate, that whatever whispers were current in this house or that, no tongue wagged openly against the favourites of the council, who were also the favourites of the crowd. For Mère Royaume's act hit marvellously the public fancy, and, passing from mouth to mouth, and from generation to generation, is still the first, the best loved, and the most picturesque of the legends of Geneva.

And Messer Blondel? Did he evade the penalty of his act? Ask any man in the streets of Geneva, even to-day, and he will tell you the fate of Philibert Blondel, Fourth Syndic. He will tell you how the magistrate triumphed for a time, as he had triumphed in the council before, how he closed the mouths of his accusers, how not once, but twice and thrice, by the sheer force and skill of a man working in a medium which he understood, he won his acquittal from his compeers. But though punishment be slow to overtake, it does overtake at last; nor has the world witnessed many instances more pertinent or more famous than that of Messer Blondel. Strive as he might, tongues would wag within the council, and without. Silence as he might Baudichon and Petitot, smaller men would talk; and their talk persisted and grew, and was vigorous when months and even years had passed. What the great did not know the small knew or guessed, and fixed greedy eyes on the head of the man who had dared to sell Geneva. The end came four years after the Escalade. To conceal the old negotiation he committed a further crime, and being betrayed by the tool he employed was seized and convicted.