

telling him respecting the party which alone could re-establish France in her ancient splendor, and enable her to resume her rank among monarchical governments. He even went so far as to allow the gentlemen of the king's chamber to break out into open invectives against the plebeian candidates. At last a courtier, certain of triumph, and in one of those moods in which pride and presumption fall, pressed affectionately the hand of Mr. Delacour, whom he imagined to have already won to his party. The elector, repressing with some trouble a convulsive movement, which the Marquis took for gratitude at the great honor he had just conferred on him, disappeared in the crowd to execute a project of vengeance, which was suggested by the recollections of the insult he had received when a mere journeyman.

He left the room, repaired to the nearest coffee house, and offered ten francs to any boy who would follow him with a basin, a pitcher of water, and a napkin. His proposal was immediately accepted. He then returned to the enclosure where they were preparing for the election, and seeking the Marquis, who was still busy in obtaining candidates for the ministry, he pointed him out to the boy, at the same time ordering him to go and entreat the lord to wash his hands to purify them from the touch of a *plebeian*. The boy followed to the letter all Delacour's commands, which occasioned the greatest surprise both to the Marquis and the bystanders. Having pressed the hands of a great number of electors while endeavouring to gain their votes, he could not imagine who was playing him this trick.

He then declared to the astonished spectators, that having touched none but honest people, he could not conceive the motive of so cutting a joke. The more his anger rose, the more the boy persisted in offering him the water. The scene attracted a great number of electors, a general laughter prevailed throughout the enclosure, and Delacour enjoyed in silence the vexation and confusion of the Marquis, and was relieved of an oppressed feeling, which had not left him for years. He waited at the door for the boy who had fulfilled his order with such exactness, and gave him double the promised reward, on condition that he would never discover to the lord who was the author of this trick.

Delacour, who was indebted for his fortune to his own industry, had the right of being among the electors of the Seine. Providence had designed him to attend an important ses-

sion in which several flagrant crimes were to be adjudged; there was one in particular which involved the honour and life of a young officer of the King's Guard. This brave young officer had had a quarrel, in a public place, with the Count of Egmont, the eldest son of a French Peer, who, in addition to the impetuosity of youth, held in utter contempt all who could not, like himself, boast of noble birth.—The young officer was the son of a very wealthy merchant, and, without the arrogance and vanity of the young count, was modestly proud, and of a very decided character. They agreed to fight with pistols in the presence of four witnesses. Luck gave the first fire to the count. The officer placed himself at the distance of ten paces, holding his pistol which, having a double trigger, at the moment his adversary was preparing to fire, accidentally went off, mortally wounding the count, who reeled, and, sinking, faint and breathless, cried, "I die assassinate!" The officer's witnesses defended him and swore that their companion was incapable of committing so base an action.

Those of the dying man declared that nothing but the great celebrity of the count for duelling, could have determined the officer to employ such means to avoid an inevitable death. They grew angry, threatened each other, and the family of the dying man wishing to be revenged for so cruel a loss, and convinced from the facts related by his witnesses, that he had been assassinated, prosecuted the officer, who, in spite of the testimony in his favour, and the additional proof of an honourable and irreproachable life, was brought to justice.—Mr. Delacour was appointed head of the jury, composed of several mechanics, whose confidence and esteem he had won. The members of the high family of the deceased were determined to avenge his death, and consequently came to solicit of the Sworn Electors justice and protection, begging him to punish the criminal with all the severity which so great a crime merited.

On the other hand, the relations and friends of the officer hastened to undeceive the honest and impartial Mr. Delacour, and to destroy the fatal impressions which many persons had given him. Among the latter was the Marquis of Almar, whose wife, being both aunt and godmother to the officer, made use of all her influence to preserve this unfortunate young man from the cruel fate which awaited him. The Marquis and Marchioness called several times to implore the support of the head of the jury, in whom neither could recognize the jour-