

king to prevent all further plundering, so it grew strong in its possessions.

With such a line of ancestry to look back on, no wonder that the Baron Regnier was proud. He himself in his youth had shared in the disasters of a crusade. After his return home, he had married a beautiful wife, whom he tenderly loved; but his happiness was of short duration; in three years after their union she died, leaving him an image of herself—a frail and lovely little being, the last flower on the rugged stem of that great house.

A lovely land is the south of France. Two thousand years ago the old geographer called it the Beautiful; and its soft *langued'or* is the very language of love. It was on the shores of the Garonne, in the twelfth century, that the troubadours sang their sweetest songs. Among them was found Pierre Rogiers, who wearied once of the cloister, and so wandered out into the world—to the court of the beautiful Ermengarde at Harbonne, to the palaces of Aragon, at last to the shores of the Garonne, and finding everywhere only vanity of vanities, once more entered the gates of the Monastery and lay down to die. Here too, lived Bernard de Ventadone, who lived and celebrated in his songs more than one royal princess. Here he dwelt in courtly splendour, till he grew weary of all things earthly and yearned for the quiet of the cloister, and wrapping the monk's robe around him, he, too, died in peace. No wonder if Clemence Regnier growing up a beautiful girl in the midst of these influences, should yield her soft promptings of affection. She was the favourite companion of her father; no wish of hers was ungratified; her sweetness of temper endeared her to all around her. She was sought in marriage by many rich nobles of Toulouse, she refused them all, and gave her preference to the younger son of a neighbouring baron—a penniless and landless knight. When the old baron first discovered their mutual attachment, he was at first incredulous, then amazed, then angry. He persistently and peremptorily refused his consent.

The Regniers had for so long married as they had done everything else, only to augment their power and wealth, that a marriage where love and happiness only were considered, was an absurd idea to the baron. This comes of all these

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