

enthusiasm. His patriotism bore him off his feet, and he was translated right in the whirl of the wildest excitement. At Belœil the patriots of the parish had a meeting, and Edgar was chosen their executive officer. There was no use excusing himself, he was only too proud to serve. Then a monster assembly was held at St. Bruno, and he was chosen one of the speakers. He likewise took part in a conclave held at Lacadie, where stirring resolutions were passed, one of which denounced the "bureaucrats" in no measured terms.

All these facts came to the ear of Samuel Varny, and he was deeply grieved at them. He even then foresaw what they would lead to, and, as far as his family was concerned, in that an excess of sorrow and misery they would culminate. His chief care was for his daughter. How cruelly the blow would fall upon her heart! Yet his mind was fully made up, after many misgivings and much anguish of spirit. Probably the young man's absence might prevent the dreadful scene. He sincerely hoped for this, seeing that Edgar had failed to make his appearance for two consecutive Sundays.

But the hope was vain. On the last Sunday in August, just one month after the interview under the maples, the young man drove up to the mansion. He was dressed in his best, and seemed in the highest spirits. The children ran out to meet him, and even before Rosalba, who walked behind them, Agnes had to have the honour of a first reception.

"Mr. Edgar!" exclaimed the little pet, as she held out her hands to him. He had to bend down till the child had folded her arms around his neck and kissed him.

They reached the broad, breezy gallery overlooking the river, where, after some time, Rosalba and Edgar found themselves alone. The young lawyer profited by his opportunity. He pressed the girl's hand in silence, and looked into her pure eyes with an expression of unutterable tenderness. Then with a shy smile, he slipped his fingers into his waistcoat pocket and drew out a small object which he held up to view. It was the kernel of an almond, already dried and shrivelled.

"Philopœna!" he murmured.

Celestine looked a little surprised at first, but remembering all, she put her hands before her face, and exclaimed gaily:

"Caught!"

"Yes, I hope so," replied Edgar, meaning more than the girl intended. Then, after a brief pause, he added:

"The month is up, dearest."

"Oh! yes, I understand. The token which you left me, I have always worn about me."

She took from her neck a coral chain, to which was attached a velvet case containing the little box which Edgar had given her.

"This is the time to open it," said he.

She opened it and a superb emerald ring flashed before her.

"The emblem of hope," she murmured faintly, while her eyes glistened with tears.

"Yes, hope not to be deferred," said the youth.

We need not intrude on the privacy of the lovers. They approached closer to each other, spoke in whispers, but all the while their faces were radiant with that unmistakable light which the bliss and rapture of requited love always impart. The result of the interview may be gathered from this little circumstance. Edgar took the emerald ring, set it on the tip of Rosalba's forefinger, held it up and exclaimed:

"Is my hope fulfilled at last?"

Just then the heavy tread of the farmer was heard in the hall behind them.

"My father!" exclaimed Rosalba nervously.

"Let us go in to see him," said Edgar.

Samuel Varny looked grave and sad, as he shook hands with the youth. His manner completely chilled the young couple. Edgar had to summon all his courage to introduce the subject nearest to his heart. Scarcely had he uttered a sentence, when the old man shook his head ominously, and stopped him short.

"Edgar Martin," said the farmer in a husky voice, his iron frame shaking with emotion, "you love my daughter, and my daughter loves you. So far it is well. But when there is question of marriage, we must pause. I had looked forward to this day with as much pleasure as yourselves, but now —"

There was a thrilling silence in the room.

Varny drew out a newspaper from his breast-pocket, unfolded it and pointing to a particular passage, handed it to Edgar.

"You were at that Lacadie meeting, Edgar?"

"Yes, Sir, I was," replied the young patriot, not yet awakened to the reality of the situation.

"And you voted for that resolution against bureaucrats?"

"Yes, Sir. Why not?"

"Well, Sir, I am one of those hated bureaucrats!" said Varny, with a bitter smile.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Edgar in amazement.

"I never thought fit to acknowledge it before, but I do so now."

"Mr Varny," replied the youth with deep feeling, "I had often heard this and other accusations against you, but I never believed them. I can hardly believe your own words now."

"You must believe them, Edgar."

The young man struck his forehead in anguish and bewilderment, while Varny drew his sobbing daughter to his knee.

"This scene is too painful, Edgar," said the old man, "let us cut it short. You have a right to your opinions. I do not blame you. But both of us must be prudent. I am responsible for the happiness of my daughter. Let us defer this whole matter. At the rate you are pushing things, a crisis must soon come. I wish you well out of it. If you meet with adversity in the day of conflict come to me and I will give you my roof to shelter you, and my daughter for your wife. If you succeed, and drive the accursed bureaucrats before your face, then it will be for Rosalba herself to decide how she will act towards you. Till then, let us await the awards of Providence."

During the whole discourse, Edgar remained