

guess whence it came, or that the speaker was behind the curtains of the alcove. "Who are you?"

"The cure of St. Marceau," the first speaker replied.

"And whom do you bring to me?"

"A sinner."

"And what has he done?"

"He will tell you."

"I am listening."

There was a pause on this, a long pause; which which was broken at length by a third speaker, in a tone half sullen, half miserable. "I have robbed my master," he said.

"Of how much?"

"Fifty livres."

"Why?"

"I lost it at play."

"And you are sorry."

"I must be sorry," the man panted with sudden fierceness, "or hang!" Hidden though he was from us, there was a tremor in his voice that told a tale of pallid cheeks and shaking knees and a terror fast rising to madness.

"He makes up his accounts to-morrow?"

"Yes."

Someone in the room groaned; it should have been the culprit, but unless I was mistaken the sound came through the curtains. A long pause followed. Then, "And if I help you," the muffled voice resumed, "will you swear to lead an honest life?"

But the answer may be guessed. I need not repeat the assurances, the protestations and vows of repentance, the cries and tears of gratitude which ensued, and to which the poor wretch, stripped of