

face, and quitted her book, happy in obtaining a look of affection from him.

The chemist reflected: during a moment of expressive silence, thoughts rapidly passed through his mind, of this young girl, who was the light of his eyes, whom he had chosen for a gentle recreation from his labours. Was he devoted enough to her? She, young and simple as she was, could not take any very deep interest, nor find much amusement in the experiments or studies which absorbed him so entirely. From this time, he consecrated himself more to this young being, whose happiness was confided to him. He devoted, every day, some of his precious hours to her, and surrounded her with the attentions of love.

In about a year, these sacrifices received a sweet recompense, for the wife of the chemist became the mother of a child, beautiful as the day. Then the laboratory became the theatre of scenes more touching and more various. The black roof echoed to infantine cries; but the chemist complained not. Caliban, the old nique servant of this little household, quitted his spade to gaze upon the child, dressing his uncouth face in smiles, and striving for a gentle voice with which to speak to it. And the young mother, seated in her worm-eaten chair, tossed up and down the little rogue, whom she covered with her kisses.

This young peasant, whom the chemist had chosen for her *naïveté* and simplicity of character, seemed now informed with a new life. She became spirituelle in all that related to him. She lived but in the life of this little being, who played upon her bosom; and the happy chemist perceived and acknowledged that nature had crucibles much better than his own, and a method, far superior, of combining her elixirs.

The chemist was one of the most astonishing and original beings that the fire from heaven had ever warmed. If ideas depend, as many teach, upon the interior form of the brain, his should have had the dazzling and extraordinary aspect of those chemical productions which apothecaries expose to the eye of the passer-by, and which present the most brilliant and multiform crystallizations. From his youth he had lived only for the arts and sciences, which he had studied with ardent enthusiasm; he had also acquired a profound knowledge of human nature. He thoroughly understood all the springs of both the mental and physical machine; by one glance he could discern the symptoms, cause and progress of a malady, and could immediately prescribe for it. He saw into the sources of pleasure and pain, of the passions and virtues, with such unerring truth, that the perfection of human happiness seemed to be within his grasp.

Perhaps the greatest proof of his wisdom, and the sublimity of his mind, was, that having attained this pinnacle of human science, he was contented to live in his laboratory between a cricket, a mouse, Caliban, the spiders, his wife and a child. Had he gone to Paris, he would have won for himself boundless wealth and fame; but he had reflected deeply, and reasoned thus: "If, by his knowledge of physical laws, he healed all diseases, why all the world would come to him; there would be no more need of physicians, consequently the physicians, out of revenge, would have quietly invited him to pass out of the world. If by his foresight and knowledge of human nature, he could accommodate all law suits, and decide all difficult questions, then lawyers would be no longer required, and his science would thus procure him the hatred of the advocates, who, more cruel than the physicians, would not scruple to use the rack and torture. If government learned that he could make diamonds, they would shut him up, and keep him constantly employed in fabricating them for their own benefit; or they would put out his eyes that he could not make them at all; and in this case government would be more cruel than either physicians or lawyers. The perfectability of human reason would become the ruin of society, which subsists only on the follies, the maladies, the passions and diseases of each one." Thus reasoning, the chemist had the almost incredible judgment to compare the glory which he might have acquired, to the smoke of his furnace, the riches, to the charcoal that blackened his hands, and whose vapours could kill; and seizing the god of happiness by the ears, he forced him to remain forever in his laboratory.

It was thus he simplified his existence. To give occupation to his active mind, he sought to discover new secrets; he took a pretty wife, who did nothing, knew nothing, seldom spoke, and he decided that their world began at the door of the cabin, and ended at the garden wall. In the evening, he would walk out with his wife to a shady glade, where they drank in the pure air of heaven, and listened to the melody of nature. And the happy chemist, putting aside all thought of his retorts and mixtures, talked gaily to his wife, and compared the mysterious glimmering of the stars to the soft lambent light which played from her beautiful eyes; she smiled upon him, her heart glowed at his admiration, and was filled with adoring love for her husband. They lived indeed a happy life; and well might the chemist laugh at the men of the world, who were madly striving to catch soap bubbles, which burst almost before they grasped them; and he clapped his hands in joyful ecstasy as he kissed his fair wife and applauded himself for his choice, and gloried that he had