

DIANE OF VILLE MARIE.

the like again. My little one, that I cradled in my arms, and who loved me with her whole heart. I am but of the people—if my heart is broken I have no need to look like a stone; now that she has left me I shall please myself by weeping like a waterspout. She said to me, speaking, oh! so gently, at the very last, ‘It is thy duty to stay with Madame, to comfort and care for her, as it is mine to leave her. Neither of us must forget her obligations, we will both strive to fulfil them nobly and faithfully, good and loving Nanon.’ Oh! my brave and beautiful demoiselle, I coveted greatness for her, I wanted to see her set high above all the world, and behold! Her Grace Madame la Duchess de Ronceval is taken away from my sight. It sounds well, that title, even if my heart is broken. How can I live without her? what can the blessed saints be thinking of up in heaven there? Behold that blonde English sheep, selfish and cold-blooded as a snake, the happy wife of M. de Gallifet, no less! No one will ever cry her eyes out for her.”

At the Court of Louis the Magnificent, Diane de Ronceval lived out the years that remained to her. The vivifying breath of an utterly unselfish affection had touched her. All egotism had been annihilated by the fierce sweep of a spiritual flame, before which every unworthy desire and ambition had perished. In the midst of a corrupt society, she preserved a noble and lofty ideal. With an earnest and simple contriving of gentle charities, she strove to make