

The latter, who was remarkable not only for his zeal, became each day dearer to his master, and frequently took his place in very difficult jobs. The brave old man was subject to attacks of the rheumatism and gout, the fruit of his numberless night watches during the war. In this way he was often confined to his bed for several months, and it was at such times that he felt happy in having Philip for his first apprentice. He directed the work in the several work-shops, with such zeal and judgment, that his master gave him a share in the business.

By degrees he raised himself to the head of the house, and his master, feeling each day that his strength was failing, and wishing to ensure the happiness of his only daughter, a young girl as remarkable for her personal charms as she was for her excellent qualities, gave her in marriage to his young partner, who had never ceased to show himself a skilful carpenter as well as the best of men. Philip Delacour was now at the head of the immense establishment, so celebrated throughout Saint Germain. He was employed by the most renowned artists in the erection of their buildings, for they were certain of finding in him exactness and great honesty. His most sanguine wishes of success were realized. His wife, who was of a very happy disposition, had made him father of two children, thus crowning their sincere and devoted attachment.—There was not a single architect who did not seek advice from Philip. If a quarrel arose among his workmen he was chosen their arbiter, and always succeeded in re-establishing harmony among them. If a decision became necessary between a proprietor and a contractor, he was entrusted with it, because it was known beforehand that his judgment would be grounded on equity, and no one ever thought of appealing to a higher power after his opinion had been given. Honoured with general esteem, and every day augmenting his fortune, of which he was not proud, a happy father and a devoted husband, Delacour was known and loved in the whole neighbourhood. He had already bought the large house in which he lived, and his extensive speculations increasing with his credit, he found himself obliged to give up the trade which had raised him to his present rank to a younger brother. He now attended particularly to buying houses to be repaired, and lots on which he built several large mansions. In a short time he was ranked among the principal landholders of the capital. He made an immense fortune,

and, joining prudence to the most happy speculations, retired from business at the age of forty-five, devoting himself to his wife's happiness, and to the education of his two daughters, who added new joy to his life, and promised to become the delight and support of his old age.

Mr. Delacour bore on his open countenance that security which is the effect of a good conscience, and that happy independence, at once the true source of a man's dignity. He had gradually acquired, not only the education, but even the *manners* of a wealthy landholder; being always busy in doing good, in gaining all hearts to himself, he was invariably spoken of with the greatest respect and consideration. He lived with his family in a large mansion in Belle-Chasse street, and, without any ridiculous display, enjoyed all the comforts and advantages that wealth can afford. Mrs. Delacour was distinguished among good mothers, and she was truly loved by the poor. Daily she could be seen giving alms to the sick, and she did not feel satisfied that she had done her duty unless she had relieved some poor family during every day. Mr. Delacour was inscribed on the list of sworn electors for the department of the Seine; he was even a member of the great college; and his real estate amounted to more than seven million of francs.

The time had come for renewing the members of the deputy chamber, and the ministry was not only displeasing to the people, but even braved all their opinions and made every effort to re-establish despotic power in France. The Marquis was among those who seconded the machinations of the king's perfidious counselors. He had often heard of Mr. Delacour, so renowned for his immense fortune, his charity and kindness, but he never imagined that his honourable citizen was the journeyman to whom he had offered so grievous an insult.—Delacour's face, in fact, had assumed a different expression: his *enbonpoint* altered him so completely that it was impossible to recognize him.

The Marquis, from the information he had received in the neighbourhood, had noted Mr. Delacour as an elector in whom confidence could be placed. Accordingly he accosted him in the *Hôtel de Ville* with those honeyed words which the would-be great generally make use of to deceive; he flattered the elector, who recognized him immediately, and determined to divert himself at his expense. He pretended to pay the greatest attention, and to feel the deepest interest in all that the Marquis was