

proportioned to the most ordinary capacities. Two months passed away without the neophyte's hearing a word about either the society or its plans, and without his having any grounds to presume it was anything more than what he had seen, a kind of covert insurrection, provided with its rallying signs and watchwords. He was even beginning to consider it altogether in the light of an illusion, when a letter, couched in such terms as to remind him distinctly of the formula of his initiation, summoned him to meet a number of his brethren in a secluded spot that was pointed out. Thither he repaired, without taking the least precautions for his safety, because the nature of his first initiation and the character of those who had introduced him to the Order, where such as to preclude the idea that any snare could possibly be laid for him. On arriving at the spot indicated, he at once recognized it, beyond a doubt, from the description that had been given him; but after minutely surveying it both before and after the appointed hour of meeting, and waiting a length of time, not a soul appeared. A few days afterward the summons was reiterated in the same terms, and the same spot was appointed for the rendezvous. He again obeyed with as much punctuality as before, but with no better success.

This individual trial of his patience, (for such the officer considered it to be,) was renewed four times, without any better result, during a space of three weeks. At length, the fifth time, he was about to retire somewhat harassed by such repeated discomfitures, when he heard the most frightful screams, at about a hundred feet distant. These screams, apparently proceeding from some one who was being murdered, drew him deeper in the wood, where he had already advanced further than usual. Daylight was fast declining; the season was bad, (it was towards the latter end of November in a severe climate,) and the roads almost impassable, especially for a stranger; yet no earthly consideration could restrain him, when humanity called aloud for his assistance. Though armed with no other weapon than his sword, he rushed through the thicket, and making his way amid the branches as best he might, still guided by the screams that waxed nearer and nearer, and were imploring the assistance of any chance wayfarer, he at length reached a clearing, where three suspicious-looking men, on horseback, galloped away as hard as they could, at the same time discharging their muskets upon him.

On the ground lay a bleeding body, and he could just distinguish through the twilight the dying man's torn garments, the ropes that bound his limbs, and even the bruises with which he was covered.

Our neophyte had scarcely time to contemplate this sad sight, and to measure at a glance the depth of the wood, where death seemed to await him at every turn, and to ascertain if any signs of life were yet discernible in the unfortunate being whose last agonies he was called upon to witness, when a detachment of gendarmes, likewise drawn thither by the cries for help, issued forth from the forest on the opposite point to where the murderers had fled, and surrounded the spot where lay the victim. Though fast expiring, the murdered man had still breath enough left to articulate a few words sufficiently distinct to leave no doubt on the minds of those present that he intended to designate the stranger as one of the assassins. Moreover, the lateness of the hour, the sword with which he was still armed, his hurried answers and evident embarrassment, all tended to incriminate him. I need not say that he was immediately arrested, loaded with chains, and ignominiously flung