

lowed queen Ingeburge, when she came over to marry the king of Paris. But Christian may have no great credit, now that the poor queen is in disgrace."

"Ah, ah!" said the gentleman, with an air of constraint, "then they know down there that the queen is in disgrace?"

"We also know my lord, that the king has given her place to Madame Agnes, daughter of Berthoud de Meran, the Bohemian."

"Daughter of Berthoud, Duke of Meranie," corrected dryly, the gentleman.

"I will call that woman according to the good pleasure of my lord," said Eric; "for excepting Christian the Dane, I know not a living soul in the great city of Paris."

"And thou wishest to engage thyself among the artisans that King Philip Augustus employs upon the monuments of his capital. Is it not so, my friend?"

"That would be my dearest wish."

"But thy young companion is not strong enough to handle the hammer?"

"Oh, said Eric," blushing lightly, "my young brother mixes the mortar and carries the sand."

"What, with such hands as these?" interrupted the unknown. Eve hid her hands under her cassock. The gentleman smiled.

"Friend," said he, afterwards brusquely, "there is the city gate, and now we separate. How do they call thee?"

"They call me Eric, my lord."

"That is a northern name," said the unknown, with a slight frown.

"My father, who settled on the River Rhine, came from Norway, my lord."

"And thy young brother?"

Eric was not prepared for this simple question, and was opening his mouth to repeat the name of his sister Eve,—when the young girl, anticipating him, replied in her soft and gentle voice—

"I am called little Adam, noble lord!"

They arrived at the Porte St. Honoré, which was wide open; twelve archers, six on each side, were drawn up under the gateway. The captain of the gate stood, hat in hand, upon the threshold of the guard-house. The gentleman passed and saluted, with his hand, while the soldiers received him with military honours.

Eric and his sister exchanged a look of astonishment. They could not understand how it was that they were not turned out, and saluted still as rogues and vagabonds. The gate closed heavily behind them. The gentleman, who had passed through first, now turned round.

"Little Adam," said he, addressing Eve, when they had got about fifty steps from the gate, "I make thee a present of this little purse, in which are twelve écus la gold, in order that thou mayest remember me." Eve dismounted, and the page took the bridle of the horse. Eve, confused and happy, received the purse with respect; nor did she withdraw her forehead, when the gentleman, bending graciously over his saddle planted there the kiss of a friend.

"As to thee, Eric," resumed he, "to-morrow morning thou wilt go and seek Maurice de Sully, bishop of Paris, and beg him for the love he bears me to employ thee on the works of his cathedral."

"On the works at Notre Dame?" exclaimed Eric, "that is what I desire more than anything in the world!"

"Indeed? Ah, well, *mon maître*, then everything goes right. *Au revoir*, little Adam; I wish thee happiness. He was leaving, when Eric called to him—

"My lord, my lord! in whose name am I to present myself to my lord the Bishop of Paris?"

In his turn the unknown now appeared to hesitate an instant, then he replied with a smile, "in the name of his gossip, Dieudonné."

He turned the angle of a street which ascended towards St. Eustache, and disappeared, followed by Albret, his page,—who said to himself, "Never saw I lad with skin so white and eye so soft!"

## CHAPTER III.

Eric and his sister stood alone, in the middle of the street St. Honoré; Eve holding in her hand the purse which the unknown lord had generously given her.

The rue St. Honoré was one of the largest and most beautiful in the whole city; but we are constrained to acknowledge that that is not saying much. Every one knows that at that period, and for a long time after, the houses of Paris did not present their fronts to the public highway. Each house projected over the street the shadow of its narrow gable end, pierced with small windows and guarded with iron bars; for the first requirement of a house at that day was, that it might serve as need for a fortress to its dwellers. These gable-ends had no windows in the basement, and there were none of those brilliant shops which, in our day, light up our streets better than the public lamps. The ordinary buying and selling took place in shops grouped together as at a fair, and were kept open only till sunset.

The taverns, as much frequented then as to-day, had their dark entrances at the bottom of long and tortuous alleys. Public society as well as the family circle was concentrated far from the street, which was left exclusively for malefactors. In those dark nights of ancient Paris, the hungry thieves laid wait for the rare passengers whose necessities compelled him to be out late, but scarcely earned their bread at it. A prudent bourgeois would rather have leaped from the top to the bottom of the ramparts than be perambulating those dark haunts at night. The gentlemen of that day were always preceded by torch-bearers, and servants with drawn swords. It was a sorry trade that of the robber; but their ranks were always overcrowded.

In the midst of that silent obscurity, disturbed only by the roar of the orgies going on down the aforesaid alleys, Eric and Eve felt more lost than in the open fields, or in the plantations of the Louvre. They knew not which way to move. The street lay before them dark and tortuous. In the distance they could perceive some trembling light smoking under some one of the votive offerings which, down to a very late day, were to be found stuck up in our highways.