

children,—and this was their great, or rather their only trouble; but this was not in their eyes, a reason for following the selfish counsel that was given them. “It is true we have no children,” they said to each other,—“God has denied us this blessing; but that is not a reason for living in idleness. If we were to retire from business, we might, doubtless, live on our means, but we should no longer be able to be of use to so many poor sailors who have need of us.” And so the good folks paid no attention to their officious advisers, and kept their shop open as usual.

Soon the revolution broke out. Strangers to politics, they did not understand its first signs, and looked upon them as a passing squall which could have but a momentary duration. But when the confusion became general; when civil war broke out around them, and foreign war had destroyed the mercantile marine, they were compelled to resolve on closing their business—a business, indeed, which it was no longer possible to carry on. The greater part of the sailors, their ordinary customers, had been pressed into the service of the State, and part of their stock-in-trade had been seized for their outfit. This sacrifice was scarcely felt by old Brunel; he refused the debenture which was offered him in return, payable in “*assignats*” on the Republican Treasury, and he declared that he willingly gave his goods to clothe the poor sailors of the State; he even added a certain quantity of material above what the order required of him, and these too he gave gratuitously.

This act of generosity, which was only an outpouring of Brunel's generous heart was looked upon by the Republican authorities as a deed of patriotic devotion: Brunel's name received an honorable mention in the public records, was published in the newspapers, and cited as an example to encourage the rich merchants and capitalists to imitate the patriotic action of the poor shopkeeper.

Old Brunel did not expect so many honors: nay! he was even ashamed of them; and was almost tempted to refuse the certificate of citizenship which was forwarded him as a reward for his noble action, know-

ing in his heart that he did not deserve it; but his wife dissuaded him from his purpose, saying, “Take care of this certificate, my husband; no one knows what may happen in these times we live in; perhaps you will be glad to make use of it some day.” Her husband followed this advice, but though he kept the document he was cautious to do nothing which could attract attention to him. His good sense told him that in such stormy times the best thing he could do would be to blot out the fact of his existence, and be forgotten as much as possible. Keeping himself, therefore, quiet in his house, he contented himself with joining his wife in deploring the misfortunes of the day, and shuddering at the frightful crimes that depopulated Nantes after the arrival of that “representative of the people,” Carrier.

One day, talking of the horrible massacres that took place every night, he said to his wife: “I learned to-day that those who were known to be good citizens were each allowed to save a young infant belonging to those unhappy people that they drown in the Loire. Now, it is my idea that as we have a certificate of citizenship you might make use of it to try and rescue one of those poor innocents from death. Ever since we have been married, we have longed for a child. The Almighty has perhaps, intended this in not giving us any; for if He had sent us one, it is probable that this idea would not have come into my head. Go, then, and choose a stout healthy boy, whom we will bring up as our son, and who will be so indeed, since he will owe us his life.”

“That is a good idea of yours, my husband,” replied Marie Jeanne; “the same thought came across me no later than yesterday, when I saw a troop of those unfortunates pass me on the Quai de la Fosse, on their road to be drowned. I counted several little babies in their mothers' arms among them, and oh! how my hands stretched out to take one of the innocent creatures. But I did not know that it was permitted; and as my pity showed itself on my countenance, the women around me looked at me and began to murmur ‘Aristocrat.’ I retired immediately; for it is