

APPLE-BLOSSOMS AND WHITE MUSLIN

school children massed in two rows on either side of the flower-strewn path, their hands filled with Louis' blossoms; back of these the rest of the villagers—those who wanted to see the procession, and crowding the doorway and well inside the aisles, every soul who could claim admission for miles around. And then as we passed under the old portal—through which, so the legend runs, strode the Great Warrior surrounded by his knights (not a word of which do I believe)—the small organ with a spasmodic jerk wheezed out a welcome that went on increasing in volume until we had moved beneath the groined arches and reached the altar. There we grouped ourselves in a half-circle while the vows were pledged and the small gold ring was slipped on Mignon's finger and Gaston had kissed Mignon; and Mignon had kissed her new mother; and madame la marquise had taken both their hands in her own and said how happy she was, and how she wished them all the joy in the world. And then—and this was the crowning joy of the ceremony—then, like the old cavalier he is, and can be when occasion demands, Lemois stepped up and shook Gaston's hand, Mignon looking at the old man with hungry, loving eyes until,