

mile or more, straight into a part of the forest that seemed utterly impenetrable,—and at the end of the passage they came out into a deep, sylvan glade, walled in on three sides by a precipice of rock, that by which they had entered being the only side open, and even that only to be reached by the single narrow way they had threaded.

Here the young man was left to himself while the robbers unloaded the mules, and overhauled their burdens. At the end of half an hour three of them came to him and informed him that they must relieve him of what valuables he had upon his person.

"Let me have my hands free," he said, "and I will give to you all the money I have about me, which is considerable."

But they would not listen. At first Girard started to offer opposition, but he very quickly saw that such a course would be worse for him, and he let them do their will. Upon the inside of his doublet were two pockets, one on each breast; and on the inside of his vest the same; and in these four pockets were a million francs in bank-notes, besides almost as much more in precious stones,—diamonds, rubies, pearls, emeralds and sapphires, with others of less value. And all these they found and took.

"O, Messieurs! Give me back these two morocco cases. Take all the rest. You will allow me thus to redeem them. They can be nothing to you—"

But they would not listen. "It is not for us to decide," said the spokesman, "our chief will do as he pleases."

"But you will tell him what I say?"

"Yes, we will tell him that." And with that they went away.

And when they had gone Girard de St. Marc threw himself down upon the sward, and burst into tears. His heart was full, and only weeping would lighten it. He thought of his dear master, and of the jewels which he had held sacred,—jewels about

which clung memories that were interwoven with the holiest ties of life. Would they ever come back to him.

How long he had lain thus he knew not; but, at length, he felt a hand upon his arm, and in a moment more the bonds were cut. Then a strong hand lifted him to his feet, and he stood face to face with Paul le Diable. And now he saw what a grand face the brigand chief had. A handsome face—a full flowing beard of glossy brown; large, clear, brilliant, hazel eyes; a brow broad and full; and an expression such as a great captain might wear.

"What is your name?" the chief asked.

"Girard de St. Marc."

"Whence come you?"

The youth told him his simple story, in as few words as possible. The chief had a sword under his arm, and another at his side. He leaned the first against a tree, and then took the two morocco cases from his pocket. He opened the larger one first, and exposed the Grand Master's jewel.

"To whom does this belong?"

"I am bearing it to the widow of the late Marquis de St. Aubin. It was his insignia—Geoffrey de St. Aubin's—as Grand Master of the Temple."

"And this?" the brigand pursued, opening the other case.

"That is mine own, Monsieur, given me by the Marquis."

"Of what use is it to you, young man? You dare not wear it."

The youth raised himself proudly erect, and spoke as speaks one whose heart is true:

"Thank Heaven! I dare to wear it; and I have the right."

"Ha! Say ye so?"

"Sincerely,—yes."

"Follow me." The chief took up the sword which he had stood against the tree, and led the way into a nook beyond a projecting spur of rock, where they could not be seen by other eyes.