

outwardly placid, there was that within him which, had Lord Dalton known of its existence, might have shaken even his effrontery ! But as he knew nothing of it he went on :

“ Three gentlemen to two ladies ! I’ll not be an outsider ! ” And he fell in between Marie and Blanche, and placed Sir Roger and De Lisle next the bushes !

The lanes were narrow—much too narrow for five horses abreast ; and therefore Lord Dalton’s stirrup-iron galled the flanks of Blanche’s horse on one side and rubbed Marie’s habit on the other ! The two outsiders of course came in for the prickly favours of the hedge ; till De Lisle, tired of having his legs lacerated, whispered to Blanche and fell back with her.

In such a situation what could the French gentleman do but talk ?—what could Blanche do but listen ? De Lisle talked very well, too, used a romance-tongue—a kind of *langue d’oc* with the modern polish on it—