

pleasure, but simply of depression, at the manner in which d'Auban appeared to have lost all thought of her during the whole time of poor Simonette's dying hours. This was selfish, heartless, some people would say; and there is no doubt that any engrossing affection, if it is not carefully watched, is apt to make us selfish and unfeeling. Conscience, reason and prayer, banish these bad first thoughts more or less speedily in those under the influence of a higher principle; but the emotion which precedes reflection often marks the danger attending a too passionate attachment; and when it is one which ought to be subdued and renounced—which has not the least right to look for a return or to expect consideration—sharp is the pang caused by any symptoms of neglect or indifference. Madame de Moldau did not know the bitter self-reproach which was affecting d'Auban's heart; she did not know that Simonette had lovingly thrown away her life for the sake of bringing him tidings which would change the whole aspect of his destiny and of her own. But she saw him hanging over her death-bed with irrepressible emotion, his eyes full of tears—his soul moved to its very depths. It did so happen, that when he rose from the side of the dead, he had abruptly left the hut, as if unable to command himself. He did feel at that moment as if he could not look at her. The new hope which had come to him was so mingled with thoughts of the closing scene, and of the sacrifice of Simonette's young life, that it seemed unnatural—almost painful—to dwell upon it, and so he passed by her without speaking to her, and went straight into the church.

Meanwhile she suffered intensely. True, she had made up her mind to separate from him, to accept a lonely existence in a distant country, even perhaps never to set eyes upon him again; but to think he had not really cared for her—cared perhaps for another person under her roof—the thought stabbed her to the heart, even as if no unreal weapon had inflicted the wound. Her brow flushed with a woman's resentment. The pride of a royal line—the German ancestral pride latent within her, burst forth in that hour with a vehemence which took her by surprise. Had Charlotte of Brunswick, the wife of the Czarovitch, the daughter of princes, the

sister of queens and kings, been made the object of a momentary caprice? Had she tacitly owned affection for a man who had loved a base-born Quadroon? The fear was maddening?

Yes! madness lies that way. An injury received—a wrong suffered at the hands of one loved and trusted, may well unsettle reason on its throne—the mere suspicion of it makes strange havoc in the brain, when we rest on the wretched pinnacle we raise for ourselves—the false gods of our worship. There is but one remedy for that parching fever of the soul. To bow down lower than men would trust us. To fall down at His feet who knelt at the feet of Peter and even of Judas—who would have knelt at our feet had we been there. This is the thought that leaves no room for pride, scarcely for indignation, as far as we are ourselves concerned. It had been often set before Madame de Moldau, and its remembrance soon caused a reaction in her feelings. What was she, poor worm of earth, that she should resent neglect? What had she done to deserve affection? How should she dare to suspect the sincerity of so true a heart—so noble a character? And if, as she had sometimes thought, that poor girl loved him, had she not a better right to do so than herself, a wedded wife, who ought never to have admitted this affection into her heart? And did not her untimely death claim for him a more than common pity? The cold dull hardness in her bosom gave way to tenderness. The sweetness of humiliation, the joy of the true penitent took its place. She went into the chamber of death, and remained there till Father Maret came to request her to follow him to the house.

D'Auban was there. He went up to her as she entered, and seemed about to speak, but, as if unable to do so, he whispered to the Father: "I cannot break it to her; tell her yourself." Then, holding her hand in both his, he said, with much feeling—"Princess! thus much let me say before I go; whatever may be your wishes or your commands, my time, my actions, and my life, are at your disposal."

She looked up in astonishment, and when he had left the room turned to Father Maret, and asked, "What does he mean? What has happened?"

"He alludes, Princess, to a great event, the news of which has just reached us