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NICOLETTE AND THE JACOBIENS *page 11*

FAITHFUL NICOLETTE

OR,

THE FRENCH NURSE.

A Story of the Reign of Terror.

..“She hath done her part:
Do thou but thine.”



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FAITHFUL NICOLETTE.

CHAPTER I

THE FLIGHT FROM MARSEILLES



N the latter part of the reign of Louis XVI, which was the period of the breaking out of the Revolution, and which was followed by the Reign of Terror, there lived in Marseilles a rich merchant whose name was Martinere. Occupied by his own extensive concerns, he kept himself as far removed as possible from the scenes of tumult and bloodshed which were everywhere being enacted. Although he deplored the state of his beloved France, he knew that no effort or means of his own could stay the storm of popular fury which every day raged more violently. Greatly blessed in his own domestic circle, which

consisted of his wife and two children—the eldest a boy of twelve years old, and his little sister, Adele, four years younger—he had never been tempted to roam beyond its limits, or appear as a partisan in the strifes which so painfully marked that turbulent time.

The quiet retirement in which the Martiniere family lived furnished no certain safeguard against the suspicion of upstart rulers and the unbridled fury of the mob, which, intoxicated with the possession of a power it knew not how to use, had sacrificed the family of the amiable but weak Louis XVI., and conducted his unhappy queen and himself to the guillotine. Men who had taken the largest part in the cruelties practised on that fearful September day in 1791, and murdered the prisoners confined in the Abbey St. German, La Force, and others, now stood as judges at the head of the popular tribunals, and neither mercy nor justice was to be expected from those blood-thirsty tyrants by such as were marked for sacrifice.

Most of the royalist party who could do so were leaving this land of misrule, and Mr. Martiniere held it no longer safe to remain. Prudently and cautiously, therefore, he made preparations for his departure. Resolving to make Germany his place of refuge, he had pro-

vided himself with passports and clothing suitable for disguise, having converted his property, as far as possible, into money. To accomplish this the greatest circumspection had to be observed, lest it should excite suspicion. The care and anxiety of the intended fugitives increased each moment, for they feared lest the observing enemies of public peace had already cast a longing eye on the wealth which they were known to possess

The evening at length arrived on which they had decided to leave their native city. Mr. Martiniere and his wife, dressed in the garb of the peasants who supplied the market with vegetables, prepared to forsake for ever the home endeared to them by many tender recollections, but regret was, for the present, lost in the urgency for flight and the dread of mishap. The large baskets which, as part of their disguise, they carried on their shoulders, held some necessary clothing and a few eatables. Their valuable papers were concealed between the double soles of their hob-nailed shoes.

Under various pretexts they had parted from time to time with all their servants except one, who for thirty years had so faithfully discharged her household duties in their service, that she was looked on more in the light of a relative

than a domestic. She had declared that she would not forsake them in the hour of danger but was resolved to follow them into exile, wherever they might lead. This woman, whose name was Nicolette, greatly loved Madame Martiniere, whom she had nursed with all a mother's tenderness. She had also been nurse to the children, who were not less the objects of her affection than if they had been parts of her own being, and they, taught from their earliest infancy to love and respect her, so every way worthy, were not less attached to this faithful servant than to their own mother. They regarded one as "mamma," and the other as "mother."

All was ready, and Nicolette had gone to awake the sleeping children, who knew nothing of the intended flight, and to whom the refreshment of a few hours of slumber was necessary to fit them for the rough journey which lay before them.

The clock chimed the hour of one from the gray tower, and the parents, having taken every precaution against surprise, waited but for the presence of Nicolette and the children to set out, when suddenly the sounds of wild tumult were heard issuing from the street below. Its import could not be mistaken—a party of riotous Jaco-

bins were storming the house. It was plain that their plan of flight had been discovered.

Madame Martinere sank fainting on the floor, for she believed escape now to be impossible. The children could not be aroused in a moment, and to attempt to carry them away in their arms would effectually hinder the flight. In the surprise occasioned by the sudden alarm and riot below, the children called loudly on father and mother for help, and rendered concealment entirely impossible.

Mr. Martinere stood for a moment irresolute and pale as death. His eyes wandered alternately from the weeping children to his still insensible wife, and he seemed to be struggling with some severe emotion.

Nicolette threw herself on her knees before him, exclaiming,—

“Save yourself and my dear lady; for your life’s sake fly! In another minute it will be too late.”

She pointed, as she spoke, to a back-stair which was plainly visible through the open door of the apartment where they were assembled, and led to a passage on the lower floor, by which they might escape through the garden.

Furious blows were now struck on the outer portal, threatening soon to destroy it; and the

cry, "Down with the base cowards! to the guillotine with the heretics!" was heard, frightfully distinct, in the stillness of night.

"But my children!" exclaimed Mr. Martiniere despairingly, as he stretched out his hands toward them.

"I will save them, God being my helper," cried Nicolette in a tone of earnestness; "but we shall certainly all be lost if you linger but a moment longer."

The portal now began to give way under the heavy strokes directed against it. Another moment, and they would be in the power of the furious mob, and then the way to the guillotine was short. Mr. Martiniere raised his wife from the floor, where she had sunk half fainting, and carrying her in his arms down the narrow stair, reached a door in the garden wall, which gave them egress to an obscure and lonely street. Favoured by the darkness, they escaped pursuit,—at least for the present.

Nicolette had no time to follow with the children; for, ere the parents reached the lower stair, the door was broken down, and the enemy, with shouts and imprecations, were ascending the steps leading from the front. Hastily, therefore, laying the little Adele back in her crib, she cried to the boy, "John, here, quick! Bind my

arms behind me with this cord—so—right tight, my boy; and now, go lie down quite still beside your little sister, but pray, my dear child, and be not afraid, for God will surely help us.”

The boy, accustomed to obey promptly, did as Nicolette directed in silence, and concluded his task almost before her words had ceased to sound.

Nicolette had thrown herself on the floor, her heart more pained to practise deception than impressed with fear of those who she knew would not hesitate one moment to take the lives of those innocent children, dearer to her than her own

“Forgive me, heavenly Father, if I am wrong!” she prayed.

As the rude men crowded into the chamber, she struggled, as if anxious to free herself from her bonds, and exclaimed,—

“Let me loose—unbind my hands, I beg you!”

“Where are they? where are the cowards? Have they bound and left you here lest you should betray them?” cried one of the mob.

“All gone, and I cannot tell where. Loose me, I entreat; this cord is so tight,” urged the poor Nicolette.

“What!” exclaimed the most savage-looking

of the troop, who seemed to be the leader, "have they escaped? Then of this house shall not one stone be left upon another. But let us be off, comrades. We will follow, for they cannot be far off. Let us divide our band into small parties, and we shall be sure to overtake them."

"Wait, citizen, wait one moment!" cried Nicolette, anxious to gain time; "I will show you the way they took. You can easily find them, for it is not two hours since they left. But first unbind my arms. The cords press deeply into my flesh, and I suffer great pain. You must loose me first, if you wish to overtake them."

"Be quick about it, then, we are in great haste," growled the leader of the troop, as he drew his dagger and severed the cord with which the arms of Nicolette were tied. But he did it in such a hurried and incautious manner, that a deep wound was inflicted on her wrist, and the blood flowed down in a stream, over her clothing, to the floor. Nicolette cared not for the pain. She foreboded no danger to herself. She trusted she might be able to baffle the pursuit until they should have at least the advantage of an hour's start. But at length she was obliged to answer the questions which poured upon her from all sides.

"It is in the harbour you are to seek them," said she; "all the fugitives try to get to England. You had better go and see if there are English ships going to sail."

"Say you so? Let us be off, then, if we wish to overtake them, there is no time to be lost," was the reply from many rough voices, and once more the wild herd stormed toward the door.

Nicolette began to breathe more freely. She could now fly with the children; they, at least, were saved, for their little bed had not been examined, their presence not suspected. But, unhappily, just at this moment one of the men stumbled over a small trunk lying on the floor. To save himself from falling, he caught hold of the nearest piece of furniture, which was unhappily the crib in which the children lay closely covered. Overpowered by the sudden fright, and believing the man had put forth his hand to seize them, the little girl screamed loudly. The intruders, struck by the cry of anguish, stood for a moment, and then one and all poured back again into the room.

Nicolette, whose exulting hope of a moment before was now turned into despair, was pale as death, and could scarcely keep from fainting; but love for those dear and helpless beings intrusted to her care obtained the victory over fear

and pain, and she was fixed in her determination to defend their lives, even at the expense of her own.

“Just see there!” said one of the men, as he drew John out of the crib; and, as the little Adele clung closely to the neck of her brother, both children were disclosed, and fairly at the mercy of those rude guests to dispose of as they pleased. “See them! they are the children of that traitor Martiniere. We will take them with us as hostages, and hang them on the first lamp-post we come to if we do not overtake the fugitives.”

“Nicolette! help us; do not forsake us, dear Nicolette!” cried John, in a voice of entreaty; and Adele, in the grasp of one of the ruffians, stretched out her little hands toward her beloved nurse.

The cry and the movement added new agony to that faithful heart. At once she sprung forward to snatch her nurslings from the murderous crew, ready to shield them or perish. But just at that moment the rough voice of their leader was heard in an impatient tone, saying, “Leave them for the present, and let us to the haven! Shall such a fine booty escape us? No doubt the fugitives have shipped great wealth. What can we do at present with a pair of crying children?”

Let them stay here until we come back ; they would only now be in the way."

At these words the noisy crew left the house, attracted by the glittering bait of Martiniere's great treasure on board the English ships. Nicolette fell on her knees, and with tears of gratitude streaming from her eyes, thanked God, who had thus safely brought her through this first great danger. She commended the lives of her darling children to his holy keeping, begged, again and again, for forgiveness, and implored his protection for the future.

But it was necessary for her to make the best use of her time during the absence of the Jacobins, because, after a vain search at the pier for Martiniere and his treasure, they would certainly return to the house and wreak their disappointment and vengeance on herself and the helpless children. Hastily, therefore, dressing the little Adele, she took her in her arms, and leading John by the hand, without tarrying to secure a single article for their future comfort, she left the house to traverse the dangerous streets in the dark hours of solemn midnight.

CHAPTER II.

THE HIDING-PLACE.

At last Nicolette reached a distant and dark street. After carefully looking round to see that she was not pursued, she knocked at the door of a small house. It was either deserted, or its inmates wrapped in the deepest slumber, for she waited a long time before any sign from within assured her that the dwelling was inhabited. A slight movement at length was heard,—a light sound, as of a cautiously-placed footstep; for in this reign of terror suspicion extended everywhere, and even in this poor hovel there was something to lose. Nicolette, placing her lips to the key-hole, whispered her name more than once before the bolts within were drawn back and the door cautiously opened to admit those midnight wanderers. An old woman, the owner of the cottage, who gained a livelihood by selling fruit in the market-place, appeared at the opening with a lamp in her hand, and inquired of Nicolette, in an anxious voice, what she wished of her.

“You must save us! you must help us, dear Mother Raynal!” answered Nicolette, as she grasped the hand of the old woman, and pressed

it affectionately. "These are the children of our family; the parents were obliged to fly, and, I hope, have escaped. I have promised to follow with the children, and will risk my own life to save theirs. Can you not hide us for one day, Mother Raynal? Just now we dare not venture abroad; we should be certain to fall into the hands of our pursuers."

"You demand great things of me, Nicolette," said the old woman, after a short pause, in which she appeared lost in thought; "for if the Jacobins discover your retreat, I, as well as yourselves, am lost. But it matters little; it is not long, at the furthest, that I have to live,—and you were so kind and good to me in those days long ago when I was in want and forsaken. I have never forgotten what I owe you, and I will repay it now to yourself and the children. Come in, then, but keep very still; for although I live alone, I have neighbours on both sides—and, old as I am, I would not willingly die under the guillotine."

"May God reward you, good mother, for your compassion in this our hour of need!" said Nicolette, with a lightened heart; "he knows my heart, and will not suffer my purpose towards these innocent children to fail."

Quietly, and bidding the children make no

noise, she entered the lowly dwelling. Mother Raynal prepared as good a bed for her unexpected guests as her slender means would allow. She also sought among the store of fruit in her basket for some wherewith to refresh the weary and frightened children. Worn out with fatigue and all they had suffered in the few last dreadful hours, their little heads scarce pressed the pillows, far less luxurious than those to which they were accustomed, than they sunk into a slumber as soft and sweet as though they slept beneath a father's roof, and a mother's careful eye watched over them.

While they enjoyed the repose which is peculiar to unconscious childhood, Nicolette, from whose eyes slumber was far distant, arranged a plan for concealment, which she disclosed to her sensible old friend. She would remain closely hidden for a few days, until, as she hoped, the revolutionists would give up the pursuit, and at last forget them. Mr. Martiniere had gone to Hamburg, and thither Nicolette resolved to follow with the children.

This was easy to determine; but two important matters were wanting in order to carry it into execution. In the first place, she had no passport, and so could not hope to pass the barrier without suspicion. In the second place,

she was entirely without money to procure subsistence for herself and children by the way. For the supply of the first want, Mother Raynal was entirely at a loss what to advise; for the last she counselled nobly, although it was at a sacrifice to herself. She proposed to sell her cottage to furnish Nicolette with the necessary means to travel; but this could not be done in a hurry, lest it should create suspicion.

"If they forget you," said the kind-hearted old creature, "as I trust they will soon do, money will obtain a passport, but we must wait a while. Surely God will give us help in a case like this."

Nicolette raised her heart to Heaven for the help and comfort afforded through this poor old woman. Hope once more cheered her with the whispered promise that she could now speedily fulfil her first intention of taking the children to Hamburg, and restoring them to their parents.

On the next morning, as Mother Raynal left her cottage to pursue her occupation of selling fruit, she locked the door carefully after her, and recommended the greatest caution to those she left behind; and Nicolette found herself alone with John and Adele. They were provided with some bread and fruit, spread out by their old friend, but were obliged to remain nearly in

darkness, for they dared not unclosethe the shutters, lest some prying eye should discover their presence. The day, therefore, passed sadly and slowly by. Nicolette thought over her plans for flight; the children, freed from their first fears, had time to think of the parents from whom they had never before been separated, and, well as they loved the kind Nicolette, they wept with anxious longing to rejoin them.

At length the evening came. The last ray of sunlight ceased to peer through the crevice of the closed window-shutter. They sat in darkness, when the key was heard to turn in the lock, and the step and voice of Mother Raynal were heard. Little Adele sprang forward to meet her, and, casting a roguish glance at the basket she carried on her arm, saw a nice piece of cake lying in it beside the fruit.

But the countenance of the old woman wore a sad and troubled expression. A faint and transient smile passed over it as she gave the sweet gift to the delighted child; but the cloud soon returned. Drawing Nicolette aside, while the little ones were devouring the cake, she told the faithful nurse the cause of her present sadness. "I have bad, bad news for you, my poor Nicolette," said she. "I think it best you should know it; but do not lose your courage; perhaps

we may be able to devise something As I sat in my old place in the market, offering my fruit to the passers-by, I noticed two or three men lying on the pavement, a few steps distant from where I was. They were sleeping off the fumes of a drunken frolic. Wild and savage they looked, and I saw at once they belonged to the Jacobin party, for they wore the well-known red caps. I determined to take heed and watch them closely. They awoke at last, and began to talk to each other in an under-tone. I could distinguish every word, for I placed myself so that I could hear, though I sat with my head bowed over my knitting, as if I had fallen asleep.

“ ‘The old woman is asleep ; we can say what we please,’ said one of the men to his comrade.

“ ‘ Maybe not,’ said the other, laughing ; ‘ let’s see if she is. I will help myself to a handful of those nice olives in her basket ; and if she does not raise an outcry over the theft, I will believe she is really asleep ’

“ He did so. I quietly suffered him to take what he wanted ; and so, thinking I did not hear, they talked to each other quite freely about their fruitless pursuit of the Martinieres, who, they said, must certainly have escaped. They also spoke of the suspicion they had of you, my

faithful Nicolette; they thought you had played them false, in order to gain time and follow your master with the children. 'Gone she cannot be!' said one; 'she must certainly yet fall into our hands, and well shall she be punished for having fooled us, in sending us after booty where none was to be found.'

" 'She shall repent of it, I tell you,' cried another, with many curses; 'we will catch her yet, and hang her up between the children. I have just thought of a good plan to find her,' he continued, springing up from the pavement where he was sitting. 'I gave the treacherous hag a cut with my dagger as I loosened the cord that bound her arms. It was a deep flesh-wound, and must have bled a great deal. I daresay she did not take time to bind it up. Let us go back to the house, and see if the blood that dropped from her arm will not guide us to her hiding-place; for hidden in the neighbourhood she must be.'

" 'What a cunning fellow you are, Pierre!' said his companion; 'what a pity it was not thought of sooner! It is so near night that it would be useless to search after her now; but we will make it our first business in the morning.'

" 'They then began to talk of matters in which I had no interest, but I had heard enough to

make my heart sad. It beat as if it would break. I could scarcely await the hour for coming home. I dared not leave a moment sooner than usual. I longed to know if you were safe, and to warn and advise with you, my poor Nicolette. At last I left. As I walked along the street, even to the door of my own house, I stooped down as if looking for something I had lost; but it was really to see if you could be traced by the blood from your wound. They said it was too dark to see; but anxiety for you and the children gave sharpness to my old eyes. It went through me like the point of a dagger, as I saw large dark spots like blood all along, and even on the step of my door. The blood must have dropped from your arm as you stood knocking for admission. The neighbours cannot have failed to see it throughout the day, although I did not notice it in the morning, and there is now no doubt in my mind that your pursuers will discover your hiding-place without much trouble."

Nicolette listened to this recital in silence, and with a face pale as marble. When Mother Raynal had concluded, poor Nicolette pressed her hands on her brow and begged direction from above, in this her increasing trouble. No word was heard to issue from the lips of any one within the lowly cottage for a space. Mother

Raynal's heart was sorely pressed with apprehension of coming evil. Nicolette felt that by the aid of Heaven alone she could hope to avert the death threatened to herself and her helpless charge. The children, seeing by the expression of her face that something unusual was the matter, pressed closely to her side, and looked on affrighted, not even daring to weep. She noticed them not; but at length, falling upon her knees, she poured out an earnest prayer that the resolution she had formed might be attended with the best results.

When she had ended, she thus addressed Mother Raynal, who stood sad and altogether discouraged beside her,—

“My good mother, I see but one way of escape—a desperate one, it is true; but as it is the only one, I must try it, although it cost me my life. I will go to the rulers of the revolutionists; I will place myself before the tribunal as if for justice, and to their rude will and unbridled power I will oppose courage and craft, by which I hope to conquer.”

“Alas!” cried Mother Raynal, raising her hands in terror at the very thought, “that would be to rush straightway into the lion's mouth. No, dear Nicolette, this thou shalt never do; I cannot permit it.”

"It will have to be so, my good Raynal; it is only in this manner that I can hope to save these children," replied the faithful nurse. "Wouldst thou that I should break my word to those sorrowing parents and prove faithless to my benefactors, to whom I owe all of happiness I ever knew, only out of cowardice and the dread of those men, who are only able to kill the body? Oh, think not so badly of me!"

The old woman dried her streaming eyes with the corner of her linen apron, and said, in accents broken by emotion, "God helps those who are firm in a good cause. Go, then; go confidently on your way; I will oppose no hindrance, nor cause you to err in what you believe to be your duty."

The good dame, although sad and worn out with the fatigues of the day, now laid herself down on her straw pallet,—not to sleep, but to listen anxiously for every footfall or sound of tumult in the street. With an attention not less strained, the faithful Nicolette watched over her sleeping charge throughout the long hours of that dreary night, picturing to herself the scene to be enacted on the following morning, and thinking over the words with which she should address those who, in the fearful massacre of the previous September, had shown that they pos-

sessed hearts deaf to all appeals of mercy and justice.

CHAPTER III.

NICOLETTE'S NEW DEVICE.

As soon as it was light, and while the children yet slept, Nicolette left the cottage, scarce daring to think whether she would be permitted to return. With a look of unutterable love, she bent over the unconscious little slumberers, and imprinted what might be a last kiss upon their rosy lips. Her heart swelled, forbidding the use of language in which to thank the good Mother Raynal. Pressing her withered hand in silence, she departed sadly on the way which, for all she knew, might lead her to the guillotine.

After a short walk she stood before that dread tribunal. "Citizens," said she, recovering from a momentary weakness, and feeling the need of all the courage she could call up at this trying moment, in which she addressed those whose voices, notwithstanding the early hour of the day, had already pronounced the death-doom on many—"citizens, I have come to lay my complaint before you and ask redress! The family in which I served all my lifetime have fled from

France, and I am left behind without support. And that is not all. They have left two children behind. They were so young that they would have hindered their flight; but the burden of their maintenance falls on me, who am too helpless almost to support myself. Besides, as children of a royalist, they have fallen under the law of proscription, and must suffer death. But I am old and weak; my carefully saved wages are in my master's possession. How can I expect to earn enough to support me without aid from some one? What I came to ask from you is this—that you will suffer me to keep those children, so that I can hire them out, or make them work for me to replace the money which I have lost by my master's flight."

"Pray, where have you been hidden all day with these children?" inquired the citizen-judge suspiciously; "it seems rather that you were anxious to avoid the proscription."

"If so," rejoined the faithful nurse, "would I now come voluntarily before you? When I left the house where the soldiers found me bound, I took the children to the abode of an old friend of my own, where I purposed to leave them until I should be able to look round and discover where my master and my means were hidden. Do you doubt what I am telling you? I will

go back to bring those children to your presence, so that you may do with them as you please; but you will have to send some one with me to help, for they will not come willingly."

The quiet and indifferent manner in which Nicolette spoke completely deceived those whom she was trembling with anxiety to blind.

"You are right, my good dame," said one of the judges, laughing, "keep the children, and revenge yourself to your heart's content on their villainous parents. Make their lives as miserable as you can! Wring your lost treasure from them! What a pity, *Chouare*, that thou art not a man! Thou wert, in that case, worth thy weight in gold to our party. Here," he continued, taking up a pen and writing a few words hastily, "there is a certificate for thee and the children! But take care what thou art about! There will be a sharp eye kept on thee and all thy movements."

The heart of Nicolette throbbed so violently with joy as he handed her the paper which insured the safety of herself and those she loved, that she feared its loud beating would betray her. With a great effort, however, she maintained her outward calmness, and thrust the paper into her pocket with an air of great indifference.

"Let me alone for that," said she; "I will be sure not to spoil the children;" and forcing

a laugh at variance with every emotion of her honest heart, she walked with slow and measured step from the judgment-hall.

Having gained the street, tears relieved her of the burden she had imposed on herself, but no sooner did she find herself in the little room of Mother Raynal, than she fell on her knees and thanked Him whose power had thus far saved the lives of the innocent children. She also prayed for strength and courage to meet the trials which she felt in store for her.

With all a mother's tenderness and joy, she then pressed her darling nurslings again and again to her heart, scarcely able to believe that they indeed were saved; while they, unconscious of what she had done or suffered for their sakes, returned her caresses with that warmth of affection which is the peculiar property of childhood.

Mother Raynal sat in her high-backed chair, and surveyed the group before her with a countenance expressive of the delight she felt in the success of Nicolette's bold project. Her aged eyes sparkled once more with the brilliancy of youth; the glow, belonging to years long since passed, mantled on her faded cheek; the fire of benevolence kindled in her heart, and forced her to renew the offer she had made to Nicolette in the hour of her deepest darkness. It was, to sell

her cottage and give the proceeds to the faithful nurse, so as to enable her to travel with John and Adele to Hamburg, which city her sanguine heart would not suffer her to doubt Monsieur and Madame Martiniere had safely reached, and from whom she was certain to sustain no loss. She even proposed to set about the matter at once; but Nicolette forbade such a sacrifice. She told her on what terms only she was allowed to keep the children. She declared that for the present all thoughts of removal were impossible, as she knew she would be closely watched, and that it was necessary she should engage in some kind of business, because no other plan would enable her to baffle the vigilance of her suspicious judges.

To carry the first part of her plan into execution—namely, that of procuring support—she borrowed some money from Mother Raynal, with which she set up a small trade in fruit, and in which John and his sister were able to assist. The boy carried the basket to and from the market-place, and offered its contents for sale to the passers-by. The little Adele had her portion of the work to perform mostly at home. It was her task to pare the fruit, to cut it in pieces, and prepare it to be dried in the sun. Nicolette clothed them in garments of rough, dark linen,

such as were worn by the lower classes at their work. At first they put these garments on very unwillingly, though they uttered neither remonstrance nor complaint. But when the true, and hitherto indulgent nurse, whom they had loved even as they did their own mother, began to speak to them with sharpness, and treat them with severity, which she sometimes did when people were passing by, they looked so sorrowful and downcast, that public suspicion was soon changed to sympathy for the oppressed.

"I do wonder why Nicolette is always so displeased with us, and never gives us a kind word," said Adele to her brother one evening on their way home. "She is a great deal worse at the market, and I hate to be so scolded before folks. To-day she slapped my hand because I would not give it to an ugly, dirty-looking man whom she called 'Citizen,' who was buying fruit from us, and asked who I was. Ah, I do wish I knew how I could make her as good as she used to be!"

"Indeed, I do not know any more than yourself, Adele, why Nicolette is so changed," said her brother, as he caressed the weeping child; "but she has always loved us so truly, and been so kind, that I am sure she means well. Let us wait patiently, then, until better days come, as she so often tells me they will. Dear Adele!

Nicolette knows why she treats us as she does in the market-place, and I am sure she intends it in some way for our own good. How often has she read to us from Mother Raynal's Bible 'Those whom God loves he chastens.' "

"Well, then, I will not be sad nor complain any more," said the little girl, quite comforted, and with the happy versatility of childhood, her thoughts soon settled on other subjects, and she reached her home in cheerful mood.

Wearied by the heat and labours of the day, the brother and sister, stretched upon a bed of straw, were sleeping as soundly as though beneath the silken canopy which hung over their couch in their late luxurious home.

Nicolette pursued the plan she had adopted for the salvation of them all so skilfully, that the suspicions of the revolutionist leaders were completely lulled. The eye of observation was then withdrawn, and she began once more to project arrangements for flight into Germany.

Mother Raynal disposed of her cottage, and gave the greater part of the price to help the travellers on their way, never doubting that she would be repaid by Monsieur Martiniere, whom she supposed to be living safely in Hamburg.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ESCAPE AND THE JOURNEY.

THE day fixed for their departure at length arrived. Accompanied with the good wishes and the blessing of her aged friend, Nicolette and the children passed the first barrier, and set out with her face toward the German border.

Mother Raynal had done her utmost in making every suitable arrangement, which she well understood how to do in the most economical manner. Nicolette had denied herself almost every comfort, yet she was unable to hire a conveyance of any kind, and so she set out with the two children to wander on foot far from their fatherland.

In this manner they proceeded slowly, making a very few miles in the course of the day, for the children soon became weary, and their feet bruised and blistered. They suffered both from hunger and thirst, for our poor travellers feared to keep the high-road. They avoided even the appearance of a path, not knowing where it might lead them. They often lost their way, and wandered for hours through the lonely woods and fields.

The children, however, increased not the difficulty through discontent or peevishness. They

uttered no complaint, although their bleeding feet might well have excused it. Their dear Nicolette was once more the Nicolette of other days in love and goodness, and shunned no sacrifice herself which could soften the hardships her darlings must endure. For their sakes the faithful nurse pined over the slowness, the painfulness of their journey. A week passed, and they were but a few leagues distant from Marseilles. Yet in this instance was the Providence which watches over the good once more made manifest. This very tediousness was the means of their escape.

In two or three days after they had left Marseilles, the absence of Nicolette and the children from the market-place was observed. The rude Jacobins, who had so long watched their every movement, set out in eager pursuit of the fugitives, greedy for revenge. Never dreaming that she would travel on foot with children of such a tender age, they sought her at a greater distance than she really was; and while she yet wandered in the fields, scarce three leagues distant from the guillotine, her baffled pursuers had returned from a chase they now gave up as hopeless.

Ignorant of all this, the devoted Nicolette, with her little companions, pursued her painful

journey. The difficulties of the way increased, and new misfortunes arose at every step. The little Adele, too delicate to bear the exertion demanded of her, fell sick, and becoming entirely unable to walk, she had to be carried by the faithful nurse and her brother the whole day.

This occasioned delay; they must rest so often, and then the dread of being overtaken. It was a touching picture to behold the boy, as he carried his sick and helpless sister, her little arm flung round his neck, and her pale face resting on his shoulders. How carefully he picked his way! How he avoided everything that might cause him to make a wavering step, lest it should increase the suffering of the child! When Adele fell asleep, he would lay her gently on the soft grass or among the ripening grain, for it was in early harvest; but only until he had sought out some thicket or tree, from whence he could carry branches to form a canopy of green leaves to shield her from the hot sun.

Until this time Nicolette had taken advantage of the warm and beautiful nights, when the moon poured down her benevolent light on the fields, to sleep among the new hay that was everywhere spread out. She feared to ask lodging in a village or an ale-house, lest it might furnish a clue to those who might be in pursuit

of her; but now she feared the effect of the night air on the sick child. She therefore sought to find shelter beneath a roof, and was, at last, quite glad to find admittance into a rude cabaret, which, though looking like the abode of vice and misery, yet stood alone and desolate on the border of a wood.

Carefully bolting the door of the wretched little chamber into which she was shown. Nicolette gave herself up to quiet slumber, for the first time since her flight from Marseilles; for little Adele was sleeping sweetly, and seemed much amended. The great efforts she had made, the severe emotions she had felt, within the last few days, had completely exhausted her strength; and sleep sat now so heavily upon her, that, in spite of her intention to rest but for a few hours, and continue her journey in the early light, she did not awake until the sun had risen high in the heavens, and darted his fiery beams full in the faces of the sleepers.

Frightened at what she deemed her own slothfulness, she sprang hastily from her hard bed; but one glance at the children by her side, who were still enjoying the slumber so necessary to their health, forbade all self-reproach.

She now thought of some changes of linen for them, which she had carried in a small bundle,

and turned toward the table on which she had laid it the evening before. But who can describe her consternation? The bundle was gone! The open window, in which a pane was broken, fully confirmed the suspicion that at once seized her of its having been stolen. All their spare clothing was in it, and, worse than that, it held her little store of money.

Poor Nicolette! The stout heart which had so nobly borne up under so many difficulties was now fairly sunken. She wrung her hands in despair. What could she do? How was she to provide for those children on the long and painful journey yet before them? Could she now hope ever to restore them to their parents, as she had promised? Would they not die of hardship by the way?

Weeping bitterly, she called in her host, explained her misfortune, and besought his assistance in recovering her loss. But poor consolation came from him.

"Make a fool of me if you can," said he maliciously. "You want to impose upon me with a tale of your money having been stolen in my house, only to cheat me out of a night's lodging. But you cannot come over me in this manner. I am up to such tricks; and you shall not step over my threshold until you have paid me to the last farthing."

"Oh, do not do so; be not so unjust and cruel," prayed the anguish-stricken Nicolette. "These poor children must die of hunger, if you refuse to help me to find what I am sure is stolen. Let your own people be searched, for no prowling thief could have known that on this night a stranger was sleeping in this room. Besides, I bolted the window, and no one but the girl, who brought me a pitcher of water, could have seen my bundle, or where I placed it "

"Do not provoke me too far!" cried the host in a rage; "and take care how you accuse, or else you shall go before the magistrate of the village close by, where you will have to prove your complaint, or pay for the suspicion you have thrown upon my house. Your assurance causes me to suspect you are some escaped prisoner, or else you have been driven off for some misdemeanour; so show me your papers, or I shall give you up to the mob "

Nicolette, hearing this threat, turned paler than at the moment when she discovered her loss. The passport, signed by the Jacobin leader in the judgment-hall, was carefully treasured, but packed in the little bundle. It was, with it, lost.

"Now, what's the matter? Can't you find any?" said the host, smiling maliciously. "Sup-

pose you go with me to the justice. You have your choice, either to do this, or leave my house this moment. Take the children and be off at once, lest I repent my indulgence "

Nicolette, who was now fully assured that the landlord knew of the theft, and perhaps had committed it himself, felt keenly the loss of her passport, on which her own safety and that of her young companions depended. She awoke John, bade him rise hastily, and taking little Adele in her arms, was about to leave the cabaret, without making any further attempt to move the host in behalf of her distressed circumstances; but she found this not so easily accomplished as she had at first supposed.

"Hollo!" cried the landlord, as she was about to step over the threshold, "do you think I am such a fool and so very good-natured as to let you go without asking you to pay for your lodging? No, no; you shall not stir until it is paid."

"Oh, have pity, do have pity!" entreated Nicolette. "I have nothing more, and must beg a piece of bread somewhere for these poor children's breakfast "

"You say you have nothing!" returned the host "I should call that a nice woollen shawl in which the child is wrapped. What do you want with it? I'll be bound you have stolen it.

It is warm weather now; no danger that the little one will freeze. I will take it for the reckoning. Be glad that I let you off so easily, and be off at once."

The shawl to which he alluded was one which she had wrapped round the child on the night they fled from Monsieur Martiniere's house, and it contrasted somewhat strangely with the rest of the garb in which they were clothed. Although shocked beyond expression to know that such injustice and unworthiness could dwell in the human heart, even in this hard stroke her pious spirit recognized the interposition of a kind Providence. The shawl, since she had lost her passport, might awaken suspicion elsewhere, and in places more dangerous than this obscure ale-house. Only anxious now to get out of the reach of the unprincipled landlord, without a murmur Nicolette suffered him to take away the only spare garment now remaining. "God, who clothes the lilies, and gives food to the ravens, though they neither toil nor spin," thought she, "will care for these helpless little ones, and be their guard and guide." With this comforting assurance her heart was somewhat lighter, although stripped of all earthly means, and she stepped briskly through the dark green forest, quieting the anxious inquiry of John after some

breakfast with the promise that as soon as they reached the next farm or village she would beg some for them both.

They had not travelled very far on their forest path, shaded from the sun's melting rays by the old, solemn-looking oaks, when the rattling of wheels was heard behind them. A carriage came up, and a lady lay sleeping on the soft cushions, with a handsome English dog near her. Nicolette cast a longing look toward it. She felt like begging that she might get up behind, and, with the children, be carried a little way; but the fear that her circumstances might be inquired into, and the dread of awakening suspicion by her answers withheld her. The carriage passed slowly. Nicolette observed that a trunk on the board behind had burst open, and some pieces of clothing were about to drop out. Needy as she was, she thought not for a moment of appropriating to her own use that which, in another instant, would be lying in the road. She called to the coachman, who stopped at once, while she told him of the accident which had happened to the trunk.

The lady awoke, and looking with astonishment at the little company, began to talk to Nicolette while the coachman was repairing the broken trunk.

"Where are you going?" said she. "You seem to have a very sick child there, who, I think, would be much better at home and in bed."

The heart of poor Nicolette bounded with joy as soon as the lady spoke. The language she used, which was German, which our faithful heroine well understood, sounded like music in her ears. She therefore lost all fear, and detailed, as briefly as possible, that she was on her flight to Hamburg, where she hoped to meet the parents of these children, who were among the proscribed. She also related the great misfortune which had befallen her on the night before in the loss of her bundle.

In this unexpected meeting the hand of God was again visible, for the lady bade her take the vacant seat in the carriage, and provided for them all for four days; at the end of which they were obliged to separate, as the roads leading to their destinations lay in different directions.

The pleasant ride and good food had entirely restored the health of the little Adele. Nicolette, as she watched the rosy tint that once more began to steal over the cheeks of the child, forgot all her discouragements, and gave herself up in thankful acknowledgment of God's great mercy. Nevertheless, they felt the trouble and incon-

venience of their present poverty, even more than at the beginning of their journey. The interval of rest, the comforts they had enjoyed for those five days, and the delicacies which the rich lady procured for the sick child, were such as they had been accustomed to in their father's house, and served by the contrast to make their lot seem harder than before. Instead of the soft beds where they were permitted to rest, the children now slept sometimes on the dry leaves of the forest, hastily thrown together so as to repel the damp arising from the earth, sometimes on rushes, sometimes on the straw in the barn of some good-natured peasant, who permitted them to lodge there, but neither white bread nor fruit did they taste; milk but seldom. They quenched their thirst with water from the brook. A piece of black bread or a few potatoes was all they could obtain to quiet the cravings of hunger. To gain even this stinted fare, Nicolette was often obliged to bear the rude jests and unfeeling sneers of the rough boors in some neighbouring peasant's house, whither she went with lingering step, to beg from their compassion a little food for herself and children.

As time wore on, and each day increased the distance between them and Marseilles, Nicolette's fears of pursuit gradually lessened. It was, there-

fore, with a feeling of gladness she saw a nobleman's castle in the distance. "There is plenty there; they will not refuse the little I want," said she to herself as, having left the children to await at the road-side her return, she turned her steps toward it.

But it was not long before she returned pale and trembling. The servants, as she approached, were about to feed the pack of dogs; and to have some sport, as they said, they set them on the beggar-woman. Enraged at being disappointed of their food, the hungry animals rushed upon the terrified Nicolette. The foremost, seizing her by her naked foot, bit it so that the blood came. Breathless, and with empty hands, she returned to the waiting children. Concealing her pain, and binding up the wound as well as she could, they resumed their toilsome march. Several hours passed ere they reached any village or place that promised to furnish the only boon they asked, food. It was long past mid-day, and they had eaten nothing. Little Adele cried, because she was hungry; and John was sad and silent, though not on his own account. He was hungry too, but he cared not for that. It was that his beloved nurse had so much to endure for their sakes.

Not a word was spoken. They had not the

spirits to converse as usual, and were more discouraged than ever. At length they crossed a meadow, where a boy younger than John was herding a number of fine cows. As the animals grazed quietly around, the boy, seated under the shadow of a branching oak, busied or amused himself with making a bird-cage, which he was endeavouring to ornament to the utmost of his simple skill. Our weary wanderers sat down near him, and, attracted by the open and good-humoured expression in the young peasant's face, John felt that he might venture to speak to him.

"Does it give you much trouble to keep your cows from straying?" asked he; "I see you are at work on a pretty cage"

"Yes, indeed, I do work," answered the little cow-herd, "and well I may; I earn half a franc every day by my cages. The cows do not roam far, for you see the pasture is very good, and I can sleep or be as lazy as I please; but I had rather work, for I know idleness to be a sin. I have one of the best masters in the world, and I can lay up two whole francs every week. I have now enough saved to begin to go to school tomorrow, and this is the last day I shall be with the cows in the meadow."

"Two francs a-week!" repeated John, thoughtfully "Do you think I could earn as much

if I were to have a place like yours for a few months?"

"I do not know," answered the boy; "but I think you might. Our master is the richest man in the neighbourhood, and so good that none of his tenants are poor. But there he is riding over the fields; you can ask him yourself."

Before Nicolette fairly understood the meaning of John's inquiries, or had time to make any objection, the rider had come up close beside them. As he reined up his horse he said in a gentle tone,—

"So, Pierre, you have company, it seems"

"Yes, dear sir," answered the little cow-herd, without the least embarrassment; "this stranger boy was just asking me if I thought he could earn something, to be paid beforehand, by herding cows for a few months. I have a notion he would like the place I am giving up."

The gentleman cast a searching look on John, whose coarse garb afforded no cause to doubt the truth of Pierre's supposition. "Do you really wish to enter into my service?" said he kindly; "but why so particular to inquire about the payment in advance?"

"So that our dear Nicolette may no longer have to beg, nor my little sister to cry for hunger," answered John, as he rose from his seat

on the ground, and bowed with a grace strangely at variance with his coarse garments.

"What did you say?" inquired the horseman, as he dismounted and came nearer. The manners, the language of the boy were those of one belonging to the upper ranks, and yet he was clothed like the rudest peasant, and the gentleman was greatly surprised. "Tell me," he continued, "who is this woman, and who are you, my boy?"

Nicolette had started up in affright from the grass, where she had until this moment sat, and was about to answer the question addressed to John, but the boy, taking her hand and kissing it, entreated that she would let him speak. "Dear Nicolette," he said, "I will stay here if the gentleman will keep me. The work I have undertaken will not be hard; and if my employer will give me from ten to fifteen francs beforehand, you can journey on to Hamburg with Adele, and have no need to beg by the way; and when you have found our parents, you can send back the money, and I can meet you, and we will all be happy together once more."

Nicolette could not restrain her emotion, although in the presence of a stranger. She pressed the noble boy to her heart, kissed his fair brow again and again, and then, as well as her excited feelings permitted, she related a part of the cir

cumstances which had driven them from their home and country.

"My brave boy!" said the gentleman, addressing John, when Nicolette had ended her narrative, "I will not hire you as a cow-herd, nor take you into my service, but I will lend you the money to carry out your plan. I want no other security than your own noble face; and," added he, smiling, "that my money may come back quicker, I will send you all some miles on your way." As he concluded, he drew his purse from his pocket, and handed the promised sum to John, who stood trembling with joy before him.

Nicolette was eloquent in her expressions of gratitude; but the benevolent nobleman withdrew himself as quick as possible.

"Did I not tell you that we had the best master in the world!" cried the little cow-herd.

Nicolette and the children thanked God for this wonderful help, which seemed to her little less than miraculous.

Accompanied by Pierre, they again set forth for the high-road, where they were soon overtaken by the promised vehicle. A comfortable carriage, drawn by two swift horses, which the coachman told them was to be at their service for two days, had been sent by the kind nobleman. Having taken leave of the little herds

man, they took their places within it, where, to their no small joy, they found a basket filled with eatables. In their present half-starved condition nothing could be more acceptable.

With renewed cheerfulness and fresh courage, they left the carriage on the third day, to prosecute their journey once more on foot, and it appeared as if all the difficulties attending this painful journey were overcome. As they approached the borders of Germany they were everywhere hospitably received. Often some good-natured countryman would let them ride a few miles in his waggon,—thus speeding their way and sparing them fatigue. At last, with great joy they hailed the towers of Hamburg, which they reached before the money given them by the benevolent nobleman was half expended.

CHAPTER V.

NEW TROUBLES.

NICOLETTE's first care was to hire a small dwelling, where she could safely lodge the children. Having readily found one suitable, she made as little delay as possible in endeavouring to find out her beloved master and mistress.

Allowing herself no time to rest, she betook herself to the police-office, to inquire after Monsieur Martiniere, whom she believed to have emigrated to Hamburg six months before; but no person knew the name. Among the many fugitives who had left France, and were now dwelling in this maritime city, there was not one who could give the least tidings of his fate.

Once more discouraged, and fearing the worst had befallen her beloved friends, Nicolette advertised in all the newspapers which she thought the parents would be likely to see, that the Martiniere children had arrived, and where they were to be found. She then awaited, with great anxiety, the result of this measure.

Week after week passed, and no tidings came. Every knock at the door of their little dwelling caused them to fly to open it with eager curiosity; but no well-remembered features presented themselves to their eyes. Each night and morning the prayer of the children, on bended knees, was poured out at the feet of Him who is the hearer of the suppliant, that they might be able to find their beloved parents; but the hope of what the day might bring forth, which cheered them in the morning, faded into disappointment as the hours dragged slowly by.

Nicolette, although she endeavoured to conceal

all she felt from John and his sister, was fairly discouraged. She feared that their escape had not proved as successful as her own, but that they had perished by the hands of the revolutionists. This fear at length amounted to certainty, and she gave up all hope of seeing them again.

To add to the weight which lay upon her heart, the little store of money which she had brought with her to Hamburg, by the expenses of advertising and searching public documents in order to ascertain the arrival of foreigners, was nearly exhausted. At the same time, she became sick and unable to do anything by which a few francs might be earned. The bitter pangs of hope deferred, the uncertainty of the fate of her beloved master and mistress, anxiety to know how she should support the children, in addition to the want of sufficient and nourishing food, preyed upon a frame already exhausted by the great exertions she had made, and she was stretched upon a bed of sickness.

There lay this faithful servant, poor, helpless, and ill, in a strange land, with none to extend the hand of friendship, with no one to sympathize with or minister to her wants in her hours of pain. Although to herself death would have been a relief, she dared not think of it when she

gazed on the desolate orphans who stood beside her. The little Adele nursed her as well as could be expected from her childish ability, but it was not much she could do. To bring a glass of fresh water from the neighbouring fountain, to smooth her dear Mother Nicolette's pillow, to open the window to give her air when her fever was highest, or to sweep out their little room, were the limits of her services; but they were rendered willingly,—and these labours of love, though so small, were of great value in the eyes of one who felt all a mother's affection for the child.

Poor John! he was not idle in the meantime. He earned a few groschens from time to time, but what was that among three persons, and rent to pay! He racked his brain to think of some steady employment, on which they could depend for support. He would object to no occupation, however humble, even to sweeping chimneys, as he had seen the little Savoyards do in France. But the tide of immigration had been so great, so many of the oppressed had sought a refuge in this favoured city, that every place seemed to be filled.

After much deliberation, Nicolette hit upon an expedient to supply the place of the money so fast diminishing. Obligated to keep her bed,

not only from sickness, but by the pain of her foot, which had been bitten by the dog, and which she could not attend to at the proper time, she had little need of clothes for the present, so she resolved to pawn them in order to procure bread for herself and the children. An honest broker in the neighbourhood advanced a small sum upon them. It was not long until she found a method of investing these little funds in a manner most advantageous in their present condition. With a view to economy, she had chosen a little dwelling in the suburbs of Hamburg, and not far from it were large gardens, where fruit and vegetables were raised for market. Giving a part of what she received to John, she bade him seek the owner of one of these gardens, and purchase a basket of fresh plums and pears, which he could sell in the city at a small profit, as Mother Raynal and themselves had done in Marseilles.

The boy, delighted to turn fruit-merchant once more, declared his readiness. Without a moment's delay, he went to a gardener, showed him, with true childlike simplicity, his little treasure, for which he begged he would give him good fruit in exchange.

"Ah! do give me the best," said he entreatingly, "for I must now try to support three persons, until I can find out our parents—our

dear good Nicolette, who is too sick to work, my little sister, and myself, but I do not want much."

The same kind Providence who had brought them so far safely on their dangerous way, was caring for them still, and had directed the boy to an old and benevolent man, who, pleased with the open simplicity of the boy, not only gave him fruit for the full value of his money, but a little flask of cordial for the sick Nicolette. Oh, how happy was our poor John! How cheerfully he carried his heavy basket back to the city! He offered his fruit to the passers-by with so pleasant a face, that they could not refuse to buy. In a short time his basket was quite empty. Unfatigued, he ran back to the gardener, had his basket refilled, and was, in his sales, as successful as he had been in the morning. Who can describe the joy with which he handed the two francs he had earned to Nicolette, or his feeling of proud satisfaction when he saw her and his sister eating the bread purchased by the fruit of his labour!

From this time he arose with the dawn, hurried off to the garden, and was back in the city by sunrise, and had sold half the contents of his basket before the other little fruit-merchants had made their appearance in the market-place.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HAPPY MEETING

ONE day, as he was carrying his basket of fruit as usual through the street, he noticed a child hanging out of an open window in the second story of a large hotel. From its movements he guessed it must be alone, for no one would certainly suffer it to lean over in such a manner as to threaten danger each moment.

Struck with the peril of the little one, without stopping one moment to consider, he stepped quickly into the open door of the vestibule, set his basket on the floor, and with the speed of an arrow flew up-stairs. It was as he supposed. The open door showed him the child alone and in the greatest danger. The unconscious little creature had clambered up into the window, and each moment she leaned further out. The slightest start or movement, and a fall was inevitable. Breathless with anxiety, but still retaining the necessary presence of mind, he crept cautiously and unobserved behind the little maiden. Grasping her by her clothes, he drew her back from her dangerous position, and placed her on a sofa. Not understanding what was meant, and frightened to find herself in the grasp

of a stranger boy, the child screamed with all her might.

The noise soon brought her nurse-maid, who, forgetful of her duty to her charge, had taken advantage of the absence of her mistress, and left little Mary to amuse herself as she pleased, while she enjoyed a short chat with the servants below. She had scarcely taken the little one, whom she was trying to quiet, upon her lap, when the mother, returning from her walk, entered the room, and asked, "What is the matter?"

"A thief! a thief!" she cried, pointing maliciously to John, who was still holding the child's sash, which had become unloosed in his hand. "While I went to bring Miss Mary her doll out of the next room, this fellow slipped in—to steal something, I am sure, for he had hold of Miss Mary's frock when I came in"

"It is not true," said John, blushing and affrighted. "I saw the little girl hanging out of the window, in danger of being dashed to pieces on the pavement. Supposing that she was alone, as, indeed, I found her, I came upstairs to prevent her from falling out"

"Go out of my presence, Leonore," said the lady angrily to the conscience-stricken nursery-maid. "Woe to you if my child had been dashed to the pavement below!"

“ Oh, what a young villain ! ” exclaimed Leonore, who had recovered from her fright, “ to lie so, right in my lady’s face, and bring an honest servant-maid to disgrace Wait, boy—you shall not be let off so easily ! ” she continued, seizing poor John by the arm, as, without waiting for the mother’s thanks, he was marching off in search of the basket he had left below. “ Do you think, my lady, he would be going off in this manner if he did not know that he was lying, and he did come to steal ? It is too hard that a faithful servant must be belied and suspected on the evidence of such a vagabond as he ”

The lady cast a searching glance at John, who, still in the grasp of the angry damsel, stood pale and silent from anger and alarm. His coarse clothing, his naked feet (for the tenderly-raised son of wealthy parents had long been without the luxury of shoes), caused the opinion of the lady to waver. She now believed the assertion of Leonore, and supposed that John was really guilty. With no time to expostulate or to excuse himself, he was sent down-stairs.

Sorrowfully he looked round for his basket, for he wished to leave the house as quickly as possible. But it was nowhere to be seen. He inquired of the servants, but they either would not listen to him, or cut him off shortly by

saying, "Get out of the way, you vagabond! Why do you bother me about your basket?" At last a butler, calling out to him, "Take yourself off, you had better!" seized him by the arm, and fairly thrust him into the street.

John stood irresolute on the pavement, fairly bewildered with pain and mortification. How could he go back with empty hands to Nicolette, and add new sorrow to her faithful heart by the tale he had to tell of his misfortune? With his basket he had lost the hard earnings of many weeks, and was now once more as poor as when he first thought of commencing his present occupation. As he stood meditating on his sad condition, and covering his tear-filled eyes with his hands, one of the house-servants, who, with some others of his companions, had eaten the fruit left in the basket below, came forward, and, pitying the distress of the boy, said, in order to compensate in some measure for the wrong he had done him, "Now, my little man, do not be so cast down for the sake of a handful of fruit. See, there is your basket, and truly it is empty. But I will give you something to do which will help to fill it again. There, take up that leather trunk; it is not very heavy. If you carry it to the haven, where the family to whom it belongs are about to go on ship-board, they will pay you

for your labour, and so you need not cry any longer."

John took up the trunk mechanically, and turned his eyes, still streaming with tears, toward its owners, whose footsteps, distinctly heard, proclaimed them close beside him. With one loud cry he threw his burden to the ground. "Father! mother!" he exclaimed, and rushed into the extended arms of Monsieur Martiniere.

"What! can it be possible, in the providence of God? John, my son!" cried father and mother both at once. A touching scene now ensued in consequence of this unexpected meeting, and a crowd beginning to assemble, Monsieur Martiniere, with his wife and son, retreated into the hotel, to avoid the demonstrations of curiosity exhibited by those who were present at the recognition.

The words of feeling are but few, and but few were spoken. After a few inquiries after Adele and Nicolette, they were on their way to the little cottage in the suburbs, which they soon reached, and the long separated were again reunited. It was some time before they recovered sufficiently from their emotion to be able to tell each other the severe adventures through which they had passed. On the night of his precipitate flight from his own house, Monsieur Martiniere

was so happy as to escape pursuit, having taken a direction entirely opposite to that pointed out by Nicolette to the Jacobins ; and having reached a distance of twelve miles from Marseilles, on the road leading to the German frontier, he waited there, expecting every day to be met by Nicolette with the children.

The anxiety attendant on his disappointment drove him back to Marseilles. He was arrested by the republican party by the way, and thrown into prison, where, together with his wife, he languished for more than half a year. At length, by bribing the jailer with a great part of the wealth he yet possessed, he succeeded in escaping once more. Although the effort was attended with great danger, he sought as diligently as possible throughout Marseilles for his children and their nurse, but found them not.

He had, by some inquiries at the market-place, met with our old acquaintance, Mother Raynal, and through her learned that Nicolette, with her little charge, had left the city a short time previously, and was on her way to Hamburg, where she expected to find him and her beloved mistress. They embarked at once in one of the ships just ready to sail for that port, but had been out but one day when a contrary wind coming up suddenly, drove them far out to sea.

where they were taken by a privateering vessel, and carried prisoners to England

Most happily, Monsieur Martiniere found a gentleman there whose acquaintance he had made in travelling some years before. He was a merchant, and rich, and without hesitation advanced the money necessary for his ransom and prosecution of his voyage to Germany. So at length the troubled parents reached Hamburg; but a whole year had elapsed since Nicolette had put her advertisement in the newspapers, and by this time the name and circumstances were forgotten. And now, indeed, it was the description of two children, a brother and sister, who were said to be seeking their parents, and had been taken into Switzerland by a noble lady, that induced him to set out for that country, fully believing that he should find John and Adele. It was just at the moment of their leaving Hamburg for this purpose that they so wonderfully, so providentially met with John, and thus the broken-hearted family were once more restored to each other.

The name of Monsieur Martiniere being well known in Hamburg to the mercantile world, he soon obtained help and assistance to commence business in that city. Setting out anew, with circumspection and industry he soon succeeded,

if not in attaining the great wealth he once possessed, at least in gaining a sufficient competence which, from the contrast afforded to the privations they had undergone, was enjoyed in a better spirit than the affluence of earlier days.

John, too, had the satisfaction of seeing a dashing equipage drive up to the door of his father's house. In it he recognized the lady at the hotel and the little girl whom he had drawn from her perilous position at the window. The mother inquired at once for him, and while she thanked him again and again for the disinterested and important service he had rendered her, entreated him to forgive the wrong that had been done him through Leonore's misrepresentation. "My little Mary," said she, "has been witness in your favour; for as soon as she recovered sufficiently from her fright, I could easily learn from her answers your innocence and her guilt."

But although the lady was now so kind, and John forgave the wrong she had done him, he could not at once forget that she had turned a deaf ear to his prayer for an impartial hearing. He steadily refused to accept the beautiful presents she had brought, believing and declaring that he had done nothing but his duty, which, if occasion offered, he was again ready to do

In the quiet happiness enjoyed by the severely tried Martinieri family, Nicolette experienced the sweet repose which was the well-earned reward of her self-sacrificing love. Although of obscure and humble parentage, she had ennobled herself. With the most devoted kindness Madame Martinieri rendered to her, the nurse of her own childhood, the affection of a daughter; and her husband never thought of her as aught but the saviour of his children.

Nor was the reverence and honour in which she was held confined to her own family circle alone. There were few in Hamburg who had not heard of her deed of noble daring, for a number of public-spirited citizens, who had formed themselves into a society, after the example of the Romans, in order to encourage all philanthropic actions by the bestowment of civic rewards, much to her own surprise conferred a gold medal publicly on her. She lived many years beloved by her own family and respected by all who knew her; and the same quiet, submissive spirit that characterized her in her deep adversity accompanied her throughout a harder trial—the deceitful glare of prosperity.

She has long since passed away from among the living, but she is not forgotten. A simple monument of white marble at this day marks

her last resting-place, which bears the inscription of her name, which needed no further epitaph than this: "Here rests in God the faithful Nicolle;" with the following admonition from 1 Peter ii. 18, 20.—"Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God "

