

house of Baptiste. The worthy couple received me with the cheering intelligence that their patient had passed a night of good repose, and was, in every respect, much better. I requested to be conducted to her. My demand was at once acceded to, and being led into a little apartment, humble but cleanly, with a bright fire blazing upon the hearth, I found the object of my solicitude seated at a table, gazing eagerly upon the miniature. So deeply was she abstracted, she was not aware of my presence, and when I broke the silence, she started to her feet and hastily concealed the miniature in her bosom.

She was conscious, however, that I had witnessed the act, and a deep blush suffused her countenance. I betrayed no astonishment or curiosity, but slightly adverted to the happy improvement in her looks. She was again about to express her gratitude, when I prevented her. "Well, well, as you please," she said, "but it is fit that you know something of the unhappy creature whom you have so greatly befriended."

"Not without it be congenial to your feelings," I answered. "I am convinced that my protection has not been bestowed upon an unworthy object. That to me is a sufficient recompense, but, as yet, I am comparatively a stranger to you, and therefore not entitled to even your friendship, much less to your confidence."

"Ah! sir," she exclaimed, "did you not save me from famishing—insult—prison—haply from death? Yes, yes, there is a frankness in your manner—a candour in your speech that assures me I may confide in you. Will you consent to become the possessor of my secret—my monitor? Do not consider me an impostor—indeed, indeed, I am an oppressed and suffering being—the victim of villany and power."

I took her hand, and requesting her to be seated, said, "If what you say be true, in the sight of Heaven I promise to direct your acts, and to endeavour to redress your wrongs."

"Thanks! Thanks! God will reward you—alas! I can never. Look

here," she said, "taking the miniature from her bosom. Behold the cause of my poverty and suffering. I looked—it was the likeness of a young and noble-looking man.

"And who is he?" I asked.

"My husband! she replied. Her hand dropped by her side with the miniature, and but for my assistance she would have fallen to the ground.

"My good woman," I said, "compose yourself. Let there be no reserve, no concealment with me. Tell me all, and rely upon me as your friend—your protector."

"I do! I do sincerely," she exclaimed. "Alas, it is a tale fraught with bright days, fond hearts, and blighted hopes; but"—she looked around the apartment as if fearful other ears than mine might hear the recital. I rose, and satisfying myself that all was safe, assured her that she might proceed freely. Thus encouraged, she spoke as follows:

"My maiden name was Pauline Rosier, the only child of humble parents, who resided in the village of Plancy, in the department of Aube. As is too frequently the case, I was indulged in every caprice that my youthful mind could fancy. Seventeen summers had shed their lustre on my head, and life was to me a garden of joy. At this period, there came to reside in our village a young man, by name, De Brian, of noble birth and attractive manners. He had been sent, by his father, from Paris, for the better finishing of his education, under tuition of the pastor of our village, as well as for the restoration of an impaired constitution, occasioned by the gaieties and dissipation of the capital. Among the inhabitants, he soon became a favourite, and, at our cottage a constant visitor. My heart was captivated by his appearance, and I regarded him as a being superior to all I had hitherto beheld. He was assiduous in his attentions to me, and at length avowed himself, with the permission of my parents, my lover. This, however, was opposed by the pastor, and his visits forbidden. Young, ardent, and impetuous,