

who deny to us that freedom of action and of religion which kings and emperors thought it a privilege to grant.

She drew back, her bosom heaving, her eyes flashing, all the enthusiasm and determination of generations of warlike ancestors in her voice and mien.

The old nun rose to her feet more quickly than she had moved for years.

'My child,' she said, 'are you mad? Do you realise what you are saying?'

'Do you realise, Mother,' was the answer, 'that it is against you this tyranny is being exercised, as much as against me, though I would avenge it?'

Mother Angelique crossed the room and unlocked the doors of a carved cabinet that hung on the wall; then she turned to the young girl, in her eyes a strange, exalted light.

'Look?' she said. 'It was not against us that Jews and Romans worked their vengeance, but against Him—the Crucified. Shall we bear less than He?'

The delicately carved head of the Christ stood out from its background of heavy, purple velvet. Gabrielle saw it all: the thorns pressing the brow, the bleeding hands and feet, the heart that bore the sin of the world, the lips that cried to heaven that His murderers might be forgiven. There He hung, the Christ in His weakness and His triumph. The young girl saw and understood, but she was not yet conquered.

'Would we have let that happen if we could have prevented it, Mother?' she said; 'and I, ah, my God! Why should I not rid the world of these men—Danton, Marat, Robespierre—who outrage God's Holy Name?'

She threw back her beautiful head and raised one slender, shapely arm high in the air as if calling heaven to witness this cruel wrong that stung her proud, loyal soul. So might Joan of Arc have looked when she led the armies of France to victory. The nun closed the cabinet, and advancing to the young girl took both her hands in hers.

'Gabrielle, little friend,' she said, 'you must seek some one wiser than I to see this matter in its true light. Go to Father Andre and tell him what you have told me. Ah, good God,' she continued, dropping the girl's hands and clasping her own, 'not by further bloodshed will France be regenerated, but by discipline and pain. We need the voice of one crying in the wilderness, one who will preach to the hearts of sinful men. The time is not yet, but the day will come when France will rise from her ashes, beautiful, glorious, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.'

She seemed not to see when Gabrielle courtesied and left the room. Softly the nun passed into the chapel beyond and fell on her knees in her stall. Long and earnestly she prayed for herself, her nuns, for France.

'For me the toil,' she said; for me the labor, the humiliation, if our Lord deems me worthy. To God alone the glory.'

Gradually the twilight descended and all was darkness, save where the red light burned in the sanctuary. In the heart of Mother Angelique, in spite of uncertainty, was that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

'Eugene, dear friend, listen to me'

The speaker stood in a deep oriel window, framed in a background of rich red damask curtains, that brought into relief the raven blackness of her hair and the delicate ivory fairness of her skin. Clad from head to foot in white, Gabrielle de St. Denis was in her own drawing-room; before her one of the handsomest and most chivalrous men in France. It mattered little to her just then that he had been pleading for her hand and for her; other and more weighty matters occupied her mind.

Owing to the troubled state of the times, the young heiress of St. Denis had grown up with more freedom and less formality than was usual in a French demoiselle. Hence the young Viscount de Morlet, whose estates adjoined hers, and who had been her friend and companion from childhood, had dined with her that night and now Madame de Vignon having fallen asleep in her chair, her ward and the Viscount had passed into the drawing-room and were ensconced in the deep oriel window that looked out over the ravine. Tradition had it that this window covered the very spot where the first lord of St. Denis had narrowly missed death from the archer's shaft. The interior of the castle had been improved and furnished by succeeding members of the family, without destroying its dignity or architectural beauty, until it was now one of the handsomest and most luxurious of the old residences of France. The title had become extinct; but the money and lands descended to the young girl, and to her heirs, if she had any.

Love, money, lands, youth, and beauty were, however, far from Gabrielle de St. Denis that night. Her whole being was wrought up to a passionate protest against the weight of tyranny and uncertainty under which France groaned.

'Listen, friend, she said. 'This is not a time for us to think of marrying and giving in marriage; our country is in the throes of mortal agony, and God alone knows what the outcome will be. Rouse yourself, Eugene, and think—think of something besides me.'

'How can I?' he said.

She made a gesture of superb scorn,

'Oh, you men!' she cried; 'you think of nothing but love till you have won, and then—you forget.'

'Ah, is it possible?' he answered, with a smile in his dark eyes, and then he straightened up.

'Gabrielle dear,' he said, 'you think me indifferent, but I am not so; gladly would I bring back to France her Catholic kings and her Catholic faith, but as yet nothing can be done; we nobles who have so far escaped the guillotine are bound hand and foot. Any day our castles may be seized and our own lives pay the forfeit. It is only so far by the faithfulness of our retainers and the mercy of God that we have remained unmolested. Ah, Gabrielle, dear heart!' he continued, as she did not speak, 'not a day passes that the motto of the De Morlets does not ring in my ears: "Je fais fort, et je faïaise"—I make me strong, and I persevere. We Catholic men of France must gird up our loins, for the time will come when our country will need her best and noblest sons.'

She was weeping now—this girl with her passionate love and loyalty for her faith and her belle patrie. Of such is the real France—the France of St. Remy, of St. Louis, of Fenelon, of a long line of saints and kings with illustrious men, whose glorious light can never grow dim.

Swayed by different emotions, Gabrielle thought one moment that she would unfold to the Viscount her plan to go to Paris with the avowed purpose of slaying the man who then ruled France, but on second thought she decided to keep it a secret. Well she knew that to tell Eugene her intentions would be to have them all frustrated. She must act quickly, she thought, and secretly, ere it be too late. Of herself thought nothing. What man or woman with a like purpose ever does. She might escape, or her own life might pay the forfeit; in her present tense, exalted state it mattered little.

Meanwhile here was a man who, in spite of republics or empires, must be dealt with—one who demanded and deserved an answer; so she turned to the young Viscount, who stood now beneath a shaded crystal lamp lit by wax candles, all the light radiating on his handsome, refined face and figure.

'Eugene, dear,' she said, 'you deserve an answer, and you shall have it. I do not say "No," yet for the present I cannot say "Yes." The thought of all the suffering hearts in our beloved patrie, and the exiles near and far, would haunt me. When I know that the pain is less, or, God willing, happily over, then—' she drew near him as she spoke, all the subtle fascination of her eyes, her smile, her low, thrilling voice, in the words—'then, Eugene, I will marry you.'

Like a chevalier of old the Viscount fell on one knee before her; some instinct told him that in her present mood the young girl would not tolerate any deeper expression of his devotion and joy.

(To be concluded next week.)

Australain singers are not flying to the old country because they are starved out of their native land. They are going (says the 'Catholic Press') because their success here has given wings to their ambition. For instance, Miss Narelle, Miss Kate Rooney, and Miss Eva Mylott made handsome incomes for three or four years before they left, incomes much larger than those earned by artists in other spheres. While the painter and the sculptor and the poet are poor and obscure, the singer queens it over the community, and has her regal claims readily acknowledged; and even her right to impose a special tax on her fellow citizens in order that she may soar like a skylark and make the world her empire is allowed. Amy Castles received upwards of £11,000 from her fellow Australians while she was in her teens, and the flower gardens of the continent were robbed to do her homage. On her return visit Melba demanded more than regal honors, and disdained anything less than gold pieces. Ada Crossley had not such high pretensions. Still she has met with enthusiasm which comes in the way of even few statesmen. She arrived some time ago, for instance, by the Ophir at Freemantle, and telegrams in our daily papers read that 'She was accorded a civic reception, and given a special railway car for the journey to Perth, where at the Central Railway station she was welcomed by a very large and enthusiastic crowd. Booking for the first concert at Perth is a record for Western Australia.'

A single trial of MOUNTAIN KING ASTHMA POWDER will convince the most sceptical of its efficacy.—\*\*\*