

the only one who escaped the bullets of the enemy.

'Then you can give some idea as to how they might be recovered,' Charles replied, still more earnestly. 'With the more certainty, as the Captain made us observe the bearings of two hills and a rock. I know the place as well as I do where the bed stands in this room.'

Charles sprang up. Then your fortune is made,' said he, exultingly. 'Why did you not speak? The Government would have accepted your proposals.'

'Perhaps,' said Vincent—'but it would have been useless.'

'Why?'

'Spain refused consent; see here.' He held another journal towards the young artisan, which announced that a request to search for hidden treasure on the banks of the Douro, in 1812, had been refused by the Government of Madrid.

'But who wants leave? Why get official permission to make a search that might be done quietly and without noise? Once there, and the ground bought, what should hinder a searcher? Who would suspect the discovery?'

'I have thought it over many a time; but where is the money to come from for the journey and the purchase?'

'Why not apply to someone richer than ourselves, and then let them into the secret?'

'How could we make them believe; or if they believe, what should hinder them from abusing our confidence? And if some chance prevented us from succeeding, or if it happened, like the fable you were reading to your cousin the other day, that when the prey was divided the lion took all, then, besides the journey and the uncertainty, comes the weariness of a lawsuit. What good would it do me to be plagued for the rest of my life with so much care? Away with millions that must be fetched from such a distance. With my pension, thanks to the little girl there, I am very comfortable, and have enough for my daily ration and my tobacco; and for the rest I hold it as cheap as a troop of Cossacks.'

'So,' said Charles, with feverish animation, 'you refuse riches, you let this opportunity escape?'

'For myself, certainly; but for you it is different. I see how ambitious you are, and how much you want to be amongst the wealthy. Well, get together the sum we require for the journey, and we'll set off together.'

'My dear uncle!' he said, exultingly; then added in alarm, 'but how could I ever get so much money together?'

'Work diligently, and bring me all your earnings, and I promise you it will come.'

'Think uncle, how small the earnings of a workman are.'

'That is my affair.'

'How many years?'

'You offered 18 just now, with the addition of an eye and an arm.'

'Oh! if I were certain!'

'To gain the treasure? You cannot fail; by the little corporal's bones I promise you.'

When the old man made use of this expression Charles knew that he was quite in earnest; and he went on encouraging him, repeating that he had the world before him; and the young man went to bed, resolving to use every possible effort.

But his hopes were too magnificent to allow of sleep; the night was passed in a sort of fever, calculating the readiest means of acquiring the desired sum; then settling how he should use his riches, and contemplating as if they were realities, all the chimeras which he was always dreaming of.

When Susan came down in the morning he was already off to his work.

Vincent, who saw her astonishment nodded his head, and said nothing; he had recommended silence to

Charles, and he chose to keep it to himself till he saw whether he would persevere.

III.

The first months were the most irksome.

The bad habits he had indulged in were difficult to break and steady work was toilsome. He was often tempted to give up, but the importance of his object kept him steady; each week when he brought his savings, which were always increasing, he felt that a step had been taken; however small, still it was a step.

Besides each day the effort was less. Man is like a ship, with passions for its sails.

Spread them to the gales of the world, and he will be driven at the mercy of all the currents and hidden rocks; but let good sense tend the sails, and the navigation will be less dangerous; then, when the anchor of habit is let down in the right place, there is nothing more to fear.

Thus it happened to the young workman; as his life became more regular, his tastes altered. When he had worked hard all day, the evening rest became enjoyment, and the society of his uncle and cousin pleased him that he forgot his noisy companions.

Susan had returned to her friendly manner, and she managed so well to give every meal in a festivity. Charles found out qualities in her that he had never remarked before, and she daily became more and more necessary to him, and the hope of pleasing her now had quite as much of his attention as the obtaining of the treasure. His dreams of ambition faded: he saw that a quiet, simple happiness was within his grasp, and his idea of perfect felicity was no longer placed in fairyland. All this happiness without his observing it, he did not know that he was changed; he felt happy and tranquil, and the only change he discovered in himself was his increasing love for Susan; he could not imagine any happiness without her, and he now valued the millions as a means of obtaining her; so he became anxious to know if she shared his sentiments.

He was walking up and down the room one evening, while Vincent and Susan were conversing near the stove. They spoke of Charles's first master, the bookbinder, who after 30 years of a laborious life, was selling his business, that he and his old wife might retire together.

'These two good old people have made a paradise on earth,' said the old soldier; 'always busy, always good-tempered, always agreed.'

'Yes,' said Susan, 'the richest people might envy them.'

Charles stopped his walk before her, and said:

'So you wish your husband to be fond of you?'

'Me? yes—to be sure—if I could,' she said, smiling and blushing a little.

'You can, then; you have only to say the word.'

'What word, cousin?' she stammered, still more embarrassed.

'That you will consent to be my wife'; and seeing her surprise and confusion, he added tenderly and respectfully, 'I have long wished to tell you so. My uncle knows what I waited for, but it came unawares; and now, be open, do not conceal what you think of me; our uncle, who hears us, will tell us if we say wrong.' His voice trembled and his eyes were moist. Susan bent down her head, and the old man looked at them joyfully. 'Speak, then, shy girl,' said he gaily.

'Susan—one word—will you accept me?'

She hid her face on his shoulder, and uttered an inarticulate 'Yes.'

'Come, come,' said Vincent; it was difficult to get out the word; well this evening you make your confidences, to-morrow we speak of business.'

The next day he told his nephew that he had saved enough money,

and was ready to set off to Spain whenever he pleased. This news, which would have once delighted him now gave him concern. How could he leave Susan, and run all the dangers of a long journey, when it would be so pleasant to stay? Since the interest of his life had changed, his desire for riches had died. Why go so far for gold to buy the happiness he had found without it?

However, he said nothing of all this to his uncle, who took upon himself to make all preparations. He and Susan often went out together for this purpose. At last he told Charles all was ready, they had only to take their places. Susan was out, so he begged his nephew to go with him for this purpose, and as his wounds were painful in consequence of the fatigue he had undergone, he took a coach. He had all the papers with him that had any reference to the treasure, and he now desired Charles to look them over once more. He read all that he knew before, and thought he had seen all, when his eyes fell upon a letter signed Peter Dafour.

'That was the name of the quartermaster of our company,' said Vincent.

'That is what he calls himself,' said Charles.

'I thought he had been in the other world; let us hear what he has to say, he was the captain's confidant.'

Instead of answering Charles made an exclamation.

'Well! what is the matter?'

'If what Dafour says is true, our journey is useless.'

'Why?'

'Because the chests contain nothing but gunpowder.'

Vincent looked at his nephew and laughed.

'Oh, it was powder, was it? that is the reason then why, before they buried them, they took out the cartridges.'

'You knew it?'

'I saw it.'

'Then, then, you have deceived me; you did not believe the story of the treasure, and you have only been laughing at me.'

'It is true I promised you a treasure, and you shall have it without going to Spain for it.'

'What do you mean?'

'You shall see.'

The coach stopped before the shop door, and they got out. Charles knew the dwelling of his old master, but restored, painted, and furnished with all the tools belonging to the trade, he looked for the name of the owner, and described his own name in gold letters. The door of the back shop then opened, and there stood Susan by a cheerful fire inviting him to come to dinner.

Vincent took his hand. 'Here is the treasure I promised you—a good business and a good wife. It is all of your own gaining; do not be angry at my little trick. You would not taste the happiness that was in your power, so like the nurses I sugared the cup for you, and now you have learnt to enjoy it. I hope you will not refuse it'—Exchange.

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