

B. F. SCHWEIER.

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Editor and Proprietor.

NO. 14.

Questions.

What question of the silence vast, Of souls that people distant spheres; What of their future and their past? Have they not hearts, and joys and fears? Do the same flowers mark the same ground? The same bird sing? On their great sea Do ships like ours, with canvas white, Move stately, and stand on the breeze?

"IN TIMES OF TROUBLE."

We grew up side by side, Madeleine Constant and I—Antonio Michael. I was an orphan when ten years old, and was sent from Italy to my Aunt Peron. I had then—I have now—all the faults and some of the good qualities of the Italian nature.

I saw Madeleine for the first time one autumn evening when I had wandered away in disgust and bitterness. I had been a witness to a quarrel between my cousins about a franc, in which quarrel they launched against each other every coarse epithet it was possible to think of, and finally turned on me because I did not take part in the matter. I left them contemptuously, and wandered across the field to the two lilac trees which stood at the gate. I often paused there, looking at the costly entrance and well-kept avenue, at the stately trees and distant castles, which seemed so lonely and powerful.

As I stood there that day, Madeleine came out with a basket on her arm. She looked so good, so joyous that at once I set her in my mind in contrast to the two lilac trees which stood at the gate. I looked up and smiled.

"Thank you," she answered; "I shall be very glad."

"Where shall I go?" I asked, as I walked to the little cottage by the road as you turn to the village. I am Madeleine Constant," she said. "I thought you must know me, for I've seen you several times. You are the Italian who came to live with the Perons?"

I nodded. We walked on silently for a while, but I did not care for this. I wanted to hear her talk—her voice sounded so pleasant and soft. I never saw any woman so beautiful.

"What have you in the basket?"

"Things they have given me at the Chateau for my sick sister."

"Do you like to accept alms from rich people?"

"I know my eyes flashed—I was always so proud. She looked at me with surprise."

"They are very good to me at the Chateau; I love Madeleine Adele; why should I be angry at their kindness to poor Hortense?" Perhaps I had a sneering expression; Madeleine flushed, and said, "I don't know what they give me; I work very hard; every one knows I work hard."

I felt ashamed of myself, and very sorry for having hurt the poor girl. We were scarcely a few paces from the Chateau, but suddenly I felt a man's contempt for my own cowardice in wounding her by a word.

"Beg your pardon," I said; "of course, if they give you for your sister's sake, I will take it; but I hate the nobles."

"Why large eyes looked at me in wonderment."

"They are cruel and unjust; they think us dogs to kick, beat, or starve; and what have they done?"

"Ah, they do many good things! Madeleine Adele, she is kind to all, and the old countess, she is very kind; she looks good; and she loves his son and daughter."

I smiled at her ignorance.

"You don't know; you are petted at the Chateau because you are pretty and harmless. The countess is cruel; she turned old Francois Lorraine from his home the other day; he struck him too, in a rage. I suppose the young count will be like his father."

Madeleine's face clouded.

"I am very sorry if this is true, very sorry."

vention, and worked it all out, as clearly as I could, without actual practical experiments, Jean and Francois met me. I looked bright, I suppose. I meant to go to Madeleine that evening. Jean the coarser of the two; stopped when he saw me.

"Tons," he said; "are you going to your lady? Some men have strange taste. How many smiles does she spare you from the young count?" And then he added something coarser, more in accordance with his brutal thoughts.

Something in my face, I suppose, made Francois say quickly—

"Leave the lad alone, Jean. What is it to us?"

I laughed—a short scornful laugh.

"Do you think any word you can utter could hurt Madeleine? Constant, or any one else?" I said disdainfully. "Your remarks are as worthless as the mud on the road!"

"I am going to Paris to be educated as an engineer. Monsieur Bournard is sending me."

"Ah," Madeleine said eagerly, "the thought you clever! I know you would do great things. I am so glad you are going."

I looked at her. I thought, "She is glad I should go—she does not care; she will have the countess and I should be grateful if you would keep a fool from us."

"We mean well and kindly, and it is for Madeleine's sake we wish to see whether she wishes to go or not."

"I have better not come here. The day after the poor countess was patronized are gone by; feeling is too bitter between classes in Paris, and I should feel grateful if you would keep a fool from us."

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she lay. She was very white, and her eyes looked feverish.

"Ah, Antonio," she said gently, "we have missed you! What has gone wrong now?"

"I could stand my precious cousins no longer, and we have parted."

"You are not like yourself somehow," she said, looking at me keenly. "Am I not many things to you here, and I have much to think of. At the end of the week I'm going away."

"I saw that Madeleine gave a little start."

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Madeline. We did not talk often of the political crisis.

"Such peace did not last long. Coming home one day, I met Madeleine's cousin, Count Horace not far from Madeleine's door. I stared at them for a moment. How long had he been in Paris! Had Madeleine deliberately concealed his presence from me? Was this the reason she had come to me?"

The count and his sister stopped and spoke to me. I stood with uncovered head, but to the count I knew my air was defiant.

"We have been to see Madeleine," he said. "We do not forget old friends."

"Monsieur le Comte," I replied, "you had better not come here. The day after the poor countess was patronized are gone by; feeling is too bitter between classes in Paris, and I should feel grateful if you would keep a fool from us."

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low whisper, so low that no one caught the words but the men behind me.

"And afterwards?" I hissed through my teeth.

Madeline had never spoken. She kept looking at me in a terrified manner.

"But we will ask in a citizen's her wishes, Madeleine," I said quietly, "will you marry this man?"

"I will not," she said. "I did not see that the poor child thought that to refuse was to give this man to death."

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your sense of justice, I'll give myself up, or you can denounce me. What does it matter which way death comes?"

"No," she said quickly, "I will not even tell Adele, only go now, and go forever! Let me never see your face again, let me try to forget. Oh, Heaven, if I could forget!"

"Turn away from her, and she from me. I wandered into the woods, and many hours passed. The sun was dying down, calm and beautiful, and I sat there, knowing that I too was going to my rest."

My mind was made up, life was over—what view of end had it ever had apart from Madeleine?

I rose to my feet, a sudden glory seeming to be upon me; then I covered my face with my hands, and strong man though I was, I sobbed. At last the paroxysm passed, and somehow I came to rest in my grandfather's empty room for me, before the morrow's sun set all would be at an end. A great calm fell on me. I remember happy days of my childhood; I had no bitter thought of any one; the peace of death seemed to be upon me. I had no longer I would sit there, till darkness had crept over the woods and fields, and then I would go to my rest in my grandfather's empty room for me, before the morrow's sun set all would be at an end. A great calm fell on me. I remember happy days of my childhood; I had no bitter thought of any one; the peace of death seemed to be upon me. I had no longer I would sit there, till darkness had crept over the woods and fields, and then I would go to my rest in my grandfather's empty room for me, before the morrow's sun set all would be at an end. 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