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THE BATTLE OF THE STRONG

[A ROMANCE OF TWO KINGDOMS]

By Gilbert Parker

CONTENTS:

THE INVASION

ELEVEN YEARS AFTER

IN FRANCE--NEAR FIVE MONTHS AFTER

IN JERSEY FIVE YEARS LATER

DURING ONE YEAR LATER

IN JERSEY--A YEAR LATER

INTRODUCTION

This book is a protest and a deliverance. For seven years I had written continuously of Canada, though some short stories of South Sea life, and the novel Mrs. Falchion, had, during that time, issued from my pen. It looked as though I should be writing of the Far North all my life. Editors had begun to take that view; but from the start it had never been my view. Even when writing Pierre and His People I was determined that I should not be cabined, cribbed, and confined in one field; that I should not, as some other men have done, wind in upon myself, until at last each succeeding book would be but a variation of some previous book, and I should end by imitating myself, become the sacrifice to the god of the pin-hole.

I was warned not to break away from Canada; but all my life I had been warned, and all my life I had followed my own convictions. I would rather not have written another word than be corralled, bitted, saddled, and ridden by that heartless broncho-buster, the public, which wants a man who has once pleased it, to do the same thing under the fret of whip and spur for ever. When I went to the Island of Jersey, in 1897, it was to shake myself free of what might become a mere obsession. I determined that, as wide as my experiences had been in life, so would my writing be, whether it pleased the public or not. I was determined to fulfil myself; and in doing so to take no instructions except those of my own conscience, impulse, and conviction. Even then I saw fields of work which would occupy my mind, and such skill as I had, for many a year to come. I saw the Channel Islands, Egypt, South Africa, and India. In all

these fields save India, I have given my Pegasus its bridle-rein, and, so far, I have no reason to feel that my convictions were false. I write of Canada still, but I have written of the Channel Islands, I have written of Egypt, I have written of England and South Africa, and my public--that is, those who read my books--have accepted me in all these fields without demur. I believe I have justified myself in not accepting imprisonment in the field where I first essayed to turn my observation of life to account.

I went to Jersey, therefore, with my teeth set, in a way; yet happily and confidently. I had been dealing with French Canada for some years, and a step from Quebec, which was French, to Jersey, which was Norman French, was but short. It was a question of atmosphere solely. Whatever may be thought of *The 'Battle of the Strong'* I have not yet met a Jerseyman who denies to it the atmosphere of the place. It could hardly have lacked it, for there were twenty people, deeply intelligent, immensely interested in my design, and they were of Jersey families which had been there for centuries. They helped me, they fed me with dialect, with local details, with memories, with old letters, with diaries of their forebears, until, if I had gone wrong, it would have been through lack of skill in handling my material. I do not think I went wrong, though I believe that I could construct the book more effectively if I had to do it again. Yet there is something in looseness of construction which gives an air of naturalness; and it may be that this very looseness which I notice in *'The Battle of the Strong'* has had something to do with giving it such a great circle of readers; though this may appear paradoxical. When it first appeared, it did not make the appeal which *'The Right of Way'* or *'The Seats of the Mighty'* made, but it justified itself, it forced its way, it assured me that I had done right in shaking myself free from the control of my own best work. The book has gone on increasing its readers year by year, and when it appeared in Nelson's delightful cheap edition in England it had an immediate success, and has sold by the hundred thousand in the last four years.

One of the first and most eager friends of *'The Battle of the Strong'* was Mrs. Langtry, now Lady de Bathe, who, born in Jersey, and come of an old Jersey family, was well able to judge of the fidelity of the life and scene which it depicted. She greatly desired the novel to be turned into a play, and so it was. The adaptation, however, was lacking in much, and though Miss Marie Burroughs and Maurice Barrymore played in it, success did not attend its dramatic life.

'The Battle of the Strong' was called an historical novel by many critics, but the disclaimer which I made in the first edition I make again. *'The Seats of the Mighty'* came nearer to what might properly be called an historical novel than any other book which I have written save, perhaps, *'A Ladder of Swords'*. *'The Battle of the Strong'* is not without faithful historical elements, but the book is essentially a romance, in which character was not meant to be submerged by incident; and I do not think that in this particular the book falls short of the design of its author. There was this enormous difference between life in the Island of Jersey and life in French Canada, that in Jersey, tradition is heaped upon tradition, custom upon custom, precept upon precept, until every

citizen of the place is bound by innumerable cords of a code from which he cannot free himself. It is a little island, and that it is an island is evidence of a contracted life, though, in this case, a life which has real power and force. The life in French Canada was also traditional, and custom was also somewhat tyrannous, but it was part of a great continent in which the expansion of the man and of a people was inevitable. Tradition gets somewhat battered in a new land, and even where, as in French Canada, the priest and the Church have such supervision, and can bring such pressure to bear that every man must feel its influence; yet there is a happiness, a blitheness, and an exhilaration even in the most obscure quarter of French Canada which cannot be observed in the Island of Jersey. In Jersey the custom of five hundred years ago still reaches out and binds; and so small is the place that every square foot of it almost--even where the potato sprouts, and the potato is Jersey's greatest friend--is identified with some odd incident, some naive circumstance, some big, vivid, and striking historical fact. Behind its rugged coasts a little people proudly hold by their own and to their own, and even a Jersey criminal has more friends in his own environment than probably any other criminal anywhere save in Corsica; while friendship is a passion even with the pettiness by which it is perforated.

Reading this book again now after all these years, I feel convinced that the book is truly Jerseyais, and I am grateful to it for having brought me out from the tyranny of the field in which I first sought for a hearing.

NOTE

A list of Jersey words and phrases used herein, with their English or French equivalents, will be found at the end of the book. The Norman and patois words are printed as though they were English, some of them being quite Anglicised in Jersey. For the sake of brevity I have spoken of the Lieutenant-Bailly throughout as Bailly; and, in truth, he performed all the duties of Bailly in those days when this chief of the Jurats of the Island usually lived in England.

PROEM

There is no man living to-day who could tell you how the morning broke and the sun rose on the first day of January 1800; who walked in the Mall, who sauntered in the Park with the Prince: none lives who heard and remembers the gossip of the moment, or can give you the exact flavour of the speech and accent of the time. Down the long aisle of years echoes the air but not the tone; the trick of form comes to us but never the inflection. The lilt of the sensations, the idiosyncrasy of voice, emotion, and mind of the first hour of our century must now pass from the printed page to us, imperfectly realised; we may not know them through

actual retrospection. The more distant the scene, the more uncertain the reflection; and so it must needs be with this tale, which will take you back to even twenty years before the century began.

Then, as now, England was a great power outside these small islands. She had her foot firmly planted in Australia, in Asia, and in America-- though, in bitterness, the American colonies had broken free, and only Canada was left to her in that northern hemisphere. She has had, in her day, to strike hard blows even for Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. But among her possessions is one which, from the hour its charter was granted it by King John, has been loyal, unwavering, and unpurchasable. Until the beginning of the century the language of this province was not our language, nor is English its official language to-day; and with a pretty pride oblivious of contrasts, and a simplicity unconscious of mirth, its people say: "We are the conquering race; we conquered England, England did not conquer us."

A little island lying in the wash of St. Michael's Basin off the coast of France, Norman in its foundations and in its racial growth, it has been as the keeper of the gate to England; though so near to France is it, that from its shores on a fine day may be seen the spires of Coutances, from which its spiritual welfare was ruled long after England lost Normandy. A province of British people, speaking still the Norman-French that the Conqueror spoke; such is the island of Jersey, which, with Guernsey, Alderney, Sark, Herm, and Jethou, form what we call the Channel Isles, and the French call the Iles de la Manche.

Volume 1.

CHAPTER I

In all the world there is no coast like the coast of Jersey; so treacherous, so snarling; serrated with rocks seen and unseen, tortured by currents maliciously whimsical, encircled by tides that sweep up from the Antarctic world with the devouring force of a monstrous serpent projecting itself towards its prey. The captain of these tides, travelling up through the Atlantic at a thousand miles an hour, enters the English Channel, and drives on to the Thames. Presently retreating, it meets another pursuing Antarctic wave, which, thus opposed in its straightforward course, recoils into St. Michael's Bay, then plunges, as it were, upon a terrible foe. They twine and strive in mystic conflict, and, in rage of equal power, neither vanquished nor conquering, circle, mad and desperate, round the Channel Isles. Impeded, impounded as they riot through the flumes of sea, they turn furiously, and smite the cliffs and rocks and walls of their prison-house. With the frenzied winds helping them, the island coasts and Norman shores are battered by their hopeless onset: and in that channel between Alderney and Cap de la Hague man or ship must well beware, for the Race of Alderney is one of the death-shoots of the tides. Before they find their way to the main again,

these harridans of nature bring forth a brood of currents which ceaselessly fret the boundaries of the isles.

Always, always the white foam beats the rocks, and always must man go warily along these coasts. The swimmer plunges into a quiet pool, the snowy froth that masks the reefs seeming only the pretty fringe of sentient life to a sleeping sea; but presently an invisible hand reaches up and grasps him, an unseen power drags him exultingly out to the main-- and he returns no more. Many a Jersey boatman, many a fisherman who has lived his whole life in sight of the Paternosters on the north, the Ecrehos on the east, the Dog's Nest on the south, or the Corbiere on the west, has in some helpless moment been caught by the unsleeping currents which harry his peaceful borders, or the rocks that have eluded the hunters of the sea, and has yielded up his life within sight of his own doorway, an involuntary sacrifice to the navigator's knowledge and to the calm perfection of an admiralty chart.

Yet within the circle of danger bounding this green isle the love of home and country is stubbornly, almost pathetically, strong. Isolation, pride of lineage, independence of government, antiquity of law and custom, and jealousy of imperial influence or action have combined to make a race self-reliant even to perverseness, proud and maybe vain, sincere almost to commonplaceness, unimaginative and reserved, with the melancholy born of monotony--for the life of the little country has coiled in upon itself, and the people have drooped to see but just their own selves reflected in all the dwellers of the land, whichever way they turn. A hundred years ago, however, there was a greater and more general lightness of heart and vivacity of spirit than now. Then the song of the harvester and the fisherman, the boat-builder and the stocking-knitter, was heard on a summer afternoon, or from the veille of a winter night when the dim crasset hung from the roof and the seaweed burned in the chimney. Then the gathering of the vraic was a fete, and the lads and lasses footed it on the green or on the hard sand, to the chance flageolets of sportive seamen home from the war. This simple gaiety was heartiest at Christmastide, when the yearly reunion of families took place; and because nearly everybody in Jersey was "couzain" to his neighbour these gatherings were as patriarchal as they were festive.

.....

The new year of seventeen hundred and eighty-one had been ushered in by the last impulse of such festivities. The English cruisers lately in port had vanished up the Channel; and at Elizabeth Castle, Mont Orgueil, the Blue Barracks and the Hospital, three British regiments had taken up the dull round of duty again; so that by the fourth day a general lethargy, akin to content, had settled on the whole island.

On the morning of the fifth day a little snow was lying upon the ground, but the sun rose strong and unclouded, the whiteness vanished, and there remained only a pleasant dampness which made sod and sand firm yet springy to the foot. As the day wore on, the air became more amiable still, and a delicate haze settled over the water and over the land, making softer to the eye house and hill and rock and sea.

There was little life in the town of St. Heliers, there were few people upon the beach; though now and then some one who had been praying beside a grave in the parish churchyard came to the railings and looked out upon the calm sea almost washing its foundations, and over the dark range of rocks, which, when the tide was out, showed like a vast gridiron blackened by fires. Near by, some loitering sailors watched the yawl-rigged fishing craft from Holland, and the codfish-smelling cul-de-poule schooners of the great fishing company which exploited the far-off fields of Gaspé in Canada.

St. Heliers lay in St. Aubin's Bay, which, shaped like a horseshoe, had Noirmont Point for one end of the segment and the lofty Town Hill for another. At the foot of this hill, hugging it close, straggled the town. From the bare green promontory above might be seen two-thirds of the south coast of the island--to the right St. Aubin's Bay, to the left Greve d'Azette, with its fields of volcanic-looking rocks, and St. Clement's Bay beyond. Than this no better place for a watchtower could be found; a perfect spot for the reflective idler and for the sailorman who, on land, must still be within smell and sound of the sea, and loves that place best which gives him widest prospect.

This day a solitary figure was pacing backwards and forwards upon the cliff edge, stopping now to turn a telescope upon the water and now upon the town. It was a lad of not more than sixteen years, erect, well-poised, having an air of self-reliance, even of command. Yet it was a boyish figure too, and the face was very young, save for the eyes; these were frank but still sophisticated.

The first time he looked towards the town he laughed outright, freely, spontaneously; threw his head back with merriment, and then glued his eye to the glass again. What he had seen was a girl of about five years of age with a man, in La Rue d'Egypte, near the old prison, even then called the Vier Prison. Stooping, the man had kissed the child, and she, indignant, snatching the cap from his head, had thrown it into the stream running through the street. Small wonder that the lad on the hill grinned, for the man who ran to rescue his hat from the stream was none other than the Bailly of the island, next in importance to the Lieutenant-Governor.

The lad could almost see the face of the child, its humorous anger, its wilful triumph, and also the enraged look of the Bailly as he raked the stream with his long stick, tied with a sort of tassel of office. Presently he saw the child turn at the call of a woman in the Place du Vier Prison, who appeared to apologise to the Bailly, busy now drying his recovered hat by whipping it through the air. The lad on the hill recognised the woman as the child's mother.

This little episode over, he turned once more towards the sea, watching the sun of late afternoon fall upon the towers of Elizabeth Castle and the great rock out of which St. Helier the hermit once chiselled his lofty home. He breathed deep and strong, and the carriage of his body was light, for he had a healthy enjoyment of all physical sensations and

all the obvious drolleries of life. A broad sort of humour was written upon every feature; in the full, quizzical eye, in the width of cheek-bone, in the broad mouth, and in the depth of the laugh, which, however, often ended in a sort of chuckle not entirely pleasant. It suggested a selfish enjoyment of the odd or the melodramatic side of other people's difficulties.

At last the youth encased his telescope, and turned to descend the hill to the town. As he did so, a bell began to ring. From where he was he could look down into the Vier Marchi, or market-place, where stood the Cohue Royale and house of legislature. In the belfry of this court-house, the bell was ringing to call the Jurats together for a meeting of the States. A monstrous tin pan would have yielded as much assonance. Walking down towards the Vier Marchi the lad gleefully recalled the humour of a wag who, some days before, had imitated the sound of the bell with the words:

"Chicane--chicane! Chicane--chicane!"

The native had, as he thought, suffered somewhat at the hands of the twelve Jurats of the Royal Court, whom his vote had helped to elect, and this was his revenge--so successful that, for generations, when the bell called the States or the Royal Court together, it said in the ears of the Jersey people--thus insistent is apt metaphor:

"Chicane--chicane! Chicane--chicane!"

As the lad came down to the town, trades-people whom he met touched their hats to him, and sailors and soldiers saluted respectfully. In this regard the Bailly himself could not have fared better. It was not due to the fact that the youth came of an old Jersey family, nor by reason that he was genial and handsome, but because he was a midshipman of the King's navy home on leave; and these were the days when England's sailors were more popular than her soldiers.

He came out of the Vier Marchi into La Grande Rue, along the stream called the Fauxbie flowing through it, till he passed under the archway of the Vier Prison, making towards the place where the child had snatched the hat from the head of the Bailly.

Presently the door of a cottage opened, and the child came out, followed by her mother.

The young gentleman touched his cap politely, for though the woman was not fashionably dressed, she was distinguished in appearance, with an air of remoteness which gave her a kind of agreeable mystery.

"Madame Landresse--" said the young gentleman with deference.

"Monsieur d'Avranche--" responded the lady softly, pausing.

"Did the Bailly make a stir? I saw the affair from the hill, through my telescope," said young d'Avranche, smiling.

"My little daughter must have better manners," responded the lady, looking down at her child reprovingly yet lovingly.

"Or the Bailly must--eh, Madame?" replied d'Avranche, and, stooping, he offered his hand to the child. Glancing up inquiringly at her mother, she took it. He held hers in a clasp of good nature. The child was so demure, one could scarcely think her capable of tossing the Bailly's hat into the stream; yet looking closely, there might be seen in her eyes a slumberous sort of fire, a touch of mystery. They were neither blue nor grey, but a mingling of both, growing to the most tender, greyish sort of violet. Down through generations of Huguenot refugees had passed sorrow and fighting and piety and love and occasional joy, until in the eyes of this child they all met, delicately vague, and with the wistfulness of the early morning of life.

"What is your name, little lady?" asked d'Avranche of the child.

"Guida, sir," she answered simply.

"Mine is Philip. Won't you call me Philip?"

She flashed a look at her mother, regarded him again, and then answered:

"Yes, Philip--sir."

D'Avranche wanted to laugh, but the face of the child was sensitive and serious, and he only smiled. "Say 'Yes, Philip', won't you?" he asked.

"Yes, Philip," came the reply obediently.

After a moment of speech with Madame Landresse, Philip stooped to say good-bye to the child. "Good-bye, Guida."

A queer, mischievous little smile flitted over her face--a second, and it was gone.

"Good-bye, sir--Philip," she said, and they parted. Her last words kept ringing in his ears as he made his way homeward. "Good-bye, sir--Philip"--the child's arrangement of words was odd and amusing, and at the same time suggested something more. "Good-bye, Sir Philip," had a different meaning, though the words were the same.

"Sir Philip--eh?" he said to himself, with a jerk of the head--"I'll be more than that some day."

CHAPTER II

The night came down with leisurely gloom. A dim starlight pervaded rather than shone in the sky; Nature seemed somnolent and gravely

meditative. It brooded as broods a man who is seeking his way through a labyrinth of ideas to a conclusion still evading him. This sense of cogitation enveloped land and sea, and was as tangible to feeling as human presence.

At last the night seemed to wake from reverie. A movement, a thrill, ran through the spangled vault of dusk and sleep, and seemed to pass over the world, rousing the sea and the earth. There was no wind, apparently no breath of air, yet the leaves of the trees moved, the weather-vanes turned slightly, the animals in the byres roused themselves, and slumbering folk opening their eyes, turned over in their beds, and dropped into a troubled doze again.

Presently there came a long moaning sound from the tide, not loud but rather mysterious and distant--a plaint, a threatening, a warning, a prelude?

A dull labourer, returning from late toil, felt it, and raised his head in a perturbed way, as though some one had brought him news of a far-off disaster. A midwife, hurrying to a lowly birth-chamber, shivered and gathered her mantle more closely about her. She looked up at the sky, she looked out over the sea, then she bent her head and said to herself that this would not be a good night, that ill-luck was in the air. "The mother or the child will die," she said to herself. A 'longshoreman, reeling home from deep potations, was conscious of it, and, turning round to the sea, snarled at it and said yah! in swaggering defiance. A young lad, wandering along the deserted street, heard it, began to tremble, and sat down on a block of stone beside the doorway of a baker's shop. He dropped his head on his arms and his chin on his knees, shutting out the sound and sobbing quietly.

Yesterday his mother had been buried; to-night his father's door had been closed in his face. He scarcely knew whether his being locked out was an accident or whether it was intended. He thought of the time when his father had ill-treated his mother and himself. That, however, had stopped at last, for the woman had threatened the Royal Court, and the man, having no wish to face its summary convictions, thereafter conducted himself towards them both with a morose indifference.

The boy was called Ranulph, a name which had passed to him through several generations of Jersey forebears--Ranulph Delagarde. He was being taught the trade of ship-building in St. Aubin's Bay. He was not beyond fourteen years of age, though he looked more, so tall and straight and self-possessed was he.

His tears having ceased soon, he began to think of what he was to do in the future. He would never go back to his father's house, or be dependent on him for aught. Many plans came to his mind. He would learn his trade of ship-building, he would become a master-builder, then a shipowner, with fishing-vessels like the great company sending fleets to Gaspe.

At the moment when these ambitious plans had reached the highest point of

imagination, the upper half of the door beside him opened suddenly, and he heard men's voices. He was about to rise and disappear, but the words of the men arrested him, and he cowered down beside the stone. One of the men was leaning on the half-door, speaking in French.

"I tell you it can't go wrong. The pilot knows every crack in the coast. I left Granville at three; Rulle cour left Chaussey at nine. If he lands safe, and the English troops ain't roused, he'll take the town and hold the island easy enough."

"But the pilot, is he certain safe?" asked another voice. Ranulph recognised it as that of the baker Carcaud, who owned the shop. "Olivier Delagarde isn't so sure of him."

Olivier Delagarde! The lad started. That was his father's name. He shrank as from a blow--his father was betraying Jersey to the French!

"Of course, the pilot, he's all right," the Frenchman answered the baker. "He was to have been hung here for murder. He got away, and now he's having his turn by fetching Rullecour's wolves to eat up your green-bellies. By to-morrow at seven Jersey 'll belong to King Louis."

"I've done my promise," rejoined Carcaud the baker; "I've been to three of the guard-houses on St. Clement's and Grouville. In two the men are drunk as donkeys; in another they sleep like squids. Rullecour he can march straight to the town and seize it--if he land safe. But will he stand by 's word to we? You know the saying: 'Cadet Roussel has two sons; one's a thief, t'other's a rogue.' There's two Rullecours-- Rullecour before the catch and Rullecour after!"

"He'll be honest to us, man, or he'll be dead inside a week, that's all."

"I'm to be Connetable of St. Heliers, and you're to be harbour-master--eh?"

"Naught else: you don't catch flies with vinegar. Give us your hand--why, man, it's doggish cold."

"Cold hand, healthy heart. How many men will Rullecour bring?"

"Two thousand; mostly conscripts and devil's beauties from Granville and St. Malo gaols."

"Any signals yet?"

"Two--from Chaussey at five o'clock. Rullecour 'll try to land at Gorey. Come, let's be off. Delagarde's there now."

The boy stiffened with horror--his father was a traitor! The thought pierced his brain like a hot iron. He must prevent this crime, and warn the Governor. He prepared to steal away. Fortunately the back of the man's head was towards him.

Carcaud laughed a low, malicious laugh as he replied to the Frenchman.

"Trust the quiet Delagarde! There's nothing worse nor still waters. He'll do his trick, and he'll have his share if the rest suck their thumbs. He doesn't wait for roasted larks to drop into his mouth--what's that!" It was Ranulph stealing away.

In an instant the two men were on him, and a hand was clapped to his mouth. In another minute he was bound, thrown onto the stone floor of the bakehouse, his head striking, and he lost consciousness.

When he came to himself, there was absolute silence round him--deathly, oppressive silence. At first he was dazed, but at length all that had happened came back to him.

Where was he now? His feet were free; he began to move them about. He remembered that he had been flung on the stone floor of the bakerroom. This place sounded hollow underneath--it certainly was not the bakerroom. He rolled over and over. Presently he touched a wall--it was stone. He drew himself up to a sitting posture, but his head struck a curved stone ceiling. Then he swung round and moved his foot along the wall--it touched iron. He felt farther with his foot--something clicked. Now he understood; he was in the oven of the bakehouse, with his hands bound. He began to think of means of escape. The iron door had no inside latch. There was a small damper covering a barred hole, through which perhaps he might be able to get a hand, if only it were free. He turned round so that his fingers might feel the grated opening. The edge of the little bars was sharp. He placed the strap binding his wrists against these sharp edges, and drew his arms up and down, a difficult and painful business. The iron cut his hands and wrists at first, so awkward was the movement. But, steeling himself, he kept on steadily.

At last the straps fell apart, and his hands were free. With difficulty he thrust one through the bars. His fingers could just lift the latch. Now the door creaked on its hinges, and in a moment he was out on the stone flags of the bakerroom. Hurrying through an unlocked passage into the shop, he felt his way to the street door, but it was securely fastened. The windows? He tried them both, one on either side, but while he could free the stout wooden shutters on the inside, a heavy iron bar secured them without, and it was impossible to open them.

Feverish with anxiety, he sat down on the low counter, with his hands between his knees, and tried to think what to do. In the numb hopelessness of the moment he became very quiet. His mind was confused, but his senses were alert; he was in a kind of dream, yet he was acutely conscious of the smell of new-made bread. It pervaded the air of the place; it somehow crept into his brain and his being, so that, as long as he might live, the smell of new-made bread would fetch back upon him the nervous shiver and numbness of this hour of danger.

As he waited, he heard a noise outside, a clac-clac! clac-clac! which seemed to be echoed back from the wood and stone of the houses in the street, and then to be lifted up and carried away over the roofs and out

to sea---clac-clac! clac-clac! It was not the tap of a blind man's staff--at first he thought it might be; it was not a donkey's foot on the cobbles; it was not the broom-sticks of the witches of St. Clement's Bay, for the rattle was below in the street, and the broom-stick rattle is heard only on the roofs as the witches fly across country from Robert to Bonne Nuit Bay.

This clac-clac came from the sabots of some nightfarer. Should he make a noise and attract the attention of the passer-by? No, that would not do. It might be some one who would wish to know whys and wherefores. He must, of course, do his duty to his country, but he must save his father too. Bad as the man was, he must save him, though, no matter what happened, he must give the alarm. His reflections tortured him. Why had he not stopped the nightfarer?

Even as these thoughts passed through the lad's mind, the clac-clac had faded away into the murmur of the stream flowing by the Rue d'Egypte to the sea, and almost beneath his feet. There flashed on him at that instant what little Guida Landresse had said a few days before as she lay down beside this very stream, and watched the water wimpling by. Trailing her fingers through it dreamily, the child had said to him:

"Ro, won't it never come back?" She always called him "Ro," because when beginning to talk she could not say Ranulph.

Ro, won't it never come back? But while yet he recalled the words, another sound mingled again with the stream-clac-clac! clac-clac! Suddenly it came to him who was the wearer of the sabots making this peculiar clatter in the night. It was Dormy Jamais, the man who never slept. For two years the clac-clac of Dormy Jamais's sabots had not been heard in the streets of St. Heliers--he had been wandering in France, a daft pilgrim. Ranulph remembered how these sabots used to pass and re-pass the doorway of his own home. It was said that while Dormy Jamais paced the streets there was no need of guard or watchman. Many a time had Ranulph shared his supper with the poor beggar whose origin no one knew, whose real name had long since dropped into oblivion.

The rattle of the sabots came nearer, the footsteps were now in front of the window. Even as Ranulph was about to knock and call the poor vagrant's name, the clac-clac stopped, and then there came a sniffing at the shutters as a dog sniffs at the door of a larder. Following the sniffing came a guttural noise of emptiness and desire. Now there was no mistake; it was the half-witted fellow beyond all doubt, and he could help him--Dormy Jamais should help him: he should go and warn the Governor and the soldiers at the Hospital, while he himself would speed to Gorey in search of his father. He would alarm the regiment there at the same time.

He knocked and shouted. Dormy Jamais, frightened, jumped back into the street. Ranulph called again, and yet again, and now at last Dormy recognised the voice.

With a growl of mingled reassurance and hunger, he lifted down the iron

bar from the shutters. In a moment Ranulph was outside with two loaves of bread, which he put into Dormy Jamais's arms. The daft one whinnied with delight.

"What's o'clock, bread-man?" he asked with a chuckle.

Ranulph gripped his shoulders. "See, Dormy Jamais, I want you to go to the Governor's house at La Motte, and tell them that the French are coming, that they're landing at Gorey now. Then to the Hospital and tell the sentry there. Go, Dormy--allez kedainne!"

Dormy Jamais tore at a loaf with his teeth, and crammed a huge crust into his mouth.

"Come, tell me, will you go, Dormy?" the lad asked impatiently.

Dormy Jamais nodded his head, grunted, and, turning on his heel with Ranulph, clattered up the street. The lad sprang ahead of him, and ran swiftly up the Rue d'Egypte, into the Vier Marchi, and on over the Town Hill along the road to Grouville.

CHAPTER III

Since the days of Henry III of England the hawk of war that broods in France has hovered along that narrow strip of sea dividing the island of Jersey from the duchy of Normandy. Eight times has it descended, and eight times has it hurried back with broken pinion. Among these truculent invasions two stand out boldly: the spirited and gallant attack by Bertrand du Guesclin, Constable of France; and the freebooting adventure of Rullecour, with his motley following of gentlemen and criminals. Rullecour it was, soldier of fortune, gambler, ruffian, and embezzler, to whom the King of France had secretly given the mission to conquer the unconquerable little island.

From the Chaussey Isles the filibuster saw the signal light which the traitor Olivier Delagarde had set upon the heights of Le Couperon, where, ages ago, Caesar built fires to summon from Gaul his devouring legions.

All was propitious for the attack. There was no moon--only a meagre starlight when they set forth from Chaussey. The journey was made in little more than an hour, and Rullecour himself was among the first to see the shores of Jersey loom darkly in front. Beside him stood the murderous pilot who was leading in the expedition, the colleague of Olivier Delagarde.

Presently the pilot gave an exclamation of surprise and anxiety--the tides and currents were bearing them away from the intended landing-place. It was now almost low water, and instead of an immediate shore, there lay before them a vast field of scarred rocks, dimly seen. He gave the signal to lay-to, and himself took the bearings. The tide was going

out rapidly, disclosing reefs on either hand. He drew in carefully to the right of the rock known as L'Echiquelez, up through a passage scarce wide enough for canoes, and to Roque Platte, the south-eastern projection of the island.

You may range the seas from the Yugon Strait to the Erebus volcano, and you will find no such landing-place for imps or men as that field of rocks on the southeast corner of Jersey called, with a malicious irony, the Bane des Violets. The great rocks La Coniere, La Longy, Le Gros Etac, Le Teton, and the Petite Sambiere, rise up like volcanic monuments from a floor of lava and trailing vrac, which at half-tide makes the sea a tender mauve and violet. The passages of safety between these ranges of reef are but narrow at high tide; at half-tide, when the currents are changing most, the violet field becomes the floor of a vast mortuary chapel for unknowing mariners.

A battery of four guns defended the post on the landward side of this bank of the heavenly name. Its guards were asleep or in their cups. They yielded, without resistance, to the foremost of the invaders. But here Rullecour and his pilot, looking back upon the way they had come, saw the currents driving the transport boats hither and thither in confusion. Jersey was not to be conquered without opposition--no army of defence was abroad, but the elements roused themselves and furiously attacked the fleet. Battalions unable to land drifted back with the tides to Granville, whence they had come. Boats containing the heavy ammunition and a regiment of conscripts were battered upon the rocks, and hundreds of the invaders found an unquiet grave upon the Banc des Violets.

Presently the traitor Delagarde arrived and was welcomed warmly by Rullecour. The night wore on, and at last the remaining legions were landed. A force was left behind to guard La Roque Platte, and then the journey across country to the sleeping town began.

With silent, drowsing batteries in front and on either side of them, the French troops advanced, the marshes of Samares and the sea on their left, churches and manor houses on their right, all silent. Not yet had a blow been struck for the honour of this land and of the Kingdom.

But a blind injustice was, in its own way, doing the work of justice.

On the march, Delagarde, suspecting treachery to himself, not without reason, required of Rullecour guarantee for the fulfilment of his pledge to make him Vicomte of the Island when victory should be theirs.

Rullecour, however, had also promised the post to a reckless young officer, the Comte de Tournay, of the House of Vaufontaine, who, under the assumed name of Yves Savary dit Detricand, marched with him.

Rullecour answered Delagarde churlishly, and would say nothing till the town was taken--the ecrivain must wait. But Delagarde had been drinking, he was in a mood to be reckless; he would not wait, he demanded an immediate pledge.

"By and by, my doubting Thomas," said Rullecour. "No, now, by the blood of Peter!" answered Delagarde, laying a hand upon his sword.

The French leader called a sergeant to arrest him. Delagarde instantly drew his sword and attacked Rullecour, but was cut down from behind by the scimitar of a swaggering Turk, who had joined the expedition as aide-de-camp to the filibustering general, tempted thereto by promises of a harem of the choicest Jersey ladies, well worthy of this cousin of the Emperor of Morocco.

The invaders left Delagarde lying where he fell. What followed this oblique retribution could satisfy no ordinary logic, nor did it meet the demands of poetic justice. For, as a company of soldiers from Grouville, alarmed out of sleep by a distracted youth, hurried towards St. Heliers, they found Delagarde lying by the roadside, and they misunderstood what had happened. Stooping over him an officer said pityingly:

"See--he got this wound fighting the French!" With the soldiers was the youth who had warned them. He ran forward with a cry, and knelt beside the wounded man. He had no tears, he had no sorrow. He was only sick and dumb, and he trembled with misery as he lifted up his father's head. The eyes of Olivier Delagarde opened.

"Ranulph--they've killed--me," gasped the stricken man feebly, and his head fell back.

An officer touched the youth's arm. "He is gone," said he. "Don't fret, lad, he died fighting for his country."

The lad made no reply, and the soldiers hurried on towards the town.

He died fighting for his country! So that was to be the legend, Ranulph meditated: his father was to have a glorious memory, while he himself knew how vile the man was. One thing however: he was glad that Olivier Delagarde was dead. How strangely had things happened! He had come to stay a traitor in his crime, and here he found a martyr. But was not he himself likewise a traitor? Ought not he to have alarmed the town first before he tried to find his father? Had Dormy Jamais warned the Governor? Clearly not, or the town bells would be ringing and the islanders giving battle. What would the world think of him!

Well, what was the use of fretting here? He would go on to the town, help to fight the French, and die that would be the best thing. He knelt, and unclasped his father's fingers from the handle of the sword. The steel was cold, it made him shiver. He had no farewell to make. He looked out to sea. The tide would come and carry his father's body out, perhaps--far out, and sink it in the deepest depths. If not that, then the people would bury Olivier Delagarde as a patriot. He determined that he himself would not live to see such mockery.

As he sped along towards the town he asked himself why nobody suspected the traitor. One reason for it occurred to him: his father, as the whole island knew, had a fishing-hut at Gorey. They would imagine him on the way to it when he met the French, for he often spent the night there. He himself had told his tale to the soldiers: how he had heard the baker and

the Frenchman talking at the shop in the Rue d'Egypte. Yes, but suppose the French were driven out, and the baker taken prisoner and should reveal his father's complicity! And suppose people asked why he himself did not go at once to the Hospital Barracks in the town and to the Governor, and afterwards to Gorey?

These were direful imaginings. He felt that it was no use; that the lie could not go on concerning his father. The world would know; the one thing left for him was to die. He was only a boy, but he could fight. Had not young Philip d'Avranche; the midshipman, been in deadly action many times? He was nearly as old as Philip d'Avranche--yes, he would fight, and, fighting, he would die. To live as the son of such a father was too pitiless a shame.

He ran forward, but a weakness was on him; he was very hungry and thirsty--and the sword was heavy. Presently, as he went, he saw a stone well near a cottage by the roadside. On a ledge of the well stood a bucket of water. He tilted the bucket and drank. He would have liked to ask for bread at the cottage-door, but he said to himself, Why should he eat, for was he not going to die? Yet why should he not eat, even if he were going to die? He turned his head wistfully, he was so faint with hunger. The force driving him on, however, was greater than hunger--he ran harder. . . . But undoubtedly the sword was heavy!

CHAPTER IV

In the Vier Marchi the French flag was flying, French troops occupied it, French sentries guarded the five streets entering into it. Rullecour, the French adventurer, held the Lieutenant-Governor of the isle captive in the Cohue Royale; and by threats of fire and pillage thought to force capitulation. For his final argument he took the Governor to the doorway, and showed him two hundred soldiers with lighted torches ready to fire the town.

When the French soldiers first entered the Vier Marchi there was Dormy Jamais on the roof of the Cohue Royale, calmly munching his bread. When he saw Rullecour and the Governor appear, he chuckled to himself, and said, in Jersey patois: "I vaut mux alouonyi l'bras que l'co," which is to say: It is better to stretch the arm than the neck. The Governor would have done more wisely, he thought, to believe the poor beganne, and to have risen earlier. Dormy Jamais had a poor opinion of a governor who slept. He himself was not a governor, yet was he not always awake? He had gone before dawn to the Governor's house, had knocked, had given Ranulph Delagarde's message, had been called a dirty buzard, and been sent away by the crusty, incredulous servant. Then he had gone to the Hospital Barracks, was there iniquitously called a lousy toad, and had been driven off with his quartern loaf, muttering through the dough the island proverb "While the mariner swigs the tide rises."

Had the Governor remained as cool as the poor vagrant, he would not have

shrunk at the sight of the incendiaries, yielded to threats, and signed the capitulation of the island. But that capitulation being signed, and notice of it sent to the British troops, with orders to surrender and bring their arms to the Cohue Royale, it was not cordially received by the officers in command.

"Je ne comprends pas le francais," said Captain Mulcaster, at Elizabeth Castle, as he put the letter into his pocket unread.

"The English Governor will be hanged, and the French will burn the town," responded the envoy. "Let them begin to hang and burn and be damned, for I'll not surrender the castle or the British flag so long as I've a man to defend it, to please anybody!" answered Mulcaster.

"We shall return in numbers," said the Frenchman, threateningly.

"I shall be delighted: we shall have the more to kill," Mulcaster replied.

Then the captive Lieutenant-Governor was sent to Major Peirson at the head of his troops on the Mont es Pendus, with counsel to surrender.

"Sir," said he, "this has been a very sudden surprise, for I was made prisoner before I was out of my bed this morning."

"Sir," replied Peirson, the young hero of twenty-four, who achieved death and glory between a sunrise and a noontide, "give me leave to tell you that the 78th Regiment has not yet been the least surprised."

From Elizabeth Castle came defiance and cannonade, driving back Rullecour and his filibusters to the Cohue Royale: from Mont Orgueil, from the Hospital, from St. Peter's came the English regiments; from the other parishes swarmed the militia, all eager to recover their beloved Vier Marchi. Two companies of light infantry, leaving the Mont es Pendus, stole round the town and placed themselves behind the invaders on the Town Hill; the rest marched direct upon the enemy. Part went by the Grande Rue, and part by the Rue d'Driere, converging to the point of attack; and as the light infantry came down from the hill by the Rue des Tres Pigeons, Peirson entered the Vier Marchi by the Route es Couochons. On one side of the square, where the Cohue Royale made a wall to fight against, were the French. Radiating from this were five streets and passages like the spokes of a wheel, and from these now poured the defenders of the isle.

A volley came from the Cohue Royale, then another, and another. The place was small: friend and foe were crowded upon each other. The fighting became at once a hand-to-hand encounter. Cannon were useless, gun-carriages overturned. Here a drummer fell wounded, but continued beating his drum to the last; there a Glasgow soldier struggled with a French officer for the flag of the invaders; yonder a handful of Malouins doggedly held the foot of La Pyramide, until every one was cut down by overpowering numbers of British and Jersiais. The British leader was conspicuous upon his horse. Shot after shot was fired at him. Suddenly

he gave a cry, reeled in his saddle, and sank, mortally wounded, into the arms of a brother officer.

For a moment his men fell back.

In the midst of the deadly turmoil a youth ran forward from a group of combatants, caught the bridle of the horse from which Peirson had fallen, mounted, and, brandishing a short sword, called upon his dismayed and wavering followers to advance; which they instantly did with fury and courage. It was Midshipman Philip d'Avranche. Twenty muskets were discharged at him. One bullet cut the coat on his shoulder, another grazed the back of his hand, a third scarred the pommel of the saddle, and still another wounded his horse. Again and again the English called upon him to dismount, for he was made a target, but he refused, until at last the horse was shot under him. Then once more he joined in the hand-to-hand encounter.

Windows near the ground, such as were not shattered, were broken by bullets. Cannon-balls embedded themselves in the masonry and the heavy doorways. The upper windows were safe, however: the shots did not range so high. At one of these, over a watchmaker's shop, a little girl was to be seen, looking down with eager interest. Presently an old man came in view and led her away. A few minutes of fierce struggle passed, and then at another window on the floor below the child appeared again. She saw a youth with a sword hurrying towards the Cohue Royale from a tangled mass of combatants. As he ran, a British soldier fell in front of him. The youth dropped the sword and grasped the dead man's musket.

The child clapped her hands on the window.

"It's Ro--it's Ro!" she cried, and disappeared again.

"Ro," with white face, hatless, coatless, pushed on through the melee. Rullecour, the now disheartened French general, stood on the steps of the Cohue Royale. With a vulgar cruelty and cowardice he was holding the Governor by the arm, hoping thereby to protect his own person from the British fire.

Here was what the lad had been trying for--the sight of this man Rullecour. There was one small clear space between the English and the French, where stood a gun-carriage. He ran to it, leaned the musket on the gun, and, regardless of the shots fired at him, took aim steadily. A French bullet struck the wooden wheel of the carriage, and a splinter gashed his cheek. He did not move, but took sight again, and fired. Rullecour fell, shot through the jaw. A cry of fury and dismay went up from the French at the loss of their leader, a shout of triumph from the British.

The Frenchmen had had enough. They broke and ran. Some rushed for doorways and threw themselves within, many scurried into the Rue des Tres Pigeons, others madly fought their way into Morier Lane.

At this moment the door of the watchmaker's shop opened and the little

girl who had been seen at the window ran into the square, calling out:
"Ro! Ro!" It was Guida Landresse.

Among the French flying for refuge was the garish Turk, Rullecour's ally. Suddenly the now frightened, crying child got into his path and tripped him up. Wild with rage he made a stroke at her, but at that instant his scimitar was struck aside by a youth covered with the smoke and grime of battle. He caught up the child to his arms, and hurried with her through the melee to the watchmaker's doorway. There stood a terror-stricken woman--Madame Landresse, who had just made her way into the square. Placing the child, in her arms, Philip d'Avranche staggered inside the house, faint and bleeding from a wound in the shoulder. The battle of Jersey was over.

"Ah bah!" said Dormy Jamais from the roof of the Cohue Royale; "now I'll toll the bell for that achocre of a Frenchman. Then I'll finish my supper."

Poising a half-loaf of bread on the ledge of the roof, he began to slowly toll the cracked bell at his hand for Rullecour the filibuster.

The bell clanged out: Chicane-chicane! Chicane-chicane!

Another bell answered from the church by the square, a deep, mournful note. It was tolling for Peirson and his dead comrades.

Against the statue in the Vier Marchi leaned Ranulph Delagarde. An officer came up and held out a hand to him. "Your shot ended the business," said he. "You're a brave fellow. What is your name?"

"Ranulph Delagarde, sir."

"Delagarde--eh? Then well done, Delagardes! They say your father was the first man killed. We won't forget that, my lad."

Sinking down upon the base of the statue, Ranulph did not stir or reply, and the officer, thinking he was grieving for his father, left him alone.

ELEVEN YEARS AFTER

CHAPTER V

The King of France was no longer sending adventurers to capture the outposts of England. He was rather, in despair, beginning to wind in again the coil of disaster which had spun out through the helpless fingers of Neckar, Calonne, Brienne and the rest, and was in the end to bind his own hands for the guillotine.

The Isle of Jersey, like a scout upon the borders of a foeman's country, looked out over St. Michael's Basin to those provinces where the war of

the Vendee was soon to strike France from within, while England, and presently all Europe, should strike her from without.

War, or the apprehension of war, was in the air. The people of the little isle, living always within the influence of natural wonder and the power of the elements, were deeply superstitious; and as news of dark deeds done in Paris crept across from Carteret or St. Malo, as men-of-war anchored in the tide-way, and English troops, against the hour of trouble, came, transport after transport, into the harbour of St. Heliers, they began to see visions and dream dreams. One peasant heard the witches singing a chorus of carnage at Rocbert; another saw, towards the Minquiers, a great army like a mirage upon the sea; others declared that certain French refugees in the island had the evil eye and bewitched their cattle; and a woman, wild with grief because her child had died of a sudden sickness, meeting a little Frenchman, the Chevalier du Champsavoys, in the Rue des Tres Pigeons, thrust at his face with her knitting-needle, and then, Protestant though she was, made the sacred sign, as though to defeat the evil eye.

This superstition and fanaticism so strong in the populace now and then burst forth in untamable fury and riot. So that when, on the sixteenth of December 1792, the gay morning was suddenly overcast, and a black curtain was drawn over the bright sun, the people of Jersey, working in the fields, vraicking among the rocks, or knitting in their doorways, stood aghast, and knew not what was upon them.

Some began to say the Lord's Prayer, some in superstitious terror ran to the secret hole in the wall, to the chimney, or to the bedstead, or dug up the earthen floor, to find the stocking full of notes and gold, which might, perchance, come with them safe through any cataclysm, or start them again in business in another world. Some began fearfully to sing hymns, and a few to swear freely. These latter were chiefly carters, whose salutations to each other were mainly oaths, because of the extreme narrowness of the island roads, and sailors to whom profanity was as daily bread.

In St. Heliers, after the first stupefaction, people poured into the streets. They gathered most where met the Rue d'Driere and the Rue d'Egypte. Here stood the old prison, and the spot was called the Place du Vier Prison.

Men and women with breakfast still in their mouths mumbled their terror to each other. A lobster-woman shrieking that the Day of Judgment was come, instinctively straightened her cap, smoothed out her dress of molleton, and put on her sabots. A carpenter, hearing her terrified exclamations, put on his sabots also, stooped whimpering to the stream running from the Rue d'Egypte, and began to wash his face. A dozen of his neighbours did the same. Some of the women, however, went on knitting hard, as they gabbled prayers and looked at the fast-blackening sun. Knitting was to Jersey women, like breathing or tale-bearing, life itself. With their eyes closing upon earth they would have gone on knitting and dropped no stitches.

A dusk came down like that over Pompeii and Herculaneum. The tragedy of fear went hand in hand with burlesque commonplace. The grey stone walls of the houses grew darker and darker, and seemed to close in on the dumfounded, hysterical crowd. Here some one was shouting command to imaginary militia; there an aged crone was offering, without price, simnels and black butter, as a sort of propitiation for an imperfect past; and from a window a notorious evil-liver was frenziedly crying that she had heard the devil and his Rocbert witches revelling in the prison dungeons the night before. Thereupon a long-haired fanatic, once a barber, with a gift for mad preaching, sprang upon the Pompe des Brigands, and declaring that the Last Day was come, shrieked:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me! He hath sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound!"

Some one thrust into his hand a torch. He waved it to and fro in his wild harangue; he threw up his arms towards the ominous gloom, and with blatant fury ordered open the prison doors. Other torches and candles appeared, and the mob trembled to and fro in delirium.

"The prison! Open the Vier Prison! Break down the doors! Gatd'en'ale--drive out the devils! Free the prisoners--the poor vauriens!" the crowd shouted, rushing forward with sticks and weapons.

The prison arched the street as Temple Bar once spanned the Strand. They crowded under the archway, overpowered the terror-stricken jailer, and, battering open the door in frenzy, called the inmates forth.

They looked to see issue some sailor seized for whistling of a Sabbath, some profane peasant who had presumed to wear pattens in church, some profaner peasant who had not doffed his hat to the Connetable, or some slip-shod militiaman who had gone to parade in his sabots, thereby offending the red-robed dignity of the Royal Court.

Instead, there appeared a little Frenchman of the most refined and unusual appearance. The blue cloth of his coat set off the extreme paleness of a small but serene face and high round forehead. The hair, a beautiful silver grey which time only had powdered, was tied in a queue behind. The little gentleman's hand was as thin and fine as a lady's, his shoulders were narrow and slightly stooped, his eye was eloquent and benign. His dress was amazingly neat, but showed constant brushing and signs of the friendly repairing needle.

The whole impression was that of a man whom a whiff of wind would blow away; with the body of an ascetic and the simplicity of a child. The face had some particular sort of wisdom, difficult to define and impossible to imitate. He held in his hand a tiny cane of the sort carried at the court of Louis Quinze. Louis Capet himself had given it to him; and you might have had the life of the little gentleman, but not this cane with the tiny golden bust of his unhappy monarch.

He stood on the steps of the prison and looked serenely on the muttering,

excited crowd.

"I fear there is a mistake," said he, coughing a little into his fingers.

"You do not seek me. I--I have no claim upon your kindness; I am only the Chevalier Orvilliers du Champsavoys de Beaumanoir."

For a moment the mob had been stayed in amazement by this small, rare creature stepping from the doorway, like a porcelain coloured figure from some dusky wood in a painting by Claude. In the instant's pause the Chevalier Orvilliers du Champsavoys de Beaumanoir took from his pocket a timepiece and glanced at it, then looked over the heads of the crowd towards the hooded sun, which now, a little, was showing its face again.

"It was due at eight, less seven minutes," said he; "clear sun again was set for ten minutes past. It is now upon the stroke of the hour."

He seemed in no way concerned with the swaying crowd before him--undoubtedly they wanted naught of him, and therefore he did not take their presence seriously; but, of an inquiring mind, he was absorbed in the eclipse.

"He's a French sorcerer! He has the evil eye! Away with him to the sea!" shouted the fanatical preacher from the Pompe des Brigands.

"It's a witch turned into a man!" cried a drunken woman from her window.

"Give him the wheel of fire at the blacksmith's forge."

"That's it! Gad'rabotin--the wheel of fire'll turn him back to a hag again!"

The little gentleman protested, but they seized him and dragged him from the steps. Tossed like a ball, so light was he, he grasped the gold-headed cane as one might cling to life, and declared that he was no witch, but a poor French exile, arrested the night before for being abroad after nine o'clock, against the orders of the Royal Court.

Many of the crowd knew him well enough by sight, but they were too delirious to act with intelligence now. The dark cloud was lifting a little from the sun, and dread of the Judgment Day was declining; but as the pendulum swung back towards normal life again, it carried with it the one virulent and common prejudice of the country--radical hatred of the French--which often slumbered but never died.

The wife of an oyster-fisher from Rozel Bay, who lived in hourly enmity with the oyster-fishers of Carteret, gashed his cheek with the shell of an ormer. A potato-digger from Grouville parish struck at his head with a hoe, for the Granvillais had crossed the strait to the island the year before, to work in the harvest fields for a lesser wage than the Jersiais, and this little French gentleman must be held responsible for that. The weapon missed the Chevalier, but laid low a centenier, who, though a municipal officer, had in the excitement lost his head like his neighbours. This but increased the rage against the foreigner, and was another crime to lay to his charge. A smuggler thereupon kicked him in

the side.

At that moment there came a cry of indignation from a girl at an upper window of the Place. The Chevalier evidently knew her, for even in his hard case he smiled; and then he heard another voice ring out over the heads of the crowd, strong, angry, determined.

From the Rue d'Driere a tall athletic man was hurrying. He had on his shoulders a workman's han basket, from which peeped a ship-builder's tools. Seeing the Chevalier's danger, he dropped his tool-basket through the open window of a house and forced his way through the crowd, roughly knocking from under them the feet of two or three ruffians who opposed him. He reproached the crowd, he berated them, he handled them fiercely. By a dexterous strength he caught the little gentleman up in his arms, and, driving straight on to the open door of the smithy, placed him inside, then blocked the passage with his own body.

It was a strange picture: the preacher in an ecstasy haranguing the foolish rabble, who now realised, with an unbecoming joy, that the Last Day was yet to face; the gaping, empty prison; the open windows crowded with excited faces; the church bell from the Vier Marchi ringing an alarm; Norman lethargy roused to froth and fury: one strong man holding two hundred back!

Above them all, at a hus in the gable of a thatched cottage, stood the girl whom the Chevalier had recognised, anxiously watching the affray. She was leaning across the lower closed half of the door, her hands in apprehensive excitement clasping her cheeks. The eyes were bewildered, and, though alive with pain, watched the scene below with unwavering intensity.

Like all mobs this one had no reason, no sense. They were balked in their malign intentions, and this man, Maitre Ranulph Delagarde, was the cause of it--that was all they knew. A stone was thrown at Delagarde as he stood in the doorway, but it missed him.

"Oh-oh-oh!" the girl exclaimed, shrinking. "O shame! O you cowards!" she added, her hands now indignantly beating on the hus. Three or four men rushed forward on Ranulph. He hurled them back. Others came on with weapons. The girl fled for an instant, then reappeared with a musket, as the people were crowding in on Delagarde with threats and execrations.

"Stop! stop!" cried the girl from above, as Ranulph seized a black-smith's hammer to meet the onset. "Stop, or I'll fire!" she called again, and she aimed her musket at the foremost assailants.

Every face turned in her direction, for her voice had rung out clear as music. For an instant there was silence--the levelled musket had a deadly look, and the girl seemed determined. Her fingers, her whole body, trembled; but there was no mistaking the strong will, the indignant purpose.

All at once in the pause another sound was heard. It was a quick tramp,

tramp, tramp! and suddenly under the prison archway came running an officer of the King's navy with a company of sailors. The officer, with drawn sword, his men following with cutlasses, drove a way through the mob, who scattered before them like sheep.

Delagarde threw aside his hammer, and saluted the officer. The little Chevalier made a formal bow, and hastened to say that he was not at all hurt. With a droll composure he offered snuff to the officer, who declined politely. Turning to the window where the girl stood, the newcomer saluted with confident gallantry.

"Why, it's little Guida Landresse!" he said under his breath--"I'd know her anywhere. Death and Beauty, what a face!" Then he turned to Ranulph in recognition.

"Ranulph Delagarde, eh?" said he good-humouredly. "You've forgotten me, I see. I'm Philip d'Avranche, of the Narcissus."

Ranulph had forgotten. The slight lad Philip had grown bronzed, and stouter of frame. In the eleven years since they had been together at the Battle of Jersey, events, travel, and responsibility had altered him vastly. Ranulph had changed only in growing very tall and athletic and strong; the look of him was still that of the Norman lad of the isle, though the power and intelligence of his face were unusual.

The girl in the cottage doorway had not forgotten at all. The words that d'Avranche had said to her years before, when she was a child, came to her mind: "My name is Philip; call me Philip."

The recollection of that day when she snatched off the Bailly's hat brought a smile to her lips now, so quickly were her feelings moved one way or another. Then she grew suddenly serious, for the memory of the hour when he saved her from the scimitar of the Turk came to her, and her heart throbbed hotly. But she smiled again, though more gently and a little wistfully now.

Philip d'Avranche looked up towards her once more, and returned her smile. Then he addressed the awed crowd. He did not spare his language; he unconsciously used an oath or two. He ordered them off to their homes. When they hesitated (for they were slow to acknowledge any authority save their own sacred Royal Court) the sailors advanced on them with drawn cutlasses, and a moment later the Place du Vier Prison was clear. Leaving a half-dozen sailors on guard till the town corps should arrive, d'Avranche prepared to march, and turned to Delagarde.

"You've done me a good turn, Monsieur d'Avranche," said Ranulph.

"There was a time you called me Philip," said d'Avranche, smiling. "We were lads together."

"It's different now," answered Delagarde.

"Nothing is different at all, of course," returned d'Avranche carelessly,

yet with the slightest touch of condescension, as he held out his hand. Turning to the Chevalier, he said: "Monsieur, I congratulate you on having such a champion"--with a motion towards Ranulph. "And you, monsieur, on your brave protector"--he again saluted the girl at the window above.

"I am the obliged and humble servant of monsieur, and monsieur," responded the little gentleman, turning from one to the other with a courtly bow, the three-cornered hat under his arm, the right foot forward, the thin fingers making a graceful salutation. "But I--I think --I really think I must go back to prison. I was not formally set free. I was out last night beyond the hour set by the Court. I lost my way, and--"

"Not a bit of it," d'Avranche interrupted. "The centeniers are too free with their jailing here. I'll be guarantee for you, monsieur." He turned to go.

The little man shook his head dubiously. "But, as a point of honour, I really think--"

D'Avranche laughed. "As a point of honour, I think you ought to breakfast. A la bonne heure, monsieur le chevalier!"

He turned again to the cottage window. The girl was still there. The darkness over the sun was withdrawn, and now the clear light began to spread itself abroad. It was like a second dawn after a painful night. It tinged the face of the girl; it burnished the wonderful red-brown hair falling loosely and lightly over her forehead; it gave her beauty a touch of luxuriance. D'Avranche thrilled at the sight of her.

"It's a beautiful face," he said to himself as their eyes met and he saluted once more.

Ranulph had seen the glances passing between the two, and he winced. He remembered how, eleven years ago, Philip d'Avranche had saved the girl from death. It galled him that then and now this young gallant should step in and take the game out of his hands--he was sure that himself alone could have mastered this crowd.

"Monsieur--monsieur le chevalier!" the girl called down from the window, "grandpethe says you must breakfast with us. Oh, but come you must, or we shall be offended!" she added, as Champsavoys shook his head in hesitation and glanced towards the prison.

"As a point of honour--" the little man still persisted, lightly touching his breast with the Louis Quinze cane, and taking a step towards the sombre prison archway. But Ranulph interfered, drew him gently inside the cottage, and, standing in the doorway, said to some one within:

"May I come in also, Sieur de Mauprat?"

Above the pleasant welcome of a quavering voice came another, soft and

clear, in pure French:

"Thou art always welcome, without asking, as thou knowest, Ro."

"Then I'll go and fetch my tool-basket first," Ranulph said cheerily, his heart beating more quickly, and, turning, he walked across the Place.

CHAPTER VI

The cottage in which Guida lived at the Place du Vier Prison was in jocund contrast to the dungeon from which the Chevalier Orvilliers du Champsavoys de Beaumanoir had complacently issued. Even in the hot summer the prison walls dripped moisture, for the mortar had been made of wet sea-sand, which never dried, and beneath the gloomy tenement of crime a dark stream flowed to the sea. But the walls of the cottage were dry, for, many years before, Guida's mother had herself seen it built from cellar-rock to the linked initials over the doorway, stone by stone, and every corner of it was as free from damp as the mielles stretching in sandy desolation behind to the Mont es Pendus, where the law had its way with the necks of criminals.

In early childhood Madame Landresse had come with her father into exile from the sunniest valley in the hills of Chambéry, where flowers and trees and sunshine had been her life. Here, in the midst of blank and grim stone houses, her heart travelled back to the chateau where she lived before the storm of persecution drove her forth; and she spent her heart and her days in making this cottage, upon the western border of St. Heliers, a delight to the quiet eye.

The people of the island had been good to her and her dead husband during the two short years of their married life, and had caused her to love the land which necessity made her home. Her child was brought up after the fashion of the better class of Jersey children, wore what they wore, ate what they ate, lived as they lived. She spoke the country patois in the daily life, teaching it to Guida at the same time that she taught her pure French and good English, which she herself had learned as a child, and cultivated later here. She had done all in her power to make Guida Jersiaise in instinct and habit, and to beget in her a contented disposition. There could be no future for her daughter outside this little green oasis of exile, she thought. Not that she lacked ambition, but in the circumstances she felt that ambition could yield but one harvest to her child, which was marriage. She herself had married a poor man, a master builder of ships, like Maitre Ranulph Delagarde, but she had been very happy while he lived. Her husband had come of an ancient Jersey family, who were in Normandy before the Conqueror was born; a man of genius almost in his craft, but scarcely a gentleman according to the standard of her father, the distinguished exile and now retired watchmaker. If Guida should chance to be as fortunate as herself, she could ask no more.

She had watched the child anxiously, for the impulses of Guida's temperament now and then broke forth in indignation as wild as her tears and in tears as wild as her laughter. As the girl grew in health and stature, she tried, tenderly, strenuously, to discipline the sensitive nature, bursting her heart with grief at times because she knew that these high feelings and delicate powers came through a long line of ancestral tendencies, as indestructible as perilous and joyous.

Four things were always apparent in the girl's character: sympathy with suffering, kindness without partiality, a love of nature, and an intense candour.

Not a stray cat wandering into the Place du Vier Prison but found an asylum in the garden behind the cottage. Not a dog hungry for a bone, stopping at Guida's door, but was sure of one from a hiding-place in the hawthorn hedge of the garden. Every morning you might have seen the birds in fluttering, chirping groups upon the may-tree or the lilac-bushes, waiting for the tiny snow-storm of bread to fall from her hand. Was he good or bad, ragged or neat, honest or a thief, not a deserting sailor or a homeless lad, halting at the cottage, but was fed from the girl's private larder behind the straw beehives among the sweet lavender and the gooseberry-bushes. No matter how rough the vagrant, the sincerity and pure impulse of the child seemed to throw round him a sunshine of decency and respect.

The garden behind the house was the girl's Eden. She had planted upon the hawthorn hedge the crimson monthly rose, the fuchsia, and the jonquil, until at last the cottage was hemmed in by a wall of flowers; and here she was ever as busy as the bees which hung humming on the sweet scabious.

In this corner was a little hut for rabbits; in that, there was a hole dug in the bank for a hedgehog; in the middle a little flower-grown enclosure for cats in various stages of health or convalescence, and a small pond for frogs; and in the midst of all wandered her faithful dog, Biribi by name, as master of the ceremonies.

Madame Landresse's one ambition had been to live long enough to see her child's character formed. She knew that her own years were numbered, for month by month she felt her strength going. And yet a beautiful tenacity kept her where she would be until Guida was fifteen years of age. Her great desire had been to live till the girl was eighteen. Then--well, then might she not perhaps leave her to the care of a husband? At best, M. de Mauprat could not live long. He had at last been forced to give up the little watchmaker's shop in the Vier Marchi, where for so many years, in simple independence, he had wrought, always putting by, from work done after hours, Jersey bank-notes and gold, to give Guida a dot, if not worthy of her, at least a guarantee against reproach when some great man should come seeking her in marriage. But at last his hands trembled among the tiny wheels, and his eyes failed. He had his dark hour by himself, then he sold the shop to a native, who thenceforward sat in the ancient exile's place; and the two brown eyes of the stooped, brown old man looked out no more from the window in the Vier Marchi: and then they

all made their new home in the Place du Vier Prison.

Until she was fifteen Guida's life was unclouded. Once or twice her mother tried to tell her of a place that must soon be empty, but her heart failed her. So at last the end came like a sudden wind out of the north; and it was left to Guida Landresse de Landresse to fight the fight and finish the journey of womanhood alone.

This time was the turning-point in Guida's life. What her mother had been to the Sieur de Mauprat, she soon became. They had enough to live on simply. Every week her grandfather gave her a fixed sum for the household. Upon this she managed, that the tiny income left by her mother might not be touched. She shrank from using it yet, and besides, dark times might come when it would be needed. Death had once surprised her, but it should bring no more amazement. She knew that M. de Mauprat's days were numbered, and when he was gone she would be left without one near relative in the world. She realised how unprotected her position would be when death came knocking at the door again. What she would do she knew not. She thought long and hard. Fifty things occurred to her, and fifty were set aside. Her mother's immediate relatives in France were scattered or dead. There was no longer any interest at Chambery in the watchmaking exile, who had dropped like a cherry-stone from the beak of the blackbird of persecution upon one of the Iles de la Manche.

There remained the alternative more than once hinted by the Sieur de Mauprat as the months grew into years after the mother died--marriage; a husband, a notable and wealthy husband. That was the magic destiny de Mauprat figured for her. It did not elate her, it did not disturb her; she scarcely realised it. She loved animals, and she saw no reason to despise a stalwart youth. It had been her fortune to know two or three in the casual, unconventional manner of villages, and there were few in the land, great or humble, who did not turn twice to look at her as she passed through the Vier Marchi, so noble was her carriage, so graceful and buoyant her walk, so lacking in self-consciousness her beauty. More than one young gentleman of family had been known to ride through the Place du Vier Prison, hoping to get sight of her, and to offer the view of a suggestively empty pillion behind him.

She had, however, never listened to flatterers, and only one youth of Jersey had footing in the cottage. This was Ranulph Delagarde, who had gone in and out at his will, but that was casually and not too often, and he was discreet and spoke no word of love. Sometimes she talked to him of things concerning the daily life with which she did not care to trouble Sieur de Mauprat. In ways quite unknown to her he had made her life easier for her. She knew that her mother had thought of Ranulph for her husband, although she blushed whenever--but it was not often--the idea came to her. She remembered how her mother had said that Ranulph would be a great man in the island some day; that he had a mind above all the youths in St. Heliers; that she would rather see Ranulph a master ship-builder than a babbling scrivain in the Rue des Tres Pigeons, a smirking leech, or a penniless seigneur with neither trade nor talent. Guida was attracted to Ranulph through his occupation, for she loved

strength, she loved all clean and wholesome trades; that of the mason, of the carpenter, of the blacksmith, and most of the ship-builder. Her father, whom she did not remember, had been a ship-builder, and she knew that he had been a notable man; every one had told her that.

.....

"She has met her destiny," say the village gossips, when some man in the dusty procession of life sees a woman's face in the pleasant shadow of a home, and drops out of the ranks to enter at her doorway.

Was Ranulph to be Guida's destiny?

Handsome and stalwart though he looked as he entered the cottage in the Place du Vier Prison, on that September morning after the rescue of the chevalier, his tool-basket on his shoulder, and his brown face enlivened by one simple sentiment, she was far from sure that he was--far from sure.

CHAPTER VII

The little hall-way into which Ranulph stepped from the street led through to the kitchen. Guida stood holding back the door for him to enter this real living-room of the house, which opened directly upon the garden behind. It was so cheerful and secluded, looking out from the garden over the wide space beyond to the changeful sea, that since Madame Landresse's death the Sieur de Mauprat had made it reception-room, dining-room, and kitchen all in one. He would willingly have slept there too, but noblesse oblige and the thought of what the Chevalier Orvilliers du Champsavoys de Beaumanoir might think prevented him. Moreover, there was something patriarchal in a kitchen as a reception-room; and both he and the chevalier loved to watch Guida busy with her household duties: at one moment her arms in the dough of the kneading trough; at another picking cherries for a jelly, or casting up her weekly accounts with a little smiling and a little sighing.

If, by chance, it had been proposed by the sieur to adjourn to the small sitting-room which looked out upon the Place du Vier Prison, a gloom would instantly have settled upon them both; though in this little front room there was an ancient arm-chair, over which hung the sword that the Comte Guilbert Mauprat de Chambéry had used at Fontenoy against the English.

So it was that this spacious kitchen, with its huge chimney, and paved with square flagstones and sanded, became like one of those ancient corners of camaraderie in some exclusive inn where gentlemen of quality were wont to meet. At the left of the chimney was the great settle, or veille, covered with baize, "flourished" with satinettes, and spread with ferns and rushes, and above it a little shelf of old china worth the ransom of a prince at least. Opposite the doorway were two great

armchairs, one for the sieur and the other for the Chevalier, who made his home in the house of one Elie Mattingley, a fisherman by trade and by practice a practical smuggler, with a daughter Carterette whom he loved passing well.

These, with a few constant visitors, formed a coterie: the huge, grizzly-bearded boatman, Jean Touzel, who wore spectacles, befriended smugglers, was approved of all men, and secretly worshipped by his wife; Amice Ingouville, the fat avocat with a stomach of gigantic proportions, the biggest heart and the tiniest brain in the world; Maitre Ranulph Delagarde, and lastly M. Yves Savary dit Detricand, that officer of Rullecour's who, being released from the prison hospital, when the hour came for him to leave the country was too drunk to find the shore. By some whim of negligence the Royal Court was afterwards too lethargic to remove him, and he stayed on, vainly making efforts to leave between one carousal and another. In sober hours, none too frequent, he was rather sorrowfully welcomed by the sieur and the chevalier.

When Ranulph entered the kitchen his greeting to the sieur and the chevalier was in French, but to Guida he said, rather stupidly in the patois--for late events had embarrassed him--"Ah bah! es-tu gentiment?"

"Gentiment," she answered, with a queer little smile. "You'll have breakfast?" she said in English.

"Et ben!" Ranulph repeated, still embarrassed, "a mouthful, that's all."

He laid aside his tool-basket, shook hands with the sieur, and seated himself at the table. Looking at du Champsavoys, he said:

"I've just met the connetable. He regrets the riot, chevalier, and says the Royal Court extends its mercy to you."

"I prefer to accept no favours," answered the chevalier. "As a point of honour, I had thought that, after breakfast, I should return to prison, and--"

"The connetable said it was cheaper to let the chevalier go free than to feed him in the Vier Prison," dryly explained Ranulph, helping himself to roasted conger eel and eyeing hungrily the freshly-made black butter Guida was taking from a wooden trencher. "The Royal Court is stingy," he added. "'It's nearer than Jean Noe, who got married in his red queminzolle,' as we say on Jersey--"

But he got no further at the moment, for shots rang out suddenly before the house. They all started to their feet, and Ranulph, running to the front door, threw it open. As he did so a young man, with blood flowing from a cut on the temple, stepped inside.

It was M. Savary dit Detricand.

"Whew--what fools there are in the world! Pish, you silly apes!" the young man said, glancing through the open doorway again to where the connetable's men were dragging two vile-looking ruffians into the Vier Prison.

"What's happened, monsieur?" said Ranulph, closing the door and bolting it.

"What was it, monsieur?" asked Guida anxiously, for painful events had crowded too fast that morning. Detricand was stanching the blood at his temple with the scarf from his neck.

"Get him some cordial, Guida--he's wounded!" said de Mauprat.

Detricand waved a hand almost impatiently, and dropped upon the veille, swinging a leg backwards and forwards.

"It's nothing, I protest--nothing whatever, and I'll have no cordial, not a drop. A drink of water--a mouthful of that, if I must drink."

Guida caught up a hanap of water from the dresser, and passed it to him. Her fingers trembled a little. His were steady enough as he took the hanap and drank off the water at a gulp. Again she filled it and again he drank. The blood was running in a tiny little stream down his cheek. She caught her handkerchief from her girdle impulsively, and gently wiped it away.

"Let me bandage the wound," she said eagerly. Her eyes were alight with compassion, certainly not because it was the dissipated French invader, M. Savary dit Detricand,--no one knew that he was the young Comte de Tournay of the House of Vaufontaine, but because he was a wounded fellow-creature. She would have done the same for the poor beganne, Dormy Jamais, who still prowled the purlieus of St. Heliers.

It was clear, however, that Detricand felt differently. The moment she touched him he became suddenly still. He permitted her to wash the blood from his temple and forehead, to stanch it first with brandied jeru-leaves, then with cobwebs, and afterwards to bind it with her own kerchief.

Detricand thrilled at the touch of the warm, tremulous fingers. He had never been quite so near her before. His face was not far from hers. Now her breath fanned him. As he bent his head for the bandaging, he could see the soft pulsing of her bosom, and hear the beating of her heart. Her neck was so full and round and soft, and her voice--surely he had never heard a voice so sweet and strong, a tone so well poised, so resonantly pleasant.

When she had finished, he had an impulse to catch the hand as it dropped away from his forehead, and kiss it; not as he had kissed many a hand,

hotly one hour and coldly the next, but with an unpurchasable kind of gratitude characteristic of this especial sort of sinner. He was just young enough, and there was still enough natural health in him, to know the healing touch of a perfect decency, a pure truth of spirit. Yet he had been drunk the night before, drunk with three noncommissioned officers--and he a gentleman, in spite of all, as could be plainly seen.

He turned his head away from the girl quickly, and looked straight into the eyes of her grandfather.

"I'll tell you how it was, *Sieur de Mauprat*," said he. "I was crossing the *Place du Vier Prison* when a rascal threw a cleaver at me from a window. If it had struck me on the head--well, the Royal Court would have buried me, and without a slab to my grave like *Rullecour*. I burst open the door of the house, ran up the stairs, gripped the ruffian, and threw him through the window into the street. As I did so a door opened behind, and another cut-throat came at me with a pistol. He fired--fired wide. I ran in on him, and before he had time to think he was out of the window too. Then the other brute below fired up at me. The bullet gashed my temple, as you see. After that, it was an affair of the *connetable* and his men. I had had enough fighting before breakfast. I saw your open door, and here I am--*monsieur, monsieur, monsieur, mademoiselle!*" He bowed to each of them and glanced towards the table hungrily.

Ranulph placed a seat for him. He viewed the conger eel and limpets with an avid eye, but waited for the *chevalier* and *de Mauprat* to sit. He had no sooner taken a mouthful, however, and thrown a piece of bread to *Biribi* the dog, than, starting again to his feet, he said:

"Your pardon, *monsieur le chevalier*, that brute in the *Place* has knocked all sense from my head! I've a letter for you, brought from *Rouen* by one of the refugees who came yesterday." He drew from his breast a packet and handed it over. "I went out to their ship last night."

The *chevalier* looked with surprise and satisfaction at the seal on the letter, and, breaking it, spread open the paper, fumbled for the eye-glass which he always carried in his waistcoat, and began reading diligently.

Meanwhile Ranulph turned to *Guida*. "To-morrow *Jean Touzel* and his wife and I go to the *Ecrehos Rocks* in *Jean's* boat," said he. "A vessel was driven ashore there three days ago, and my carpenters are at work on her. If you can go and the wind holds fair, you shall be brought back safe by sundown--*Jean* says so too."

Of all boatmen and fishermen on the coast, *Jean Touzel* was most to be trusted. No man had saved so many shipwrecked folk, none risked his life so often; and he had never had a serious accident. To go to sea with *Jean Touzel*, folk said, was safer than living on land. *Guida* loved the sea; and she could sail a boat, and knew the tides and currents of the south coast as well as most fishermen.

M. de Mauprat met her inquiring glance and nodded assent. She then said gaily to Ranulph: "I shall sail her, shall I not?"

"Every foot of the way," he answered.

She laughed and clapped her hands. Suddenly the little chevalier broke in. "By the head of John the Baptist!" said he.

Detricand put down his knife and fork in amazement, and Guida coloured, for the words sounded almost profane upon the chevalier's lips.

Du Champsavoys held up his eye-glass, and, turning from one to the other, looked at each of them imperatively yet abstractedly too. Then, pursing up his lower lip, and with a growing amazement which carried him to distant heights of reckless language, he said again:

"By the head of John the Baptist on a charger!" He looked at Detricand with a fierceness which was merely the tension of his thought. If he had looked at a wall it would have been the same. But Detricand, who had an almost whimsical sense of humour, felt his neck in affected concern as though to be quite sure of it. "Chevalier," said he, "you shock us--you shock us, dear chevalier."

"The most painful things, and the most wonderful too," said the chevalier, tapping the letter with his eye-glass; "the most terrible and yet the most romantic things are here. A drop of cider, if you please, mademoiselle, before I begin to read it to you, if I may--if I may--eh?"

They all nodded eagerly. Guida handed him a mogue of cider. The little grey thrush of a man sipped it, and in a voice no bigger than a bird's began:

"From Lucillien du Champsavoys, Comte de Chanier, by the hand of a faithful friend, who goeth hence from among divers dangers, unto my cousin, the Chevalier du Champsavoys de Beaumanoir, late Gentleman of the Bedchamber to the best of monarchs, Louis XV, this writing:

"MY DEAR AND HONOURED Cousin"--The chevalier paused, frowned a trifle, and tapped his lips with his finger in a little lyrical emotion--"My dear and honoured cousin, all is lost. The France we loved is no more. The twentieth of June saw the last vestige of Louis's power pass for ever. That day ten thousand of the sans-culottes forced their way into the palace to kill him. A faithful few surrounded him. In the mad turmoil, we were fearful, he was serene. 'Feel,' said Louis, placing his hand on his bosom, 'feel whether this is the beating of a heart shaken by fear.' Ah, my friend, your heart would have clamped in misery to hear the Queen cry: 'What have I to fear? Death? it is as well to-day as to-morrow; they can do no more!' Their lives were saved, the day passed, but worse came after.

"The tenth of August came. With it too, the end-the dark and bloody end-of the Swiss Guard. The Jacobins had their way at last. The

Swiss Guard died in the Court of the Carrousel as they marched to the Assembly to save the King. Thus the last circle of defence round the throne was broken. The palace was given over to flame and the sword. Of twenty nobles of the court I alone escaped. France is become a slaughter-house. The people cried out for more liberty, and their liberators gave them the freedom of death. A fortnight ago, Danton, the incomparable fiend, let loose his assassins upon the priests of God. Now Paris is made a theatre where the people whom Louis and his nobles would have died to save have turned every street into a stable of carnage, every prison and hospital into a vast charnel-house. One last revolting thing alone remains to be done--the murder of the King; then this France that we have loved will have no name and no place in our generation. She will rise again, but we shall not see her, for our eyes have been blinded with blood, for ever darkened by disaster. Like a mistress upon whom we have lavished the days of our youth and the strength of our days, she has deceived us; she has stricken us while we slept. Behold a Caliban now for her paramour!

"Weep with me, for France despoils me. One by one my friends have fallen beneath the axe. Of my four sons but one remains. Henri was stabbed by Danton's ruffians at the Hotel de Ville; Gaston fought and died with the Swiss Guard, whose hacked and severed limbs were broiled and eaten in the streets by these monsters who mutilate the land. Isidore, the youngest, defied a hundred of Robespierre's cowards on the steps of the Assembly, and was torn to pieces by the mob. Etienne alone is left. But for him and for the honour of my house I too would find a place beside the King and die with him. Etienne is with de la Rochejaquelein in Brittany. I am here at Rouen.

"Brittany and Normandy still stand for the King. In these two provinces begins the regeneration of France: we call it the War of the Vendee. On that Isle of Jersey there you should almost hear the voice of de la Rochejaquelein and the marching cries of our loyal legions. If there be justice in God we shall conquer. But there will be joy no more for such as you or me, nor hope, nor any peace. We live only for those who come after. Our duty remains, all else is dead. You did well to go, and I do well to stay.

"By all these piteous relations you shall know the importance of the request I now set forth.

"My cousin by marriage of the House of Vaufontaine has lost all his sons. With the death of the Prince of Vaufontaine, there is in France no direct heir to the house, nor can it, by the law, revert to my house or my heirs. Now of late the Prince hath urged me to write to you--for he is here in seclusion with me--and to unfold to you what has hitherto been secret. Eleven years ago the only nephew of the Prince, after some naughty escapades, fled from the Court with Rullecour the adventurer, who invaded the Isle of Jersey. From that hour he has been lost to France. Some of his companions in arms returned after a number of years. All with one exception

declared that he was killed in the battle at St. Heliers. One, however, maintains that he was still living and in the prison hospital when his comrades were set free.

"It is of him I write to you. He is--as you will perchance remember--the Comte de Tournay. He was then not more than seventeen years of age, slight of build, with brownish hair, dark grey eyes, and had over the right shoulder a scar from a sword thrust. It seemeth little possible that, if living, he should still remain in that Isle of Jersey. He may rather have returned to obscurity in France or have gone to England to be lost to name and remembrance --or even indeed beyond the seas.

"That you may perchance give me word of him is the object of my letter, written in no more hope than I live; and you can well guess how faint that is. One young nobleman preserved to France may yet be the great unit that will save her.

"Greet my poor countrymen yonder in the name of one who still waits at a desecrated altar; and for myself you must take me as I am, with the remembrance of what I was, even

"Your faithful friend and loving kinsman,

"CHANIER."

"All this, though in the chances of war you read it not till wintertide, was told you at Rouen this first day of September 1792."

During the reading, broken by feeling and reflective pauses on the chevalier's part, the listeners showed emotion after the nature of each. The Sieur de Mauprat's fingers clasped and unclasped on the top of his cane, little explosions of breath came from his compressed lips, his eyebrows beetled over till the eyes themselves seemed like two glints of flame. Delagarde dropped a fist heavily upon the table, and held it there clinched, while his heel beat a tattoo of excitement upon the floor. Guida's breath came quick and fast--as Ranulph said afterwards, she was "blanc comme un linge." She shuddered painfully when the slaughter and burning of the Swiss Guards was read. Her brain was so swimming with the horrors of anarchy that the latter part of the letter dealing with the vanished Count of Tournay passed by almost unheeded.

But this particular matter greatly interested Ranulph and de Mauprat. They leaned forward eagerly, seizing every word, and both instinctively turned towards Detricand when the description of de Tournay was read.

As for Detricand himself, he listened to the first part of the letter like a man suddenly roused out of a dream. For the first time since the Revolution had begun, the horror of it and the meaning of it were brought home to him. He had been so long expatriated, had loitered so long in the primrose path of daily sleep and nightly revel, had fallen so far, that he little realised how the fiery wheels of Death were spinning in

France, or how black was the torment of her people. His face turned scarlet as the thing came home to him now. He dropped his head in his hand as if to listen more attentively, but it was in truth to hide his emotion. When the names of Vaufontaine and de Tournay were mentioned, he gave a little start, then suddenly ruled himself to a strange stillness. His face seemed presently to clear; he even smiled a little. Conscious that de Mauprat and Delagarde were watching him, he appeared to listen with a keen but impersonal interest, not without its effect upon his scrutinisers. He nodded his head as though he understood the situation. He acted very well; he bewildered the onlookers. They might think he tallied with the description of the Comte de Tournay, yet he gave the impression that the matter was not vital to himself. But when the little Chevalier stopped and turned his eye-glass upon him with sudden startled inquiry, he found it harder to keep composure.

"Singular--singular!" said the old man, and returned to the reading of the letter.

When he ended there was absolute silence for a moment. Then the chevalier lifted his eye-glass again and looked at Detricand intently.

"Pardon me, monsieur," he said, "but you were with Rullecour--as I was saying."

Detricand nodded with a droll sort of helplessness, and answered: "In Jersey I never have chance to forget it, Chevalier."

Du Champsavoys, with a naive and obvious attempt at playing counsel, fixed him again with the glass, pursed his lips, and with the importance of a greffier at the ancient Cour d'Heritage, came one step nearer to his goal.

"Have you knowledge of the Comte de Tournay, monsieur?"

"I knew him--as you were saying, Chevalier," answered Detricand lightly.

Then the Chevalier struck home. He dropped his fingers upon the table, stood up, and, looking straight into Detricand's eyes, said:

"Monsieur, you are the Comte de Tournay!"

The Chevalier involuntarily held the silence for an instant. Nobody stirred. De Mauprat dropped his chin upon his hands, and his eyebrows drew down in excitement. Guida gave a little cry of astonishment. But Detricand answered the Chevalier with a look of blank surprise and a shrug of the shoulder, which had the effect desired.

"Thank you, Chevalier," said he with quizzical humour. "Now I know who I am, and if it isn't too soon to levy upon the kinship, I shall dine with you today, chevalier. I paid my debts yesterday, and sous are scarce, but since we are distant cousins I may claim grist at the family mill, eh?"

The Chevalier sat, or rather dropped into his chair again.

"Then you are not the Comte de Tournay, monsieur," said he hopelessly.

"Then I shall not dine with you to-day," retorted Detricand gaily.

You fit the tale," said de Mauprat dubiously, touching the letter with his finger.

"Let me see," rejoined Detricand. "I've been a donkey farmer, a shipmaster's assistant, a tobacco pedlar, a quarryman, a wood merchant, an interpreter, a fisherman--that's very like the Comte de Tournay! On Monday night I supped with a smuggler; on Tuesday I breakfasted on soupe a la graisse with Manon Moignard the witch; on Wednesday I dined with Dormy Jamais and an avocat disbarred for writing lewd songs for a chocolate-house; on Thursday I went oyster-fishing with a native who has three wives, and a butcher who has been banished four times for not keeping holy the Sabbath Day; and I drank from eleven o'clock till sunrise this morning with three Scotch sergeants of the line--which is very like the Comte de Tournay, as you were saying, Chevalier! I am five feet eleven, and the Comte de Tournay was five feet ten--which is no lie," he added under his breath. "I have a scar, but it's over my left shoulder and not over my right--which is also no lie," he added under his breath. "De Tournay's hair was brown, and mine, you see, is almost a dead black--fever did that," he added under his breath. "De Tournay escaped the day after the Battle of Jersey from the prison hospital, I was left, and here I've been ever since--Yves Savary dit Detricand at your service, chevalier."

A pained expression crossed over the Chevalier's face. "I am most sorry; I am most sorry," he said hesitatingly. "I had no wish to wound your feelings."

"Ah, it is de Tournay to whom you must apologise," said Detricand musingly, with a droll look.

"It is a pity," continued the Chevalier, "for somehow all at once I recalled a resemblance. I saw de Tournay when he was fourteen--yes, I think it was fourteen--and when I looked at you, monsieur, his face came back to me. It would have made my cousin so happy if you had been the Comte de Tournay and I had found you here." The old man's voice trembled a little. "We are growing fewer every day, we Frenchmen of the ancient families. And it would have made my cousin so happy, as I was saying, monsieur."

Detricand's manner changed; he became serious. The devil-may-care, irresponsible shamelessness of his face dropped away like a mask. Something had touched him. His voice changed too.

"De Tournay was a much better fellow than I am, chevalier," said he--"and that's no lie," he added under his breath. "De Tournay was a fiery, ambitious, youngster with bad companions. De Tournay told me he repented of coming with Rullecour, and he felt he had spoilt his life--that he

could never return to France again or to his people."

The old Chevalier shook his head sadly. "Is he dead?" he asked.

There was a slight pause, and then Detricand answered: "No, still living."

"Where is he?"

"I promised de Tournay that I would never reveal that."

"Might I not write to him?" asked the old man. "Assuredly, Chevalier."

"Could you--will you--despatch a letter to him from me, monsieur?"

"Upon my honour, yes."

"I thank you--I thank you, monsieur; I will write it to-day."

"As you will, Chevalier. I will ask you for the letter to-night," rejoined Detricand. "It may take time to reach de Tournay; but he shall receive it into his own hands."

De Mauprat trembled to his feet to put the question he knew the Chevalier dreaded to ask:

"Do you think that monsieur le comte will return to France?"

"I think he will," answered Detricand slowly.

"It will make my cousin so happy--so happy," quavered the little Chevalier. "Will you take snuff with me, monsieur?" He offered his silver snuff-box to his vagrant countryman. This was a mark of favour he showed to few.

Detricand bowed, accepted, and took a pinch. "I must be going," he said.

CHAPTER IX

At eight o'clock the next morning, Guida and her fellow-voyagers, bound for the Ecrehos Rocks, had caught the first ebb of the tide, and with a fair wind from the sou'-west had skirted the coast, ridden lightly over the Banc des Violets, and shaped their course nor'-east. Guida kept the helm all the way, as she had been promised by Ranulph. It was still more than half tide when they approached the rocks, and with a fair wind there should be ease in landing.

No more desolate spot might be imagined. To the left, as you faced towards Jersey, was a long sand-bank. Between the rocks and the sand-bank shot up a tall, lonely shaft of granite with an evil history. It

had been chosen as the last refuge of safety for the women and children of a shipwrecked vessel, in the belief that high tide would not reach them. But the wave rose up maliciously, foot by foot, till it drowned their cries for ever in the storm. The sand-bank was called "Ecriviere," and the rock was afterwards known as the "Pierre des Femmes."

Other rocks less prominent, but no less treacherous, flanked it--the Noir Sabloniere and the Grande Galere. To the right of the main island were a group of others, all reef and shingle, intersected by treacherous channels; in calm lapped by water with the colours of a prism of crystal, in storm by a leaden surf and flying foam. These were known as the Colombiere, the Grosse Tete, Tas de Pois, and the Marmotiers; each with its retinue of sunken reefs and needles of granitic gneiss lying low in menace. Happy the sailor caught in a storm and making for the shelter the little curves in the island afford, who escapes a twist of the current, a sweep of the tide, and the impaling fingers of the submarine palisades.

Beyond these rocks lay Maitre Ile, all gneiss and shingle, a desert in the sea. The holy men of the early Church, beholding it from the shore of Normandy, had marked it for a refuge from the storms of war and the follies of the world. So it came to pass, for the honour of God and the Virgin Mary, the Abbe of Val Richer builded a priory there: and there now lie in peace the bones of the monks of Val Richer beside the skeletons of unfortunate gentlemen of the sea of later centuries--pirates from France, buccaneers from England, and smugglers from Jersey, who kept their trysts in the precincts of the ancient chapel.

The brisk air of early autumn made the blood tingle in Guida's cheeks. Her eyes were big with light and enjoyment. Her hair was caught close by a gay cap of her own knitting, but a little of it escaped, making a pretty setting to her face.

The boat rode under all her courses, until, as Jean said, they had put the last lace on her bonnet. Guida's hands were on the tiller firmly, doing Jean's bidding promptly. In all they were five. Besides Guida and Ranulph, Jean and Jean's wife, there was a young English clergyman of the parish of St. Michael's, who had come from England to fill the place of the rector for a few months. Word had been brought to him that a man was dying on the Ecrehos. He had heard that the boat was going, he had found Jean Touzel, and here he was with a biscuit in his hand and a black-jack of French wine within easy reach. Not always in secret the Reverend Lorenzo Dow loved the good things of this world.

The most notable characteristic of the young clergyman's appearance was his outer guilelessness and the oddness of his face. His head was rather big for his body; he had a large mouth which laughed easily, a noble forehead, and big, short-sighted eyes. He knew French well, but could speak almost no Jersey patois, so, in compliment to him, Jean Touzel, Ranulph, and Guida spoke in English. This ability to speak English--his own English--was the pride of Jean's life. He babbled it all the way, and chiefly about a mythical Uncle Elias, who was the text for many a sermon.

"Times past," said he, as they neared Maitre Ile, "mon onc' 'Lias he knows these Ecrehoses better as all the peoples of the world--respe d'la compagnie. Mon onc' 'Lias he was a fine man. Once when there is a fight between de Henglish and de hopping Johnnies," he pointed towards France, "dere is seven French ship, dere is two Henglish ship--gentlemen-of-war dey are call. Eh ben, one of de Henglish ships he is not a gentleman-of-war, he is what you call go-on-your-own-hook--privator. But it is all de same--tres-ba, all right! What you t'ink coum to pass? De big Henglish ship she is hit ver' bad, she is all break-up. Efin, dat leetle privator he stan' round on de fighting side of de gentleman-of-war and take de fire by her loneliness. Say, then, wherever dere is troub' mon onc' 'Lias he is there, he stan' outside de troub' an' look on--dat is his hobby. You call it hombog? Oh, nannin-gia! Suppose two peoples goes to fight, ah bah, somebody must pick up de pieces--dat is mon onc' 'Lias! He have his boat full of hoysters; so he sit dere all alone and watch dat great fight, an' heat de hoyster an' drink de cider vine.

"Ah, bah! mon onc' 'Lias he is standin' hin de door dat day. Dat is what we say on Jersey--when a man have some ver' great luck we say he stan' hin de door. I t'ink it is from de Bible or from de helmanac--sacre moi, I not know.... If I talk too much you give me dat black-jack."

They gave him the black-jack. After he had drunk and wiped his mouth on his sleeve, he went on:

"O my good-ma'm'selle, a leetle more to de wind. Ah, dat is right--trejous! . . . Dat fight it go like two bulls on a vergee--respe d'la compagnie. Mon onc' 'Lias he have been to Hengland, he have sing 'God save our greshus King'; so he t'ink a leetle--Ef he go to de French, likely dey will hang him. Mon onc' 'Lias, he is what you call patreeteesm. He say, 'Hengland, she is mine--trejous.' Efin, he sail straight for de Henglish ships. Dat is de greates' man, mon onc' 'Lias --respe d'la compagnie! he coum on de side which is not fighting. Ah bah, he tell dem dat he go to save de gentleman-of-war. He see a hofficier all bloodiness and he call hup: 'Es-tu gentiment?' he say. 'Gentiment,' say de hofficier; 'han' you?' 'Naicely, yank you!' mon onc' 'Lias he say. 'I will save you,' say mon onc' 'Lias--'I will save de ship of God save our greshus King.' De hofficier wipe de tears out of his face. 'De King will reward you, man alive,' he say. Mon onc' 'Lias he touch his breast and speak out. 'Mon hofficier, my reward is here--trejous. I will take you into de Ecrehoses.' 'Coum up and save de King's ships,' says de hofficier. 'I will take no reward,' say mon onc' 'Lias, 'but, for a leetle pourboire, you will give me de privator --eh?' 'Milles sacres'--say de hofficier, 'mines saeres--de privator!' he say, ver' surprise'. 'Man doux d'la vie--I am damned!' 'You are damned trulee, if you do not get into de Ecrehoses,' say mon onc' 'Lias --'A bi'tot, good-bye!' he say. De hofficier call down to him: 'Is dere nosing else you will take?' 'Nannin, do not tempt me,' say mon onc' 'Lias. 'I am not a gourman'. I will take de privator--dat is my hobby.' All de time de cannons grand--dey brow-brou! boum-boum!--what you call discomfortable. Time is de great t'ing, so de hofficier wipe de tears out of his face again. 'Coum up,' he say; 'de privator is yours.'

"Away dey go. You see dat spot where we coum to land, Ma'm'selle Landresse--where de shingle look white, de leetle green grass above? Dat is where mon onc' 'Lias he bring in de King's ship and de privator. Gatd'en'ale--it is a journee awful! He twist to de right, he shape to de left trough de teeth of de rocks--all safe--vera happee--to dis nice leetle bay of de Maitre Ile dey coum. De Frenchies dey grind dere teeth and spit de fire. But de Henglish laugh at demdey are safe. 'Frien' of my heart,' say de hofficier to mon onc' 'Lias, 'pilot of pilots,' he say, 'in de name of our greshus King I t'ank you--A bi'tot, good-bye!' he say. 'Tres-ba,' mon onc' 'Lias he say den, 'I will go to my privator.' 'You will go to de shore,' say de hofficier. 'You will wait on de shore till de captain and his men of de privator coum to you. When dey coum, de ship is yours--de privator is for you.' Mon onc' 'Lias he is like a child--he believe. He 'bout ship and go shore. Misery me, he sit on dat rocking-stone you see tipping on de wind. But if he wait until de men of de privator coum to him, he will wait till we see him sitting there now. Gache-a-penn, you say patriote? Mon onc' 'Lias he has de patreeteesm, and what happen? He save de ship of de greshus King God save--and dey eat up his hoysters! He get nosing. Gad'rabotin--respe d'la compagnie--if dere is a ship of de King coum to de Ecrehoses, and de hofficier say to me"--he tapped his breast--"Jean Touzel, tak de ships of de King trough de rocks,'--ah bah, I would rememb' mon onc' 'Lias. I would say, 'A bi'tot-good-bye.' . . . Slowlee--slowlee! We are at de place. Bear wif de land, ma'm'selle! Steadee! As you go! V'la! hitch now, Maitre Ranulph."

The keel of the boat grated on the shingle.

The air of the morning, the sport of using the elements for one's pleasure, had given Guida an elfish sprightliness of spirits. Twenty times during Jean's recital she had laughed gaily, and never sat a laugh better on any one's countenance than on hers. Her teeth were strong, white, and regular; in themselves they gave off a sort of shining mirth.

At first the lugubrious wife of the happy Jean was inclined to resent Guida's gaiety as unseemly, for Jean's story sounded to her as serious statement of fact; which incapacity for humour probably accounted for Jean's occasional lapses from domestic grace. If Jean had said that he had met a periwinkle dancing a hornpipe with an oyster she would have muttered heavily "Think of that!" The most she could say to any one was: "I believe you, ma couzaine." Some time in her life her voice had dropped into that great well she called her body, and it came up only now and then like an echo. There never was anything quite so fat as she. She was found weeping one day on the veille because she was no longer able to get her shoulders out of the window to use the clothes-lines stretching to her neighbour's over the way. If she sat down in your presence, it was impossible to do aught but speculate as to whether she could get up alone. Yet she went abroad on the water a great deal with Jean. At first the neighbours gave out sinister suspicions as to Jean's intentions, for sea-going with your own wife was uncommon among the sailors of the coast. But at last these dark suggestions settled down into a belief that Jean took her chiefly for ballast; and thereafter she

was familiarly called "Femme de Ballast."

Talking was no virtue in her eyes. What was going on in her mind no one ever knew. She was more phlegmatic than an Indian; but the tails of the sheep on the Town Hill did not better show the quarter of the wind than the changing colour of Aimable's face indicated Jean's coming or going. For Maitresse Aimable had one eternal secret, an unwavering passion for Jean Touzel. If he patted her on the back on a day when the fishing was extra fine, her heart pumped so hard she had to sit down; if, passing her lonely bed of a morning, he shook her great toe to wake her, she blushed, and turned her face to the wall in placid happiness. She was so credulous and matter-of-fact that if Jean had told her she must die on the spot, she would have said "Think of that!" or "Je te crais," and died. If in the vague dusk of her brain the thought glimmered that she was ballast for Jean on sea and anchor on land, she still was content. For twenty years the massive, straight-limbed Jean had stood to her for all things since the heavens and the earth were created. Once, when she had burnt her hand in cooking supper for him, his arm made a trial of her girth, and he kissed her. The kiss was nearer her ear than her lips, but to her mind it was the most solemn proof of her connubial happiness and of Jean's devotion. She was a Catholic, unlike Jean and most people of her class in Jersey, and ever since that night he kissed her she had told an extra bead on her rosary and said another prayer.

These were the reasons why at first she was inclined to resent Guida's laughter. But when she saw that Maitre Ranulph and the curate and Jean himself laughed, she settled down to a grave content until they landed.

They had scarce reached the deserted chapel where their dinner was to be cooked by Maitresse Aimable, when Ranulph called them to note a vessel bearing in their direction.

"She's not a coasting craft," said Jean.

"She doesn't look like a merchant vessel," said Ranulph, eyeing her through his telescope. "Why, she's a warship!" he added.

Jean thought she was not, but Maitre Ranulph said "Pardi, I ought to know, Jean. Ship-building is my trade, to say nothing of guns--I wasn't two years in the artillery for nothing. See the low bowsprit and the high poop. She's bearing this way. She'll be Narcissus!" he said slowly.

That was Philip d'Avranche's ship.

Guida's face lighted, her heart beat faster. Ranulph turned on his heel.

"Where are you going, Ro?" Guida said, taking a step after him.

"On the other side, to my men and the wreck," he said, pointing.

Guida glanced once more towards the man-o'-war: and then, with mischief in her eye, turned towards Jean. "Suppose," she said to him archly,

"suppose the ship should want to come in, of course you'd remember your onc' 'Lias, and say, 'A bi'tot, good-bye!"

An evasive "Ah bah!" was the only reply Jean vouchsafed.

Ranulph joined his men at the wreck, and the Reverend Lorenzo Dow went about the Lord's business in the little lean-to of sail-cloth and ship's lumber which had been set up near to the toil of the carpenters. When the curate entered the but the sick man was in a doze. He turned his head from side to side restlessly and mumbled to himself. The curate, sitting on the ground beside the man, took from his pocket a book, and began writing in a strange, cramped hand. This book was his journal. When a youth he had been a stutterer, and had taken refuge from talk in writing, and the habit stayed even as his affliction grew less. The important events of the day or the week, the weather, the wind, the tides, were recorded, together with sundry meditations of the Reverend Lorenzo Dow. The pages were not large, and brevity was Mr. Dow's journalistic virtue. Beyond the diligent keeping of this record, he had no habits, certainly no precision, no remembrance, no system: the business of his life ended there. He had quietly vacated two curacies because there had been bitter complaints that the records of certain baptisms, marriages, and burials might only be found in the chequered journal of his life, sandwiched between fantastic reflections and remarks upon the rubric. The records had been exact enough, but the system was not canonical, and it rested too largely upon the personal ubiquity of the itinerant priest, and the safety of his journal--and of his life.

Guida, after the instincts of her nature, had at once sought the highest point on the rocky islet, and there she drank in the joy of sight and sound and feeling. She could see--so perfect was the day--the line marking the Minquiers far on the southern horizon, the dark and perfect green of the Jersey slopes, and the white flags of foam which beat against the Dirouilles and the far-off Paternosters, dissolving as they flew, their place taken by others, succeeding and succeeding, as a soldier steps into a gap in the line of battle. Something in these rocks, something in the Paternosters--perhaps their distance, perhaps their remoteness from all other rocks--fascinated her. As she looked at them, she suddenly felt a chill, a premonition, a half-spiritual, half-material telegraphy of the inanimate to the animate: not from off cold stone to sentient life; but from that atmosphere about the inanimate thing, where the life of man has spent itself and been dissolved, leaving--who can tell what? Something which speaks but yet has no sound.

The feeling which possessed Guida as she looked at the Paternosters was almost like blank fear. Yet physical fear she had never felt, not since that day when the battle raged in the Vier Marchi, and Philip d'Avranche had saved her from the destroying scimitar of the Turk. Now that scene all came back to her in a flash, as it were; and she saw again the dark snarling face of the Mussulman, the blue-and-white silk of his turban, the black and white of his waistcoat, the red of the long robe, and the glint of his uplifted sword. Then in contrast, the warmth, brightness, and bravery on the face of the lad in blue and gold who struck aside the descending blade and caught her up in his arms; and she had nestled

there--in those arms of Philip d'Avranche. She remembered how he had kissed her, and how she had kissed him--he a lad and she a little child --as he left her with her mother in the watchmaker's shop in the Vier Marchi that day. . . . And she had never seen him again until yesterday.

She looked from the rocks to the approaching frigate. Was it the Narcissus coming--coming to this very island? She recalled Philip--how gallant he was yesterday, how cool, with what an air of command! How light he had made of the riot! Ranulph's strength and courage she accepted as a matter of course, and was glad that he was brave, generous, and good; but the glamour of distance and mystery were around d'Avranche. Remembrance, like a comet, went circling through the firmament of eleven years, from the Vier Marchi to the Place du Vier Prison.

She watched the ship slowly bearing with the land. The Jack was flying from the mizzen. They were now taking in her topsails. She was so near that Guida could see the anchor a-cockbell, and the poop lanthorns. She could count the guns like long black horns shooting out from a rhinoceros hide: she could discern the figurehead lion snarling into the spritsail. Presently the ship came up to the wind and lay to. Then she signalled for a pilot, and Guida ran towards the ruined chapel, calling for Jean Touzel.

In spite of Jean's late protests as to piloting a "gentleman-of-war," this was one of the joyful moments of his life. He could not loosen his rowboat quick enough; he was away almost before you could have spoken his name. Excited as Guida was, she could not resist calling after him:

"God save our greshus King! A bi'tot--goodbye!"

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A sort of chuckle not entirely pleasant
Sacrifice to the god of the pin-hole
What fools there are in the world

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