The Cambridge Chronicle.

JOSEPH R. ECCLESTON,] [Editor & Proprietor.

NEW SERIES—VOL. 9. CAMBRIDGE, MD—SATURDAY MORNING, MAY 23, 1846. NUMBER 34

TERMS.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY MORNING

At two Dollars and Fifty Cents per annum, payable half yearly in advance. No subscription will be received for a shorter period than six months, and no paper discontinued until all arrears are paid.

ADVERTISEMENTS inserted on the usual terms, and where the number of insertions is not limited, they will be continued until direction to omit them is received, and charged accordingly.

LA SAINT-DESIRE,

OR

THE REWARD OF BENEVOLENCE,

Translated from the French of Mille. A. Quarre.

It was a beautiful spring morning; the sun had just risen in the cloudless heavens, and the eyes of the promenaders rested with delight on the fresh foliage of the trees, that had but just put forth their leaves. All was still and quiet in the beautiful house occupied by the rich banker Denteze, in the centre of a pretty city in the south of France, when, having awakened earlier than usual, a pretty girl, sixteen years of age, arose and called Genevieve, the old nurse, who had brought her up, and begged her to accompany her.

This young girl, who was in such haste to go, was Louise, the only and much beloved daughter of the banker. It was the day of Saint-Desire, the birth-day of her father, and she wished to go out, to select, among the flowers of the season, the prettiest and the most worthy to be offered to him. Genevieve was soon ready to follow her young mistress; they crossed the city, and sought the dwelling of the most skillful gardener in the suburbs.—As they were approaching it, a woman presented herself to ask alms; she was pale, thin, and an expression of profound grief was impressed on her face. Two poor, weeping children, crouched upon the earth by her feet.

"Have pity on these innocent beings, my dear young lady," said she to Louise; "I have had no bread to give them since yesterday morning—they weep from hunger!"

The tears flowed down the cheeks of the poor mother. The heart of Louise almost stopped beating, at the sight of so much distress.—She had put fifteen francs in her purse, before she left home—she took three of them, and gave them this woman, who followed her with heartfelt blessings. Having reached the gardener's, she walked a long time in the greenhouse, running along the blooming walks; her choice wavering among the many flowers—wonderful for beauty, or precious on account of their rarity. Covered with buds and delicate flowers, a May rose displayed its beauties, beside the scentless tulip, and fragrant hyacinth. Louise had seen it on her first entrance, and gazed on it with admiration and joy. But a May rose was very simple—very common, it must be acknowledged—and ought she not to seek something better for her father? She at length stopped before a foreign plant of great beauty, and asked the price, of the mistress of the garden.

"It is fifteen francs, Miss," said this woman—"we cannot sell it for less."

"Fifteen francs!" replied the young girl—"it is very dear! Would not twelve be sufficient?" The poor child blushed at offering this price, but she could not give more, as her purse contained only that sum. The gardner refused. Louise Denteze was too proud to insist, and trouble the woman.

She bought the modest rose tree, and fondly carried it away. "My father will not love thee less," said she to it, "than that rare flower, which, taken from the greenhouse where it is cultivated, would have perished perhaps in a few days, whilst thou, being in thy native climate, fresh buds will expand beneath the rays of the sun, and deck thee with ever fresh brilliancy." Thus satisfied, she returned, casting joyful looks on the bush, which her waiting woman carried, and which appeared twice as pretty as in the garden; when, passing the place where she had met the poor women, she saw her seated in the same place, but her face had no longer that expression of deep dejection which had so much touched the young girl.—She made Louise a profound courtesy, pointing with unspeakable gratitude, to her children, Tho were playing at her side, still engaged in eating the bread she had hurried to buy for them. Louise smiled at this sight, a tear glistened on her eylide, and she raised her eyes to Heaven, in thanks for the happiness she felt, when, looking down they met those of an old man who was attentively gazing at her. This man was seated on a stone bench, eating his breakfast. A piece of black bread and a handful of small readishes, which he had taken from an old knapsack, composed the whole of his repast. A knotty stick lay by his side; his shoes full of holes and with dust, showed that he had travelled a long distance. His clothes, and his whole appearance, announced poverty; but his long beard and the imposing expression of his face seemed to ennoble his misery and command respect. He asked for nothing; but Louise seeing him, alone, old and poor, felt her heart moved by pity, and wished to assist him. Fearing to humiliate, by giving alms to a man, who was not perhaps accustomed to receive them, and not knowing how to contrive to give him silver, she passed close to him, and slipped her offering into the half opened sack: "Take it, Father," said she, so gently, and with such an accent goodness, that the old man appeared moved. He bowed in reverence before her as he would have done to an angel; a peculiar smile passed over his lips, he thanked his young benefactress wrth a look, and that look, full of affection and interest, followed her till she disappeared. The old waiting maid expressed her surprise at seeing Louis Denteze display so much generosity.—"My young lady, if you give so much to every beggar you meet," said she, "no fortune will be large enough for you." You are right, Genevieve," replied Louise; "The allowance given me by my father, to furnish my toilette. will not permit me to act every day in this manner; but, you know, I intended to purchase a flower vith this money to-day; the flower cost only six francs, so I was able to spend the rest as I pleased; so do not scold me, my good nurse, I am so happy? and then, do you see how pretty my rose bush is?

M. Denteze was engaged in his office when Louise returned; she did not wish to disturb him, but prepared breakfast, placed the bush on the table, and when her father entered welcomed him with kisses and caresses. The banker appeared anxious. "Ah! it is my birth day," said he; "I thank you, my good Louise, for having remembered it; I had forgotten it.—My birth-day!" resumed he, bitterly, and as if speaking to himself. "A sad gift for to day!" "Does my flower displease you, father?" said Louis, anxiously. "In truth, I ought to have chosen something better!" "No, my poor child; this flower is charming, and you could not have done better; I was speaking of something else; I was wrong. It was about business affair—some bad news that I received this morning,, Louise; my thoughts were preoccupied." "My father, my dear father," said the young girl, putting her graceful arm around the neck of the banker; "do not be so much affected. All my joy will fade away if I see your face sad." "You are right," said he, forcing a smile, and passing his hand over his brow, as if to drive away some painful thought; "who knows but that this failure may not be as large as they have told me? and a loss can be repaired and forgotten; I must work a little longer, that is all. Of what consequence is that, provided my daughter is happy?"

In truth, the happiness of Louise was the only desire of her father, and the constant aim of all his efforts. Having been many years a widower, all the affections of his heart had centred on his daughter. The cherished purpose of his life was to place her in an independent position; to assure her an elevated station in society; to spare her every care, and to surround her with joys of all kinds. This affection was every way justified by the happy disposition of its object. Although the most brilliant talents had been sought to aid her education, Louis had not become vain. Her lips never uttered a scornful word. Cheerful and frank with her companions, indulgent and kind to her inferiors. attentive and respectful to her elders, she unconsciously made herself beloved by every one, by merely following the dictates of a naturally benevolent heart.

M. Denteze had entered largely into business affairs; having commenced with a moderate fortune, he had seen it rapidly increase. All his speculations had been fortunate, and successful, as though by magic. This habitual good fortune, the chances always favorable to him, had naturally inspired him with great confidence—and when he for the first time, met a check, he felt it all the more from not being prepared for it. The father of Louis undoubtedly possessed a fine fortune; but, as it often happens- public opinion had delighted to magnify it, and raise the sum much higher than it really was. Thus his alliance was much coveted; and, although Louise was not yet seventeen, her hand had been demanded several times The banker, much as his mind was occupied with accumulation wealth did not think that riches alone would suffice for, the happiness of his child. He had been very particular in his choice of a son-in-law, and had not as yet, decided upon any one. Nevertheless, there was, among the persons who visited the house, a young barrister, of honor, talent and modesty, whom he appeared to welcome with particular cordiality.

Jules Volson, an orphan, and of obscure origin, possessed no other fortune than his profession; but he had, it was said, a very rich old uncle, still living, a great original, and of whom a thousand peculiarities were related. Some persons suspected that this old man might have secretly arranged the marriage of his nephew and Louise, with the banker; but, at the same time, no one knew of there being any connexion between them. The mother of this young man, who was the old man's sister, not having married to please him, he has never consented to receive her. Jules did not even know him; and, although united by blood, they were completely strangers to each other. But the industry of Jules, his honorable character, the distinguished talent he had already displayed so many times, the personal esteem he had gained for himself, all tended to make it generally believed that his prejudices having died away, his old relation would be proud to give him his affection, and make him his sole heir. But these were mere probabilities; and, as to the marriage being agreed upon by him and the banker, it was entirely a gratuitous supposition, such as is often created in the provincial cities. The true state of the case, with regard to Father Dubreuil, (this was the name of the old man,) was, that he possessed an immense fortune, the fruit of economy and labor. He was known to possess more than two million francs in real estate; and the value of his other possessions, of which he alone could give the amount, could not be much less. But in spite of all this, he led a very singular life.—Possessing beautiful houses and chateaux, he dwelt on an isolated farm; lived like the poorest of his domistic, eating at the same table with them, and giving them all an example of the strictest temperance and active labor. Always dwelling in the country directing his work people, and visiting his lands, he never appeared in the city, except when his presence was absolutely required by business. Thus his person was little known there; whilst his reputation for riches and avarice had spread more than twenty leagues round. They, however did him the justice to acknowledge that he never pushed any one for debt—contenting himself with sending away the farmers who did not pay him, without injuring them.

After the death of his parents, the poor young orphan, finding himself alone in the world, had been tempted twenty times, to go and throw himself in the arms of his uncle, and offering him his affection, demand his in return; but that which would have decided a less noble heart restrained him; that large fortune made him fear . . . the old man might think that he desired to be his heir, and this supposition was revolting to his delicacy and pride. The same feelings were also his misfortune with regard to Louise; freely admitted to the house of M. Denteze, he could not see his daughter without loving her, but he could not flatter himself that he should be preferred—he, without relatives, without fortune, to the many wealthy lovers who offered themselves, and on no account would we have it imagined that he cared ought for this happy daughter. Not a word had so far betrayed the secret of his tenderness. Louise did not suspect it. Submissive to every will of her father, she was ready to accept, without the slightest hesitation, the husband of his choice. If young Volson should be the object of that choice, she would be delighted; but her preference went no farther, and the innocent young girl entrusted the case of her happiness to him who made it the sole aim of his life.

Alas! how often are all our best laid plans defeated! The brilliant and rich future prepared for Louise was soon to change. On the very morning of his birth day, the banks had received the news of heavy failure, by which he experienced a severe loss; and notwithstanding the caresses of his beloved child, his brow remained clouded all day. Louise, saddened by her father's gloom, in vain attempted to sing her prettiest airs. Nothing could cheer her—the sight of her rose tree alone gave her any pleasure; it was so fresh, so beautiful, and the remembrance of a good action, associated with it, increased its beauty in her eyes. She opened one of the windows and carried out on the balcony, where she went to examine it every moment, carefully seeking among the leaves for the insects that might injure it. Whilst engaged in this occupation, she saw the man to whom she had that morning given alms, pass; he walked slowly, his eyes fixed upon her, and bowed with much respect.

Resolved to repair his recent loss, M. Denteze entered into new speculations; they did not succeed, and the first loss he had ever experienced was soon followed by others. He carefully concealed these reverses, which would have weakened his credit, and enclosed in his own bosom the anxiety, and chagrin by which he was tormented. But each day brought new losses, and he no longer looked forward to the future, but with affright. Ten months had scarce elapsed, when a final misfortune consummated his ruin. This news was a subject of great astonishment to the whole city. He was much pitied; but this futile pity did not change his position. He had no fears of poverty for himself, but he thought of his daughter, and the unhappy father was in despair! But Louise the timid, playful child, now at the sight of misfortune, showed herself a serious, brave-hearted woman. She encouraged and consoled her father, assuring him that she should always be happy, if near him, and did not give one tear, one regret to the life of ease and luxury she was about to leave.

"Are not the talents I possess a fortune?" said she to him. "Thanks to the wise education I have received—I hope to be able to keep us both from any very great misery."

These words softened, but did not calm, the distress of M. Denteze. He had so long suffered in secret, that his health could no longer withstand it, he fell dangerously ill. The house, lately so gay, so animated, became sad and silent; all the domestics had been dismissed, except Genevieve alone, who, devoted to her master and mistress, would have rather died than abandon them. The visitors had also disappeared; no one came to turn the attention of the sick man from his sufferings, nor support the young girl in the anguish with which her heart was torn. But one friend still remained to them: Jules, who had been absent at the time of these deplorable events, was stupified on hearing the accounts which were eagerly given him, on his return; listening only to the dictates of his heart, he flew to the father of Louise, who was rendered still dearer to him by her misfortunes, and gave him all the attentions dictated by the truest friendship: Seated near the bed to which the banker was confined, he lavished on him the tender care of a son, and scarcely ever quitted him.—The grateful Louise became every day more attached to Jules; without being conscious of it, she loved him almost as well as her father. M. Denteze perceived it, and was alarmed; he feared that his affection, which would have made him smile a year before, would now prove a fatal source of pain and regret to his daughter. Trembling at the thought of leaving her alone in the world, he concealed his anxiety in her presence. But one day, whilst she was absent for a few moments, he spoke to Jules of his anxiety for the fate of his child. The young man, who had not yet dared to speak to him of his projects of happiness, seized this occasion to demand the hand of Louise, promising to watch over her with the tenderest care, and to devote his whole life to render her happy.—The poor father was deeply moved. "Generous friend," said he, sadly, "I had, in more prosperous times, hoped for this marriage which you propose to me; yes, I had chosen you in my heart, when an alliance with my daughter was advantageous, and much sought after, but now that we are the victims of misfortune, now that Louise, has only poverty to offer, I cannot accept such noble and disinterested devotion from you."

"What!" cried Jules, "did you destine for me that angel whom I have so long adored without hope? O, my friend, my father! What gratitude I owe you! No, you shall not now refuse to make me happy, to ensure the destiny of Louise, and you will live long to witness our happiness.

M. Denteze could not oppose a union which filled him with joy: Louise was all the more happy and grateful, on account of his appreciating the heart of Jules, the value of which she knew. It was then decided that the marriage should take place as soon as the health of M. Denteze should be re-established and his affairs settled—conditions which he would not recede from. This time would not be far distant, for they were actively engaged in winding up the business. His house, which he had not been able to quit, on account of his sickness had been put up for sale; this was very painful to him, for it had descended to him from his father; and the day assigned for this sale, was his birthday, on which, a year before, Louise had risen so gaily to go to seek an offering for him. Some days after this event, Jules, on entering his room, found a letter which had been brought for him during his absence. The writing was unknown to him. He opened it and read the following lines:

"SIR:—You have, undoubtedly, sometimes heard of an elder brother of your mother, who had ceased to hold any relations with her after her marriage, and consequently has never had any with you. If it had pleased you to make any advances to this relation, you would perhaps have found him disposed to love you: it only depends upon you, to still gain his affection. I am this uncle. Rich and single, as you know, I have vowed the tenderness of a father to a young person, who merits it, in every respect, being beautiful, wise, and good, which is the best of all. Will you marry her? All my fortune shall be yours; if you refuse, we shall remain strangers to each other, and I shall make her my heir.

Your uncle, DAUREUIL."

This letter was enough to surprise Jules, and did in truth surprise him; but he did not hesitate as to his answer, and put in the post a note thus expressed:

"SIR:—I thank you for the mark of esteem you have given me. You are rich, I am poor; and a motive, the delicacy of which you may appreciate, has alone hitherto prevented me from going to ask of you that affection which you now deign to offer, but with a condition which it is impossible for me to accept. The person of whom you speak is, without doubt, worthy to make the happiness of an honest man; but I have, for a long time, been attached elsewhere—my heart and word are both engaged, and nothing in the world would induce me to withdraw either. I regret, sir, not being able to please you, and am, respectfully, your nephew, JULES VOLSON."

The next day he went, as usual, to the banker's, and said nothing of this circumstance to the family whom he had chosen.

The Saint Desire of this year had but little resemblance to those preceding it. Confined to his chamber, which he had not quitted for two months, M. Denteze, pale and thin, was reclining in a large chair for the sick, Louise seated near him, holding in her hand a piece of embroidery, which she had commenced long before. Near her was the rosebush, drooping and suffering like its owners; for, absorbed in her painful thoughts, the young girl often forgot to water it. Even the presence of Jules, this day could bring no gaiety to these sad faces, or drive away the melancholy thoughts which left their impress on the countenance of each. The clock struck twelve. "The sale is about to commence," said the banker, "it is now the appointed hour." A prolonged silence followed these words, which he had with difficulty spoken; his eye seemed to follow the movements of the hand with anxiety. Two hours had passed in this manner, when suddenly the sound of a voice was heard at the bottom of the staircase. Genevieve half opened the door: "Sir," said she, "here is a man who asks for admittance; he wishes to speak to my young lady! "Do you not know, Genevieve," said M. Denteze, "that I am sick, and can see no one?" "But he said, sir," resumed the poor woman, hesitating, "he said that he must enter; that he was also the proprietor here, having just bought the house." Two large tears fell from the eyes of Genevieve, as she spoke the words.

"Ah, it is true, he is the master here," said the banker, bitterly; "open all the doors, Genevieve, let the purchaser visit his property, and above all, tell him that we shall not trouble him long."

The man entered; he was aged, clad in a brown dress, decent enough, but the ancient cut of which showed that it was old, and had been preserved with great care. His face, browned by the sun, had a noble and dignified expression. He respectfully approached Louise, who looked at him with astonishment. "I ask your pardon, young lady, for having disturbed you, but I wished to speak to you." "I am at your orders, sir," replied she, offering him a seat; "you may explain yourself freely, there is no one but members of the family present." This gentleman is your father," said the stranger, pointing to the sick man.—"Yes sir," replied Louise. "This gentleman is, perhaps, your brother," added he, turning toward Jules. "No, sir, he is a ——a friend;" murmured the poor girl, embarrassed, and blushing. "Yes sir," said the banker, in a grave tone, "he is a friend, a protector, the betrothed of my daughter; he will soon be her husband, he has a noble heart, which we have found courageous and faithful, in our adversity, as it had been timid and delicate in the days of our past fortune." "It is well, young man," said the stranger, in an agitated voice, extending his hand to Jules, and warmly pressing the hand of the young advocate. Then, again addressing Louise: "Then, young lady, since there are none but your own family present, I will tell you the motive of my visit. The house of your father has just been sold. You have bought it, and here is the deed which renders you its proprietor." All eyes were fixed in astonishment on the unknown visitor. "But I do not understand you, sir," replied Louise, trying to return the paper which he had just laid on her knees. "I am about to explain myself more clearly," said he, "It is now about a year, that, passing through one of the suburbs of the city, you generously gave alms to a poor woman, who, with her children was dying of hunger; some moments after, you returned, having bought a pretty rose bush.—Seated by the road side, was a man, who had seen you, and whose heart you had gained by your charity. He could not detach his eyes from you. The meanness of his clothes was such, that misunderstanding the expression of his face, you thought he was imploring you, and fearing, without doubt, to humiliate him, with the goodness of an angel, you placed your offering near him, calling him "father." The old man accepted it, for he wished to contract a debt of gratitude to you. You slipped six francs into my knapsack, my dear young lady, and I have invested this money. My speculations are generally successful—I associated you with me, without your knowledge; we have taken, together, some shares in steamboats; our capital increased an hundred fold in a few months. I realized it; we bought a debt in the colonies, for ten per cent. I made my arrangements, and it reimbursed us at fifty per cent; in short, our affairs could not go better, and I should have continued making them prosper, if I had not learned the misfortunes of your father, and that he had offered his house for sale.—I thought it would be painful for you to leave this house, where you have been brought up; I should myself have been sad to think that I should no longer see you at this window, where you appeared to me so happy and smiling; and dissolving our partnership, I thought I should only forestall your wishes by preserving to you this part of your father's property, which I have just bought for you."

The calm and benevolent voice of the stranger had ceased to be heard, and his affectionate look alone seemed to question the young girl, and gently beg for an answer. Surprised, moved, uncertain, the troubled Louise hesitated, restrained by a feeling of pride; but soon yielding unreservedly to the generous instinct of her heart:—"How can I thank you, sir," cried she in an accent of most lively gratitude, and sprang sobbing into the arms of the old man, who pressed her to his bosom. "I wished to have done more," said he, "I had hoped to be able to attach you to myself by the ties of blood; my proposal has been rejected by an ingrate; I see, however, that I have been preceded, and that your hand is promised. I am old, without a family, with no one on earth to love; the first words you addressed to me, named me your father; be then as a daughter to me, permit me to give you the title, the tenderness and rights,."

The voice of the man had became tremulous with emotion. Louise, as her only answer, leaned over him, and kissed his brow; M. Denteze and Jules both extended their hands, and pressed his affectionately. "But," cried he, suddenly, "I forgot that I did not introduce myself on entering, and that you do not yet know the name of the man to whom you so frankly give your friendship. It will not be, I think entirely unknown to you; have perhaps heard Father Dubreuil sometimes spoken of? . . ." All three started at this well known name.—"My uncle," cried Jules carried away by this

©Maryland State Archives, msa_sc6044_1_64-0397.jpg