



# The Red and the Black

Stendhal

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This work was on the point of publication when the great events of July took place and turned every mind in a direction which does not encourage the play of the imagination. We have reason to believe that the following pages were written in 1827.

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# BOOK ONE

*The truth, the harsh truth*  
DANTON

# CHAPTER 1. A SMALL TOWN

*Put thousands together  
Less bad,  
But the cage less gay.*

HOBBS

The small town of Verrieres may be regarded as one of the most attractive in the Franche-Comte. Its white houses with their high pitched roofs of red tiles are spread over the slope of a hill, the slightest contours of which are indicated by clumps of sturdy chestnuts. The Doubs runs some hundreds of feet below its fortifications, built in times past by the Spaniards, and now in ruins.

Verrieres is sheltered on the north by a high mountain, a spur of the Jura. The jagged peaks of the Verra put on a mantle of snow in the first cold days of October. A torrent which comes tearing down from the mountain passes through Verrieres before emptying its waters into the Doubs, and supplies power to a great number of sawmills; this is an extremely simple industry, and procures a certain degree of comfort for the majority of the inhabitants, who are of the peasant rather than of the burgess class. It is not, however, the sawmills that have made this little town rich. It is to the manufacture of printed calicoes, known as Mulhouse stuffs, that it owes the general prosperity which, since the fall of Napoleon, has led to the refacing of almost all the houses in Verrieres. No sooner has one entered the town than one is startled by the din of a noisy machine of terrifying aspect. A score of weighty hammers, falling with a clang which makes the pavement tremble, are raised aloft by a wheel which the water of the torrent sets in motion. Each of these hammers turns out, daily, I cannot say how many thousands of nails. A bevy of fresh, pretty girls subject to the blows of these enormous hammers, the little scraps of iron which are rapidly transformed into nails. This work, so rough to the outward eye, is one of the industries that most astonish the traveller who ventures for the first time among the mountains that divide France from Switzerland. If, on entering Verrieres, the traveller inquires to whom belongs that fine nail factory which deafens everybody who passes up the main street, he will be told in a drawling accent: 'Eh! It belongs to the Mayor.'

Provided the traveller halts for a few moments in this main street of Verrieres, which runs from the bank of the Doubs nearly to the summit of the hill, it is a hundred to one that he will see a tall man appear, with a busy, important air.

At the sight of him every hat is quickly raised. His hair is turning grey, and he is dressed in grey. He is a Companion of several Orders, has a high forehead, an aquiline nose, and on the whole his face is not wanting in a certain regularity: indeed, the first impression formed of it



may be that it combines with the dignity of a village mayor that sort of charm which may still be found in a man of forty-eight or fifty. But soon the visitor from Paris is annoyed by a certain air of self-satisfaction and self-sufficiency mingled with a suggestion of limitations and want of originality. One feels, finally, that this man's talent is confined to securing the exact payment of whatever is owed to him and to postponing payment till the last possible moment when he is the debtor. Such is the Mayor of Verrieres, M. de Renal. Crossing the street with a solemn step, he enters the town hall and passes from the visitor's sight. But, a hundred yards higher up, if the visitor continues his stroll, he will notice a house of quite imposing appearance, and, through the gaps in an iron railing belonging to the house, some splendid gardens. Beyond, there is a line of horizon formed by the hills of Burgundy, which seem to have been created on purpose to delight the eye. This view makes the visitor forget the pestilential atmosphere of small financial interests which was beginning to stifle him.

He is told that this house belongs to M. de Renal. It is to the profits that he has made from his great nail factory that the Mayor of Verrieres is indebted for this fine freestone house which he has just finished building. His family, they say, is Spanish, old, and was or claims to have been established in the country long before Louis XIV conquered it. Since 1815 he has blushed at his connection with industry: 1815 made him Mayor of Verrieres. The retaining walls that support the various sections of this splendid garden, which, in a succession of terraces, runs down to the Doubs, are also a reward of M. de Renal's ability as a dealer in iron.

You must not for a moment expect to find in France those picturesque gardens which enclose the manufacturing towns of Germany; Leipsic, Frankfurt, Nuremberg, and the rest. In the Franche-Comte, the more walls a man builds, the more he makes his property bristle with stones piled one above another, the greater title he acquires to the respect of his neighbours. M. de Renal's gardens, honeycombed with walls, are still further admired because he bought, for their weight in gold, certain minute scraps of ground which they cover. For instance that sawmill whose curious position on the bank of the Doubs struck you as you entered Verrieres, and on which you noticed the name *Sorel*, inscribed in huge letters on a board which overtops the roof, occupied, six years ago, the ground on which at this moment they are building the wall of the fourth terrace of M. de Renal's gardens.

For all his pride, the Mayor was obliged to make many overtures to old *Sorel*, a dour and obstinate peasant; he was obliged to pay him in fine golden louis before he would consent to remove his mill elsewhere. As for the *public lade* which supplied power to the saw, M. de Renal, thanks to the influence he wielded in Paris, obtained leave to divert it. This favour was conferred upon him after the 182 — elections.

He gave Sorel four acres in exchange for one, five hundred yards lower down by the bank of the Doubs. And, albeit this site was a great deal more advantageous for his trade in planks of firwood, Pere Sorel, as they have begun to call him now that he is rich, contrived to screw out of the impatience and *landowning mania* which animated his neighbour a sum of 6,000 francs.

It is true that this arrangement was adversely criticised by the local wiseacres. On one occasion, it was a Sunday, four years later, M. de Renal, as he walked home from church in his mayoral attire, saw at a distance old Sorel, supported by his three sons, watching him with a smile. That smile cast a destroying ray of light into the Mayor's soul; ever since then he has been thinking that he might have brought about the exchange at less cost to himself.

To win popular esteem at Verrieres, the essential thing is not to adopt (while still building plenty of walls) any plan of construction brought from Italy by those masons who in spring pass through the gorges of the Jura on their way to Paris. Such an innovation would earn the rash builder an undying reputation for wrong-headedness, and he would be lost forever among the sober and moderate folk who create reputations in the Franche-Comte.

As a matter of fact, these sober folk wield there the most irritating form of *despotism*; it is owing to that vile word that residence in small towns is intolerable to anyone who has lived in that great republic which we call Paris. The tyranny of public opinion (and what an opinion!) is as fatuous in the small towns of France as it is in the United States of America.

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## CHAPTER 2. A MAYOR

*Prestige! Sir, is it nothing? To be revered by fools, gaped at by children, envied by the rich and scorned by the wise.*

BARNAVE

Fortunately for M. de Renal's reputation as an administrator, a huge retaining wall was required for the public avenue which skirts the hillside a hundred feet above the bed of the Doubs. To this admirable position it is indebted for one of the most picturesque views in France. But, every spring, torrents of rainwater made channels across the avenue, carved deep gullies in it and left it impassable. This nuisance, which affected everybody alike, placed M. de Renal under the fortunate obligation to immortalise his administration by a wall twenty feet in height and seventy or eighty yards long.

The parapet of this wall, to secure which M. de Renal was obliged to make three journeys to Paris, for the Minister of the Interior before last had sworn a deadly enmity to the Verrieres avenue; the parapet of this wall now rises four feet above the ground. And, as though to defy all Ministers past and present, it is being finished off at this moment with slabs of dressed stone.

How often, my thoughts straying back to the ball-rooms of Paris, which I had forsaken overnight, my elbows leaning upon those great blocks of stone of a fine grey with a shade of blue in it, have I swept with my gaze the vale of the Doubs! Over there, on the left bank, are five or six winding valleys, along the folds of which the eye can make out quite plainly a number of little streams. After leaping from rock to rock, they may be seen falling into the Doubs. The sun is extremely hot in these mountains; when it is directly overhead, the traveller's rest is sheltered on this terrace by a row of magnificent planes. Their rapid growth, and handsome foliage of a bluish tint are due to the artificial soil with which the Mayor has filled in the space behind his immense retaining wall, for, despite the opposition of the town council, he has widened the avenue by more than six feet (although he is an Ultra and I myself a Liberal, I give him credit for it), that is why, in his opinion and in that of M.

Valenod, the fortunate governor of the Verrieres poorhouse, this terrace is worthy to be compared with that of Saint-Germain-en-Laye. For my part, I have only one fault to find with the *Cours de la Fidelite*; one reads this, its official title, in fifteen or twenty places, on marble slabs which have won M. de Renal yet another Cross; what I should be inclined to condemn in the *Cours de la Fidelite* is the barbarous manner in which the authorities keep these sturdy plane trees trimmed and pollarded. Instead of suggesting, with their low, rounded, flattened heads, the commonest of kitchen garden vegetables, they would like nothing better than to assume those magnificent forms which one sees

them wear in England. But the Mayor's will is despotic, and twice a year every tree belonging to the commune is pitilessly lopped. The Liberals of the place maintain, but they exaggerate, that the hand of the official gardener has grown much more severe since the Reverend Vicar Maslon formed the habit of appropriating the clippings.

This young cleric was sent from Besancon, some years ago, to keep an eye upon the abbe Chelan and certain parish priests of the district. An old Surgeon-Major of the Army of Italy, in retirement at Verrieres, who in his time had been simultaneously, according to the Mayor, a Jacobin and a Bonapartist, actually ventured one day to complain to him of the periodical mutilation of these fine trees.

'I like shade,' replied M. de Renal with the touch of arrogance appropriate when one is addressing a surgeon, a Member of the Legion of Honour; 'I like shade, I have my trees cut so as to give shade, and I do not consider that a tree is made for any other purpose, unless, like the useful walnut, it *yields a return*.'

There you have the great phrase that decides everything at Verrieres: YIELD A RETURN; it by itself represents the habitual thought of more than three fourths of the inhabitants.

*Yielding a return* is the consideration that settles everything in this little town which seemed to you, just now, so attractive. The stranger arriving there, beguiled by the beauty of the cool, deep valleys on every side, imagines at first that the inhabitants are influenced by the idea of beauty; they are always talking about the beauty of their scenery: no one can deny that they make a great to-do about it; but this is because it attracts a certain number of visitors whose money goes to enrich the innkeepers, and thus, through the channel of the rate-collector, *yields a return* to the town.

It was a fine day in autumn and M. de Renal was strolling along the Cours de la Fidelite, his lady on his arm. While she listened to her husband, who was speaking with an air of gravity, Madame de Renal's eye was anxiously following the movements of three little boys. The eldest, who might be about eleven, was continually running to the parapet as though about to climb on top. A gentle voice then uttered the name Adolphe, and the child abandoned his ambitious project. Madame de Renal looked like a woman of thirty, but was still extremely pretty.

'He may live to rue the day, that fine gentleman from Paris,' M. de Renal was saying in a tone of annoyance, his cheek paler even than was its wont. 'I myself am not entirely without friends at Court. . . .'

But albeit I mean to speak to you of provincial life for two hundred pages, I shall not be so barbarous as to inflict upon you the tedium and all the clever turns of a provincial dialogue.

This fine gentleman from Paris, so odious to the Mayor of Verrieres, was none other than M. Appert,<sup>1</sup> who, a couple of days earlier, had contrived

to make his way not only into the prison and the poorhouse of Verrieres, but also into the hospital, administered gratuitously by the Mayor and the principal landowners of the neighbourhood.

‘But,’ Madame de Renal put in timidly, ‘what harm can this gentleman from Paris do you, since you provide for the welfare of the poor with the most scrupulous honesty?’

‘He has only come to cast blame, and then he’ll go back and have articles put in the Liberal papers.’

‘You never read them, my dear.’

‘But people tell us about those Jacobin articles; all that distracts us, and hinders us from doing good.<sup>2</sup> As for me, I shall never forgive the cure.’

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## CHAPTER 3. THE BREAD OF THE POOR

*A virtuous priest who does not involve himself in intrigue is a blessing for the village.*

FLEURY

It should be explained that the cure of Verrieres, an old man of eighty, but blessed by the keen air of his mountains with an iron character and strength, had the right to visit at any hour of the day the prison, the hospital, and even the poorhouse. It was at six o'clock in the morning precisely that M. Appert, who was armed with an introduction to the cure from Paris, had had the good sense to arrive in an inquisitive little town. He had gone at once to the presbytery.

As he read the letter addressed to him by M. le Marquis de La Mole, a Peer of France, and the wealthiest landowner in the province, the cure Chelan sat lost in thought.

'I am old and liked here,' he murmured to himself at length, 'they would never dare!' Turning at once to the gentleman from Paris, with eyes in which, despite his great age, there burned that sacred fire which betokens the pleasure of performing a fine action which is slightly dangerous:

'Come with me, Sir, and, in the presence of the gaoler and especially of the superintendents of the poorhouse, be so good as not to express any opinion of the things we shall see.' M. Appert realised that he had to deal with a man of feeling; he accompanied the venerable cure, visited the prison, the hospital, the poorhouse, asked many questions and, notwithstanding strange answers, did not allow himself to utter the least word of reproach.

This visit lasted for some hours. The cure invited M. Appert to dine with him, but was told that his guest had some letters to write: he did not wish to compromise his kind friend any further. About three o'clock, the gentlemen went back to complete their inspection of the poorhouse, after which they returned to the prison. There they found the gaoler standing in the doorway; a giant six feet tall, with bandy legs; terror had made his mean face hideous.

'Ah, Sir,' he said to the cure, on catching sight of him, 'is not this gentleman, that I see with you, M. Appert?'

'What if he is?' said the cure.

'Because yesterday I received the most definite instructions, which the Prefect sent down by a gendarme who had to gallop all night long, not to allow M. Appert into the prison.'

'I declare to you, M. Noiroud,' said the cure, 'that this visitor, who is in my company, is M. Appert. Do you admit that I have the right to enter the prison at any hour of the day or night, bringing with me whom I please?'

‘Yes, M. le cure,’ the gaoler murmured in a subdued tone, lowering his head like a bulldog brought reluctantly to obedience by fear of the stick. ‘Only, M. le cure, I have a wife and children, if I am reported I shall be dismissed; I have only my place here to live on.’

‘I too should be very sorry to lose mine,’ replied the worthy cure, in a voice swayed by ever increasing emotion.

‘What a difference!’ the gaoler answered promptly; ‘why you, M. le cure, we know that you have an income of 800 livres, a fine place in the sun

...

Such are the events which, commented upon, exaggerated in twenty different ways, had been arousing for the last two days all the evil passions of the little town of Verrieres. At that moment they were serving as text for the little discussion which M. de Renal was having with his wife. That morning, accompanied by M. Valenod, the governor of the poorhouse, he had gone to the cure’s house, to inform him of their extreme displeasure. M. Chelan was under no one’s protection; he felt the full force of their words.

‘Well, gentlemen, I shall be the third parish priest, eighty years of age, to be deprived of his living in this district. I have been here for six and fifty years; I have christened almost all the inhabitants of the town, which was no more than a village when I came. Every day I marry young couples whose grandparents I married long ago. Verrieres is my family; but I said to myself, when I saw the stranger: “This man, who has come from Paris, may indeed be a Liberal, there are far too many of them; but what harm can he do to our poor people and our prisoners?”’

The reproaches of M. de Renal, and above all those of M. Valenod, the governor of the poorhouse, becoming more and more bitter:

‘Very well, gentlemen, have me deprived,’ the old cure had cried, in a quavering voice. ‘I shall live in the town all the same. You all know that forty-eight years ago I inherited a piece of land which brings me 800 livres; I shall live on that income. I save nothing out of my stipend, gentlemen, and that may be why I am less alarmed when people speak of taking it from me.’

M. de Renal lived on excellent terms with his wife; but not knowing what answer to make to the question, which she timidly repeated: ‘What harm can this gentleman from Paris do to the prisoners?’ he was just about to lose his temper altogether when she uttered a cry. Her second son had climbed upon the parapet of the wall of the terrace, and was running along it, though this wall rose more than twenty feet from the vineyard beneath. The fear of alarming her son and so making him fall restrained Madame de Renal from calling him. Finally the child, who was laughing at his own prowess, turned to look at his mother, noticed how pale she was, sprang down upon the avenue and ran to join her. He was well scolded.

This little incident changed the course of the conversation.

'I am quite determined to engage young Sorel, the sawyer's son,' said M. de Renal; 'he will look after the children, who are beginning to be too much of a handful for us. He is a young priest or thereabouts, a good Latin scholar, and will bring the children on; for he has a strong character, the cure says. I shall give him 300 francs and his board. I had some doubts as to his morals; for he was the Benjamin of that old surgeon, the Member of the Legion of Honour who on pretence of being their cousin came to live with the Sorels. He might quite well have been nothing better than a secret agent of the Liberals; he said that our mountain air was good for his asthma; but that has never been proved. He had served in all *Buonaparte's* campaigns in Italy, and they even say that he voted against the Empire in his day. This Liberal taught young Sorel Latin, and left him all the pile of books he brought here with him. Not that I should ever have dreamed of having the carpenter's son with my children; but the cure, only the day before the scene which has made a permanent breach between us, told me that this Sorel has been studying theology for the last three years, with the idea of entering the Seminary; so he is not a Liberal, and he is a Latin scholar.

'This arrangement suits me in more ways than one,' M. de Renal went on, looking at his wife with an air of diplomacy; 'Valenod is tremendously proud of the two fine Norman horses he has just bought for his calash. But he has not got a tutor for his children.'

'He is quite capable of taking this one from us.'

'Then you approve of my plan?' said M. de Renal, thanking his wife, with a smile, for the excellent idea that had just occurred to her. 'There, that's settled.'

'Oh, good gracious, my dear, how quickly you make up your mind!'

'That is because I have a strong character, as the cure has had occasion to see. Let us make no pretence about it, we are surrounded by Liberals here. All these cloth merchants are jealous of me, I am certain of it; two or three of them are growing rich; very well, I wish them to see M. de Renal's children go by, out walking in the care of their tutor. It will make an impression. My grandfather used often to tell us that in his young days he had had a tutor. It's a hundred crowns he's going to cost me, but that will have to be reckoned as a necessary expense to keep up our position.'

This sudden decision plunged Madame de Renal deep in thought. She was a tall, well-made woman, who had been the beauty of the place, as the saying is in this mountain district. She had a certain air of simplicity and bore herself like a girl; in the eyes of a Parisian, that artless grace, full of innocence and vivacity, might even have suggested ideas of a mildly passionate nature. Had she had wind of this kind of success, Madame de Renal would have been thoroughly ashamed of it. No trace either of coquetry or of affectation had ever appeared in her nature. M. Valenod, the wealthy governor of the poorhouse, was supposed to have

paid his court to her, but without success, a failure which had given a marked distinction to her virtue; for this M. Valenod, a tall young man, strongly built, with a vivid complexion and bushy black whiskers, was one of those coarse, brazen, noisy creatures who in the provinces are called fine men.

Madame de Renal, being extremely shy and liable to be swayed by her moods, was offended chiefly by the restless movements and loud voice of M. Valenod. The distaste that she felt for what at Verrieres goes by the name of gaiety had won her the reputation of being extremely proud of her birth. She never gave it a thought, but had been greatly pleased to see the inhabitants of Verrieres come less frequently to her house. We shall not attempt to conceal the fact that she was reckoned a fool in the eyes of their ladies, because, without any regard for her husband's interests, she let slip the most promising opportunities of procuring fine hats from Paris or Besancon. Provided that she was left alone to stroll in her fine garden, she never made any complaint.

She was a simple soul, who had never risen even to the point of criticising her husband, and admitting that he bored her. She supposed, without telling herself so, that between husband and wife there could be no more tender relations. She was especially fond of M. de Renal when he spoke to her of his plans for their children, one of whom he intended to place in the army, the second on the bench, and the third in the church. In short, she found M. de Renal a great deal less boring than any of the other men of her acquaintance.

This wifely opinion was justified. The Mayor of Verrieres owed his reputation for wit, and better still for good tone, to half a dozen pleasantries which he had inherited from an uncle.

This old Captain de Renal had served before the Revolution in the Duke of Orleans's regiment of infantry, and, when he went to Paris, had had the right of entry into that Prince's drawing-rooms.

He had there seen Madame de Montesson, the famous Madame de Genlis, M. Ducrest, the 'inventor' of the Palais-Royal. These personages figured all too frequently in M. de Renal's stories. But by degrees these memories of things that it required so much delicacy to relate had become a burden to him, and for some time now it was only on solemn occasions that he would repeat his anecdotes of the House of Orleans. As he was in other respects most refined, except when the talk ran on money, he was regarded, and rightly, as the most aristocratic personage in Verrieres.

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## CHAPTER 4. FATHER AND SON

*E sara mia colpa, Se cosi e?*

MACHIAVELLI

‘My wife certainly has a head on her shoulders!’ the Mayor of Verrieres remarked to himself the following morning at six o’clock, as he made his way down to Pere Sorel’s sawmill. ‘Although I said so to her, to maintain my own superiority, it had never occurred to me that if I do not take this little priest Sorel, who, they tell me, knows his Latin like an angel, the governor of the poorhouse, that restless spirit, might very well have the same idea, and snatch him from me, I can hear the tone of conceit with which he would speak of his children’s tutor! . . . This tutor, once I’ve secured him, will he wear a cassock?’

M. de Renal was absorbed in this question when he saw in the distance a peasant, a man of nearly six feet in height, who, by the first dawning light, seemed to be busily occupied in measuring pieces of timber lying by the side of the Doubs, upon the towpath. The peasant did not appear any too well pleased to see the Mayor coming towards him; for his pieces of wood were blocking the path, and had been laid there in contravention of the law.

Pere Sorel, for it was he, was greatly surprised and even more pleased by the singular offer which M. de Renal made him with regard to his son Julien. He listened to it nevertheless with that air of grudging-melancholy and lack of interest which the shrewd inhabitants of those mountains know so well how to assume. Slaves in the days of Spanish rule, they still retain this facial characteristic of the Egyptian fellahin. Sorel’s reply was at first nothing more than a long-winded recital of all the formal terms of respect which he knew by heart. While he was repeating these vain words, with an awkward smile which enhanced the air of falsehood and almost of rascality natural to his countenance, the old peasant’s active mind was seeking to discover what reason could be inducing so important a personage to take his scapegrace of a son into his establishment. He was thoroughly dissatisfied with Julien, and it was for Julien that M. de Renal was offering him the astounding wage of 300 francs annually, in addition to his food and even his clothing. This last condition, which Pere Sorel had had the intelligence to advance on the spur of the moment, had been granted with equal readiness by M. de Renal.

This demand impressed the Mayor. ‘Since Sorel is not delighted and overwhelmed by my proposal, as he ought naturally to be, it is clear,’ he said to himself, ‘that overtures have been made to him from another quarter; and from whom can they have come, except from Valenod?’ It was in vain that M. de Renal urged Sorel to conclude the bargain there and then: the astute old peasant met him with an obstinate refusal; he

wished, he said, to consult his son, as though, in the country, a rich father ever consulted a penniless son, except for form's sake.

A sawmill consists of a shed by the side of a stream. The roof is held up by rafters supported on four stout wooden pillars. Nine or ten feet from the ground, in the middle of the shed, one sees a saw which moves up and down, while an extremely simple mechanism thrusts forward against this saw a piece of wood. This is a wheel set in motion by the mill-lade which drives both parts of the machine; that of the saw which moves up and down, and the other which pushes the piece of wood gently towards the saw, which slices it into planks.

As he approached his mill, Pere Sorel called Julien in his stentorian voice; there was no answer. He saw only his two elder sons, young giants who, armed with heavy axes, were squaring the trunks of fir which they would afterwards carry to the saw. They were completely engrossed in keeping exactly to the black line traced on the piece of wood, from which each blow of the axe sent huge chips flying. They did not hear their father's voice. He made his way to the shed; as he entered it, he looked in vain for Julien in the place where he ought to have been standing, beside the saw. He caught sight of him five or six feet higher up, sitting astride upon one of the beams of the roof. Instead of paying careful attention to the action of the machinery, Julien was reading a book. Nothing could have been less to old Sorel's liking; he might perhaps have forgiven Julien his slender build, little adapted to hard work, and so different from that of his elder brothers; but this passion for reading he detested: he himself was unable to read.

It was in vain that he called Julien two or three times. The attention the young man was paying to his book, far more than the noise of the saw, prevented him from hearing his father's terrifying voice. Finally, despite his years, the father sprang nimbly upon the trunk that was being cut by the saw, and from there on to the cross beam that held up the roof. A violent blow sent flying into the mill-lade the book that Julien was holding; a second blow no less violent, aimed at his head, in the form of a box on the ear, made him lose his balance. He was about to fall from a height of twelve or fifteen feet, among the moving machinery, which would have crushed him, but his father caught him with his left hand as he fell.

'Well, idler! So you keep on reading your cursed books, when you ought to be watching the saw? Read them in the evening, when you go and waste your time with the cure.'

Julien, although stunned by the force of the blow, and bleeding profusely, went to take up his proper station beside the saw. There were tears in his eyes, due not so much to his bodily pain as to the loss of his book, which he adored.

'Come down, animal, till I speak to you.' The noise of the machine again prevented Julien from hearing this order. His father who had stepped

down not wishing to take the trouble to climb up again on to the machine, went to find a long pole used for knocking down walnuts, and struck him on the shoulder with it. No sooner had Julien reached the ground than old Sorel, thrusting him on brutally from behind, drove him towards the house. 'Heaven knows what he's going to do to me!' thought the young man. As he passed it, he looked sadly at the mill lade into which his book had fallen; it was the one that he valued most of all, the *Memorial de Sainte-Helene*.

His cheeks were flushed, his eyes downcast. He was a slim youth of eighteen or nineteen, weak in appearance, with irregular but delicate features and an aquiline nose. His large dark eyes, which, in moments of calm, suggested a reflective, fiery spirit, were animated at this instant with an expression of the most ferocious hatred. Hair of a dark chestnut, growing very low, gave him a narrow brow, and in moments of anger a wicked air. Among the innumerable varieties of the human countenance, there is perhaps none that is more strikingly characteristic. A slim and shapely figure betokened suppleness rather than strength. In his childhood, his extremely pensive air and marked pallor had given his father the idea that he would not live, or would live only to be a burden upon his family. An object of contempt to the rest of the household, he hated his brothers and father; in the games on Sundays, on the public square, he was invariably beaten.

It was only during the last year that his good looks had begun to win him a few supporters among the girls. Universally despised, as a feeble creature, Julien had adored that old Surgeon-Major who one day ventured to speak to the Mayor on the subject of the plane trees.

This surgeon used now and then to pay old Sorel a day's wage for his son, and taught him Latin and history, that is to say all the history that he knew, that of the 1796 campaign in Italy. On his death, he had bequeathed to him his Cross of the Legion of Honour, the arrears of his pension, and thirty or forty volumes, the most precious of which had just taken a plunge into the public lade, diverted by the Mayor's influence.

As soon as he was inside the house, Julien felt his shoulder gripped by his father's strong hand; he trembled, expecting to receive a shower of blows.

'Answer me without lying,' the old peasant's harsh voice shouted in his ear, while the hand spun him round as a child's hand spins a lead soldier. Julien's great dark eyes, filled with tears, found themselves starting into the little grey eyes of the old peasant, who looked as though he sought to penetrate to the depths of his son's heart.

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## CHAPTER 5. DRIVING A BARGAIN

*Cunctando restituit rem.*

ENNIUS

‘Answer me, without lying, if you can, you miserable bookworm; how do you come to know Madame de Renal? When have you spoken to her?’

‘I have never spoken to her,’ replied Julien, ‘I have never seen the lady except in church.’

‘But you must have looked at her, you shameless scoundrel?’

‘Never! You know that in church I see none but God,’ Julien added with a hypocritical air, calculated, to his mind, to ward off further blows.

‘There is something behind this, all the same,’ replied the suspicious peasant, and was silent for a moment; ‘but I shall get nothing out of you, you damned hypocrite. The fact is, I’m going to be rid of you, and my saw will run all the better without you. You have made a friend of the parson or someone, and he’s got you a fine post. Go and pack your traps, and I’ll take you to M. de Renal’s where you’re to be tutor to the children.’

‘What am I to get for that?’

‘Board, clothing and three hundred francs in wages.’

‘I do not wish to be a servant,’

‘Animal, who ever spoke of your being a servant? Would I allow my son to be a servant?’

‘But, with whom shall I have my meals?’

This question left old Sorel at a loss; he felt that if he spoke he might be guilty of some imprudence; he flew into a rage with Julien, upon whom he showered abuse, accusing him of greed, and left him to go and consult his other sons.

Presently Julien saw them, each leaning upon his axe and deliberating together. After watching them for some time, Julien, seeing that he could make out nothing of their discussion, went and took his place on the far side of the saw, so as not to be taken by surprise. He wanted time to consider this sudden announcement which was altering his destiny, but felt himself to be incapable of prudence; his imagination was wholly taken up with forming pictures of what he would see in M. de Renal’s fine house.

‘I must give up all that,’ he said to himself, ‘rather than let myself be brought down to feeding with the servants. My father will try to force me; I would sooner die. I have saved fifteen francs and eight sous, I shall run away tonight; in two days, by keeping to side-roads where I need not fear the police, I can be at Besancon; there I enlist as a soldier, and, if necessary, cross the border into Switzerland. But then, good-bye to everything, good-bye to that fine clerical profession which is a stepping-stone to everything.’

This horror of feeding with the servants was not natural to Julien; he would, in seeking his fortune, have done other things far more disagreeable. He derived this repugnance from Rousseau's *Confessions*. It was the one book that helped his imagination to form any idea of the world. The collection of reports of the Grand Army and the *Memorial de Sainte-Helene* completed his Koran. He would have gone to the stake for those three books. Never did he believe in any other. Remembering a saying of the old Surgeon-Major, he regarded all the other books in the world as liars, written by rogues in order to obtain advancement. With his fiery nature Julien had one of those astonishing memories so often found in foolish people. To win over the old priest Chelan, upon whom he saw quite clearly that his own future depended, he had learned by heart the entire New Testament in Latin; he knew also M. de Maistre's book *Du Pape*, and had as little belief in one as in the other. As though by a mutual agreement, Sorel and his son avoided speaking to one another for the rest of the day. At dusk, Julien went to the cure for his divinity lesson, but did not think it prudent to say anything to him of the strange proposal that had been made to his father. 'It may be a trap,' he told himself; 'I must pretend to have forgotten about it.'

Early on the following day, M. de Renal sent for old Sorel, who, after keeping him waiting for an hour or two, finally appeared, beginning as he entered the door a hundred excuses interspersed with as many reverences. By dint of giving voice to every sort of objection, Sorel succeeded in gathering that his son was to take his meals with the master and mistress of the house, and on days when they had company in a room by himself with the children. Finding an increasing desire to raise difficulties the more he discerned a genuine anxiety on the Mayor's part, and being moreover filled with distrust and bewilderment, Sorel asked to see the room in which his son was to sleep. It was a large chamber very decently furnished, but the servants were already engaged in carrying into it the beds of the three children.

At this the old peasant began to see daylight; he at once asked with assurance to see the coat which would be given to his son. M. de Renal opened his desk and took out a hundred francs.

'With this money, your son can go to M. Durand, the clothier, and get himself a suit of black.'

'And supposing I take him away from you,' said the peasant, who had completely forgotten the reverential forms of address. 'Will he take this black coat with him?'

'Certainly.'

'Oh, very well!' said Sorel in a drawling tone, 'then there's only one thing for us still to settle: the money you're to give him.'

'What!' M. de Renal indignantly exclaimed, 'we agreed upon that yesterday: I give three hundred francs; I consider that plenty, if not too much.'

‘That was your offer, I do not deny it,’ said old Sorel, speaking even more slowly; then, by a stroke of genius which will astonish only those who do not know the Franc-Comtois peasant, he added, looking M. de Renal steadily in the face: *‘We can do better elsewhere.’*

At these words the Mayor was thrown into confusion. He recovered himself, however, and, after an adroit conversation lasting fully two hours, in which not a word was said without a purpose, the peasant’s shrewdness prevailed over that of the rich man, who was not dependent on his for his living. All the innumerable conditions which were to determine Julien’s new existence were finally settled; not only was his salary fixed at four hundred francs, but it was to be paid in advance, on the first day of each month.

‘Very well! I shall let him have thirty-five francs,’ said M. de Renal.

‘To make a round sum, a rich and generous gentleman like our Mayor,’ the peasant insinuated in a coaxing voice, ‘will surely go as far as thirty-six.’

‘All right,’ said M. de Renal, ‘but let us have no more of this.’

For once, anger gave him a tone of resolution. The peasant saw that he could advance no farther. Thereupon M. de Renal began in turn to make headway. He utterly refused to hand over the thirty-six francs for the first month to old Sorel, who was most eager to receive the money on his son’s behalf. It occurred to M. de Renal that he would be obliged to describe to his wife the part he had played throughout this transaction.

‘Let me have back the hundred francs I gave you,’ he said angrily. ‘M. Durand owes me money. I shall go with your son to choose the black cloth.’

After this bold stroke, Sorel prudently retired upon his expressions of respect; they occupied a good quarter of an hour. In the end, seeing that there was certainly nothing more to be gained, he withdrew. His final reverence ended with the words:

‘I shall send my son up to the chateau.’

It was thus that the Mayor’s subordinates spoke of his house when they wished to please him.

Returning to his mill, Sorel looked in vain for his son. Doubtful as to what might be in store for him, Julien had left home in the dead of night. He had been anxious to find a safe hiding-place for his books and his Cross of the Legion of Honour. He had removed the whole of his treasures to the house of a young timber-merchant, a friend of his, by the name of Fouque, who lived on the side of the high mountain overlooking Verrieres.

When he reappeared: ‘Heaven knows, you damned idler,’ his father said to him, ‘whether you will ever have enough honour to pay me for the cost of your keep, which I have been advancing to you all these years! Pack up your rubbish, and off with you to the Mayor’s.’

Julien, astonished not to receive a thrashing, made haste to set off. But no sooner was he out of sight of his terrible father than he slackened his pace. He decided that it would serve the ends of his hypocrisy to pay a visit to the church.

The idea surprises you? Before arriving at this horrible idea, the soul of the young peasant had had a long way to go.

When he was still a child, the sight of certain dragoons of the 6th, in their long, white cloaks, and helmets adorned with long crests of black horsehair, who were returning from Italy, and whom Julien saw tying their horses to the barred window of his father's house, drove him mad with longing for a military career.

Later on he listened with ecstasy to the accounts of the battles of the Bridge of Lodi, Arcole and Rivoli given him by the old Surgeon-Major. He noticed the burning gaze which the old man directed at his Cross. But when Julien was fourteen, they began to build a church at Verrieres, one that might be called magnificent for so small a town. There were, in particular, four marble pillars the sight of which impressed Julien; they became famous throughout the countryside, owing to the deadly enmity which they aroused between the Justice of the Peace and the young vicar, sent down from Besancon, who was understood to be the spy of the Congregation. The Justice of the Peace came within an ace of losing his post, such at least was the common report. Had he not dared to have a difference of opinion with a priest who, almost every fortnight, went to Besancon, where he saw, people said, the Right Reverend Lord Bishop?

In the midst of all this, the Justice of the Peace, the father of a large family, passed a number of sentences which appeared unjust; all of these were directed against such of the inhabitants as read the *Constitutionnel*. The right party was triumphant. The sums involved amounted, it was true, to no more than four or five francs; but one of these small fines was levied upon a nailsmith, Julien's godfather. In his anger, this man exclaimed: 'What a change! And to think that, for twenty years and more, the Justice was reckoned such an honest man!' The Surgeon-Major, Julien's friend, was dead.

All at once Julien ceased to speak of Napoleon; he announced his intention of becoming a priest, and was constantly to be seen, in his father's sawmill, engaged in learning by heart a Latin Bible which the cure had lent him. The good old man, amazed at his progress, devoted whole evenings to instructing him in divinity. Julien gave utterance in his company to none but pious sentiments. Who could have supposed that that girlish face, so pale and gentle, hid the unshakeable determination to expose himself to the risk of a thousand deaths rather than fail to make his fortune?

To Julien, making a fortune meant in the first place leaving Verrieres; he loathed his native place. Everything that he saw there froze his



imagination.

>From his earliest boyhood, he had had moments of exaltation. At such times he dreamed with rapture that one day he would be introduced to the beautiful ladies of Paris; he would manage to attract their attention by some brilliant action. Why should he not be loved by one of them, as Bonaparte, when still penniless, had been loved by the brilliant Madame de Beauharnais? For many years now, perhaps not an hour of Julien's life had passed without his reminding himself that Bonaparte, an obscure subaltern with no fortune, had made himself master of the world with his sword. This thought consoled him for his misfortunes which he deemed to be great, and enhanced his joy when joy came his way.

The building of the church and the sentences passed by the Justice brought him sudden enlightenment; an idea which occurred to him drove him almost out of his senses for some weeks, and finally took possession of him with the absolute power of the first idea which a passionate nature believes itself to have discovered.

'When Bonaparte made a name for himself, France was in fear of being invaded; military distinction was necessary and fashionable. Today we see priests at forty drawing stipends of a hundred thousand francs, that is to say three times as much as the famous divisional commanders under Napoleon. They must have people to support them. Look at the Justice here, so wise a man, always so honest until now, sacrificing his honour, at his age, from fear of offending a young vicar of thirty. I must become a priest.'

On one occasion, in the midst of his new-found piety, after Julien had been studying divinity for two years, he was betrayed by a sudden blaze of the fire that devoured his spirit. This was at M. Chelan's; at a dinner party of priests, to whom the good cure had introduced him as an educational prodigy, he found himself uttering frenzied praise of Napoleon. He bound his right arm across his chest, pretending that he had put the arm out of joint when shifting a fir trunk, and kept it for two months in this awkward position. After this drastic penance, he forgave himself. Such is the young man of eighteen, but weak in appearance, whom you would have said to be, at the most, seventeen, who, carrying a small parcel under his arm, was entering the magnificent church of Verrieres.

He found it dark and deserted. In view of some festival, all the windows in the building had been covered with crimson cloth; the effect of this, when the sun shone, was a dazzling blaze of light, of the most imposing and most religious character. Julien shuddered. Being alone in the church, he took his seat on the bench that had the most handsome appearance. It bore the arms of M. de Renal.

On the desk in front, Julien observed a scrap of printed paper, spread out there as though to be read. He looked at it closely and saw:

‘Details of the execution and of the last moments of Louis Jenrel, executed at Besancon, on the . . .’

The paper was torn. On the other side he read the opening words of a line, which were: ‘The first step.’

‘Who can have put this paper here?’ said Julien. ‘Poor wretch!’ he added with a sigh, ‘his name has the same ending as mine.’ And he crumpled up the paper.

On his way out, Julien thought he saw blood by the holy water stoup; it was some of the water that had been spilt: the light from the red curtains which draped the windows made it appear like blood.

Finally, Julien felt ashamed of his secret terror.

‘Should I prove coward?’ he said to himself. ‘*To arms!*’

This phrase, so often repeated in the old Surgeon’s accounts of battles, had a heroic sound in Julien’s ears. He rose and walked rapidly to M. de Renal’s house.

Despite these brave resolutions, as soon as he caught sight of the house twenty yards away he was overcome by an unconquerable shyness. The iron gate stood open; it seemed to him magnificent. He would have now to go in through it.

Julien was not the only person whose heart was troubled by his arrival in this household. Madame de Renal’s extreme timidity was disconcerted by the idea of this stranger who, in the performance of his duty, would be constantly coming between her and her children. She was accustomed to having her sons sleep in her own room. That morning, many tears had flowed when she saw their little beds being carried into the apartment intended for the tutor. In vain did she beg her husband to let the bed of Stanislas Xavier, the youngest boy, be taken back to her room.

Womanly delicacy was carried to excess in Madame de Renal. She formed a mental picture of a coarse, unkempt creature, employed to scold her children, simply because he knew Latin, a barbarous tongue for the sake of which her sons would be whipped.

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## CHAPTER 6. DULLNESS

*Non so piu cosa son, Cosa facio.*

MOZART (Figaro)

With the vivacity and grace which came naturally to her when she was beyond the reach of male vision, Madame de Renal was coming out through the glass door which opened from the drawing-room into the garden, when she saw, standing by the front door, a young peasant, almost a boy still, extremely pale and showing traces of recent tears. He was wearing a clean white shirt and carried under his arm a neat jacket of violet ratteen.

This young peasant's skin was so white, his eyes were so appealing, that the somewhat romantic mind of Madame de Renal conceived the idea at first that he might be a girl in disguise, come to ask some favour of the Mayor. She felt sorry for the poor creature, who had come to a standstill by the front door, and evidently could not summon up courage to ring the bell. Madame de Renal advanced, oblivious for the moment of the bitter grief that she felt at the tutor's coming. Julien, who was facing the door, did not see her approach. He trembled when a pleasant voice sounded close to his ear:

'What have you come for, my boy?'

Julien turned sharply round, and, struck by the charm of Madame de Renal's expression, forgot part of his shyness. A moment later, astounded by her beauty, he forgot everything, even his purpose in coming. Madame de Renal had repeated her question.

'I have come to be tutor, Madame,' he at length informed her, put to shame by his tears which he dried as best he might.

Madame de Renal remained speechless; they were standing close together, looking at one another. Julien had never seen a person so well dressed as this, let alone a woman with so exquisite a complexion, to speak to him in a gentle tone. Madame de Renal looked at the large tears which lingered on the cheeks (so pallid at first and now so rosy) of this young peasant. Presently she burst out laughing, with all the wild hilarity of a girl; she was laughing at herself, and trying in vain to realise the full extent of her happiness. So this was the tutor whom she had imagined an unwashed and ill-dressed priest, who was coming to scold and whip her children.

'Why, Sir!' she said to him at length, 'do you know Latin?'

The word 'Sir' came as such a surprise to Julien that he thought for a moment before answering.

'Yes, Ma'am,' he said shyly.

Madame de Renal felt so happy that she ventured to say to Julien:

'You won't scold those poor children too severely?'

'Scold them? I?' asked Julien in amazement. 'Why should I?'

‘You will, Sir,’ she went on after a brief silence and in a voice that grew more emotional every moment, ‘you will be kind to them, you promise me?’

To hear himself addressed again as ‘Sir’, in all seriousness, and by a lady so fashionably attired, was more than Julien had ever dreamed of; in all the cloud castles of his boyhood, he had told himself that no fashionable lady would deign to speak to him until he had a smart uniform. Madame de Renal, for her part, was completely taken in by the beauty of Julien’s complexion, his great dark eyes and his becoming hair which was curling more than usual because, to cool himself, he had just dipped his head in the basin of the public fountain. To her great delight, she discovered an air of girlish shyness in this fatal tutor, whose severity and savage appearance she had so greatly dreaded for her children’s sake. To Madame de Renal’s peace-loving nature the contrast between her fears and what she now saw before her was a great event. Finally she recovered from her surprise. She was astonished to find herself standing like this at the door of her house with this young man almost in his shirtsleeves and so close to her.

‘Let us go indoors, Sir,’ she said to him with an air of distinct embarrassment.

Never in her life had a purely agreeable sensation so profoundly stirred Madame de Renal; never had so charming an apparition come in the wake of more disturbing fears. And so those sweet children, whom she had tended with such care, were not to fall into the hands of a dirty, growling priest. As soon as they were in the hall, she turned to Julien who was following her shyly. His air of surprise at the sight of so fine a house was an additional charm in the eyes of Madame de Renal. She could not believe her eyes; what she felt most of all was that the tutor ought to be wearing a black coat.

‘But is it true, Sir,’ she said to him, again coming to a halt, and mortally afraid lest she might be mistaken, so happy was the belief making her, ‘do you really know Latin?’

These words hurt Julien’s pride and destroyed the enchantment in which he had been living for the last quarter of an hour.

‘Yes, Ma’am,’ he informed her, trying to adopt a chilly air; ‘I know Latin as well as M. le cure; indeed, he is sometimes so kind as to say that I know it better.’

Madame de Renal felt that Julien had a very wicked air; he had stopped within arm’s length of her. She went nearer to him, and murmured:

‘For the first few days, you won’t take the whip to my children, even if they don’t know their lessons?’

This gentle, almost beseeching tone coming from so fine a lady at once made Julien forget what he owed to his reputation as a Latin scholar.

Madame de Renal’s face was close to his own, he could smell the

perfume of a woman's summer attire, so astounding a thing to a poor peasant. Julien blushed deeply, and said with a sigh and in a faint voice: 'Fear nothing, Ma'am, I shall obey you in every respect.'

It was at this moment only, when her anxiety for her children was completely banished, that Madame de Renal was struck by Julien's extreme good looks. The almost feminine cast of his features and his air of embarrassment did not seem in the least absurd to a woman who was extremely timid herself. The manly air which is generally considered essential to masculine beauty would have frightened her.

'How old are you, Sir?' she asked Julien.

'I shall soon be nineteen.'

'My eldest son is eleven,' went on Madame de Renal, completely reassured; 'he will be almost a companion for you, you can talk to him seriously. His father tried to beat him once, the child was ill for a whole week, and yet it was quite a gentle blow.'

'How different from me,' thought Julien. 'Only yesterday my father was thrashing me. How fortunate these rich people are!'

Madame de Renal had by this time arrived at the stage of remarking the most trivial changes in the state of the tutor's mind; she mistook this envious impulse for shyness, and tried to give him fresh courage.

'What is your name, Sir?' she asked him with an accent and a grace the charm of which Julien could feel without knowing whence it sprang.

'They call me Julien Sorel, Ma'am; I am trembling as I enter a strange house for the first time in my life; I have need of your protection, and shall require you to forgive me many things at first. I have never been to College, I was too poor; I have never talked to any other men, except my cousin the Surgeon-Major, a Member of the Legion of Honour, and the Reverend Father Chelan. He will give you a good account of me. My brothers have always beaten me, do not listen to them if they speak evil of me to you; pardon my faults, Ma'am, I shall never have any evil intention.'

Julien plucked up his courage again during this long speech; he was studying Madame de Renal. Such is the effect of perfect grace when it is natural to the character, particularly when she whom it adorns has no thought of being graceful. Julien, who knew all that was to be known about feminine beauty, would have sworn at that moment that she was no more than twenty. The bold idea at once occurred to him of kissing her hand. Next, this idea frightened him; a moment later, he said to himself: 'It would be cowardly on my part not to carry out an action which may be of use to me, and diminish the scorn which this fine lady probably feels for a poor workman, only just taken from the sawbench.' Perhaps Julien was somewhat encouraged by the words 'good-looking boy' which for the last six months he had been used to hearing on Sundays on the lips of various girls. While he debated thus with himself, Madame de Renal offered him a few suggestions as to how he should

begin to handle her children. The violence of Julien's effort to control himself made him turn quite pale again; he said, with an air of constraint:

'Never, Ma'am, will I beat your children; I swear it before God.'

And so saying he ventured to take Madame de Renal's hand and carry it to his lips. She was astonished at this action, and, on thinking it over, shocked. As the weather was very warm, her arm was completely bare under her shawl, and Julien's action in raising her hand to his lips had uncovered it to the shoulder. A minute later she scolded herself; she felt that she had not been quickly enough offended.

M. de Renal, who had heard the sound of voices, came out of his study; with the same majestic and fatherly air that he assumed when he was conducting marriages in the Town Hall, he said to Julien:

'It is essential that I speak to you before the children see you.'

He ushered Julien into one of the rooms and detained his wife, who was going to leave them together. Having shut the door, M. de Renal seated himself with gravity.

'The cure has told me that you were an honest fellow, everyone in this house will treat you with respect, and if I am satisfied I shall help you to set up for yourself later on. I wish you to cease to see anything of either your family or your friends, their tone would not be suited to my children. Here are thirty-six francs for the first month; but I must have your word that you will not give a penny of this money to your father.'

M. de Renal was annoyed with the old man, who, in this business, had proved more subtle than he himself.

'And now, Sir, for by my orders everyone in this house is to address you as Sir, and you will be conscious of the advantage of entering a well-ordered household; now, Sir, it is not proper that the children should see you in a jacket. Have the servants seen him?' M. de Renal asked his wife.

'No, dear,' she replied with an air of deep thought.

'Good. Put on this,' he said to the astonished young man, handing him one of his own frock coats. 'And now let us go to M. Durand, the clothier.'

More than an hour later, when M. de Renal returned with the new tutor dressed all in black, he found his wife still seated in the same place. She felt soothed by Julien's presence; as she studied his appearance she forgot to feel afraid. Julien was not giving her a thought; for all his mistrust of destiny and of mankind, his heart at that moment was just like a child's; he seemed to have lived whole years since the moment when, three hours earlier, he stood trembling in the church. He noticed Madame de Renal's frigid manner, and gathered that she was angry because he had ventured to kiss her hand. But the sense of pride that he derived from the contact of garments so different from those which he was accustomed to wear caused him so much excitement, and he was so

anxious to conceal his joy that all his gestures were more or less abrupt and foolish. Madame de Renal gazed at him with eyes of astonishment. 'A little gravity, Sir,' M. de Renal told him, 'if you wish to be respected by my children and my servants.'

'Sir,' replied Julien, 'I am uncomfortable in these new clothes; I, a humble peasant, have never worn any but short jackets; with your permission, I shall retire to my bedroom.'

'What think you of this new acquisition?' M. de Renal asked his wife. With an almost instinctive impulse, of which she herself certainly was not aware, Madame de Renal concealed the truth from her husband.

'I am by no means as enchanted as you are with this little peasant; your kindness will turn him into an impertinent rascal whom you will be obliged to send packing within a month.'

'Very well! We shall send him packing; he will have cost me a hundred francs or so, and Verrieres will have grown used to seeing a tutor with M. de Renal's children. That point I should not have gained if I had let Julien remain in the clothes of a working man. When I dismiss him, I shall of course keep the black suit which I have just ordered from the clothier. He shall have nothing but the coat I found ready made at the tailor's, which he is now wearing.'

The hour which Julien spent in his room seemed like a second to Madame de Renal. The children, who had been told of their new tutor's arrival, overwhelmed their mother with questions. Finally Julien appeared. He was another man. It would have been straining the word to say that he was grave; he was gravity incarnate. He was introduced to the children, and spoke to them with an air that surprised M. de Renal himself.

'I am here, young gentlemen,' he told them at the end of his address, 'to teach you Latin. You know what is meant by repeating a lesson. Here is the Holy Bible,' he said, and showed them a tiny volume in 32mo, bound in black. 'It is in particular the story of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that is the part which is called the New Testament. I shall often make you repeat lessons; now you must make me repeat mine.'

Adolphe, the eldest boy, had taken the book.

'Open it where you please,' Julien went on, 'and tell me the first word of a paragraph. I shall repeat by heart the sacred text, the rule of conduct for us all, until you stop me.'

Adolphe opened the book, read a word, and Julien repeated the whole page as easily as though he were speaking French. M. de Renal looked at his wife with an air of triumph. The children, seeing their parents' amazement, opened their eyes wide. A servant came to the door of the drawing-room, Julien went on speaking in Latin. The servant at first stood motionless and then vanished. Presently the lady's maid and the cook appeared in the doorway; by this time Adolphe had opened the



book at eight different places, and Julien continued to repeat the words with the same ease.

'Eh, what a bonny little priest,' the cook, a good and truly devout girl, said aloud.

M. de Renal's self-esteem was troubled; so far from having any thought of examining the tutor, he was engaged in ransacking his memory for a few words of Latin; at last, he managed to quote a line of Horace. Julien knew no Latin apart from the Bible. He replied with a frown:

'The sacred ministry to which I intend to devote myself has forbidden me to read so profane a poet.'

M. de Renal repeated a fair number of alleged lines of Horace. He explained to his children what Horace was; but the children, overcome with admiration, paid little attention to what he was saying. They were watching Julien.

The servants being still at the door, Julien felt it incumbent upon him to prolong the test.

'And now,' he said to the youngest boy, 'Master Stanislas Xavier too must set me a passage from the Holy Book.'

Little Stanislas, swelling with pride, read out to the best of his ability the opening words of a paragraph, and Julien repeated the whole page. That nothing might be wanting to complete M. de Renal's triumph, while Julien was reciting, there entered M. Valenod, the possessor of fine Norman horses, and M. Charcot de Maugiron, Sub-Prefect of the district. This scene earned for Julien the title 'Sir'; the servants themselves dared not withhold it from him.

That evening, the whole of Verrieres flocked to M. de Renal's to behold the marvel. Julien answered them all with an air of gloom which kept them at a distance. His fame spread so rapidly through the town that, shortly afterwards, M. de Renal, afraid of losing him, suggested his signing a contract for two years.

'No, Sir,' Julien replied coldly, 'if you chose to dismiss me I should be obliged to go. A contract which binds me without putting you under any obligation is unfair, I must decline.'

Julien managed so skilfully that, less than a month after his coming to the house, M. de Renal himself respected him. The cure having quarrelled with MM. de Renal and Valenod, there was no one who could betray Julien's former passion for Napoleon, of whom he was careful to speak with horror.

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