

***FREDERICK
MARRYAT***



VALERIE

Frederick Marryat

Valerie

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Preface.

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On August 10, 1845, Marryat wrote to Mrs S., a lady for whom, to the time of his death, he retained the highest sentiments of friendship and esteem:—

“I really wish you would write your confessions, I will publish them. I have a beautiful opening in some memoranda I have made of the early life of a Frenchwoman, that is, up to the age of seventeen, when she is cast adrift upon the world, and I would work it all up together. Let us commence, and divide the tin; it is better than doing nothing. I have been helping Ainsworth in the *New Monthly*, and I told him that I had commenced a work called *Mademoiselle Virginie*, which he might perhaps have. Without my knowing it, he has announced its coming forth; but it does not follow that he is to have it, nevertheless, and indeed he now wishes me to continue one” (*The Privateersman*) “that I have already begun in the magazine.”

However, Mrs S., with whom at one time Washington Irving also wished to collaborate, declined the offer; and *Mademoiselle Virginie* was ultimately published in the *New Monthly* under the title of *Valerie*. The first eleven chapters appeared in the magazine 1846, 1847, and the remaining pages were added—according to *The Life and Letters of Captain Marryat*—by another hand, when it came out in book form.

There are two special features in *Valerie*, beyond its actual merits, that inevitably excite our attention. It is

Marryat's last work, and the only one in which the interest centres entirely on women. For this reason, and from the eighteenth century flavour in some of its characters, the book inevitably recalls Miss Burney and her little-read *The Wanderer*, in which, as in *Valerie*, a proud and sensitive girl is thrown on the world, and discovers—by bitter experience as governess, companion, and music mistress—the sneer that lurks beneath the smile of fashion and prosperity.

The subject is well handled, on the old familiar lines, and supplies the groundwork of an eminently readable story, peopled by many life-like “humours” and an attractive, spirited heroine. The adventures of *Valerie* are various and well-sustained; her bearing throughout secures the reader's sympathy, and he is conscious of a genuine pleasure in her ultimate prosperity and happiness.

Valerie, an autobiography, is here reprinted from the first edition in two volumes. Henry Colburn, 1849.

R.B.J.

After Marryat's death a fragment of a story for the “Juvenile Library” was found in his desk, and has been published in the *Life and Letters* by Florence Marryat. It describes the experience of a man who, like Marryat himself, was compelled by the failure of speculations to live in the country and manage his own estate. It was projected “because few young people have any knowledge of farming, and there are no books written by which any knowledge of it may be imparted to children.” Marryat himself was not a very successful farmer, but probably his theory was in advance of his practice.

Chapter One.

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I have titled these pages with nothing more than my baptismal name. If the reader finds sufficient interest in them to read to the end, he will discover the position that I am in, after an eventful life. I shall, however, not trespass upon his time by making many introductory remarks; but commence at once with my birth, parentage, and education. This is necessary, as although the two first are, perhaps, of little comparative consequence, still the latter is of importance, as it will prepare the reader for many events in my after-life. I may add, that much depends upon birth and parentage; at all events, it is necessary to complete a perfect picture. Let me, therefore, begin at the beginning.

I was born in France. My father, who was of the *ancienne noblesse* of France, by a younger branch of the best blood, and was a most splendid specimen of the outward man, was the son of an old officer, and an officer himself in the army of Napoleon. In the conquest of Italy, he had served in the ranks, and continuing to follow Napoleon through all his campaigns, had arrived to the grade of captain of cavalry. He had distinguished himself on many occasions, was a favourite of the Emperor's, wore the cross of the Legion of Honour, and was considered in a fair way to rapid promotion, when he committed a great error. During the time that his squadron was occupying a small German town, situated on the river Erbach, called Deux Ponts, he saw my mother, fell desperately in love, and married. There was some excuse for him, for a more beautiful woman than my mother I never beheld; moreover, she was highly talented,

and a most perfect musician; of a good family, and with a dowry by no means contemptible.

The reader may say that, in marrying such a woman, my father could hardly be said to have committed a very great error. This is true, the error was not in marrying, but in allowing his wife's influence over him to stop his future advancement. He wished to leave her with her father and mother until the campaign was over. She refused to be left, and he yielded to her wishes. Now, Napoleon had no objection to his officers being married, but a very great dislike to their wives accompanying the army; and this was the fault which my father committed, and which lost him the favour of his general. My mother was too beautiful a woman not to be noticed, and immediately inquired about, and the knowledge soon came to Napoleon's ears, and militated against my father's future advancement.

During the first year of their marriage, my eldest brother, Auguste, was born, and shortly afterwards my mother promised an increase to the family, which was the occasion of great satisfaction to my father, who now that he had been married more than a year, would at times look at my mother, and, beautiful as she was, calculate in his mind whether the possession of her was indemnification sufficient for the loss of the brigade which she had cost him.

To account for my father's satisfaction, I must acquaint the reader with circumstances which are not very well known. As I before observed, Napoleon had no objection to marriage, because he required men for his army; and because he required men, and not women, he thought very poorly of a married couple who produced a plurality of girls.

If, on the contrary, a woman presented her husband with six or seven boys, if he was an officer in the army, he was certain of a pension for life. Now, as my mother had commenced with a boy, and it is well known that there is every chance of a woman continuing to produce the sex which first makes its appearance, she was much complimented and congratulated by the officers when she so soon gave signs of an increase, and they prophesied that she would, by her fruitfulness, in a few years obtain a pension for her husband. My father hoped so, and thought that if he had lost the brigade, he would be indemnified by the pension. My mother was certain of it; and declared it was a boy.

But prophesies, hopes, and declarations, were all falsified and overthrown by my unfortunate appearance. The disappointment of my father was great; but he bore it like a man. My mother was not only disappointed, but indignant. She felt mortified after all her declarations, that I should have appeared and disproved them. She was a woman of violent temper, a discovery which my father made too late. To me, as the cause of her humiliation and disappointment, she took an aversion, which only increased as I grew up, and which, as will be hereafter shown, was the main spring of all my vicissitudes in after-life.

Surely, there is an error in asserting that there is no feeling so strong as maternal love. How often do we witness instances like mine, in which disappointed vanity, ambition, or interest, have changed this love into deadly hate!

My father, who felt the inconvenience of my mother accompanying him on forced marches, and who, perhaps,

being disappointed in his hopes of a pension, thought that he might as well recover the Emperor's favour, and look for the brigade, now proposed that my mother should return with her two children to her parents. This my mother, who had always gained the upper-hand, positively refused to accede to. She did, however, allow me and my brother Auguste to be sent to her parents' care at Deux Ponts, and there we remained while my father followed the fortunes of the Emperor, and my mother followed the fortunes of my father. I have little or no recollection of my maternal grandfather and grandmother. I remember that I lived with them, as I remained there with my brother till I was seven years old, at which period my paternal grandmother offered to receive my brother and me, and take charge of our education. This offer was accepted, and we both went to Luneville where she resided.

I have said that my paternal grandmother offered to receive us, and not my paternal grandfather, who was still alive. Such was the case; as, could he have had his own way, he would not have allowed us to come to Luneville, for he had a great dislike to children; but my grandmother had property of her own, independent of her husband, and she insisted upon our coming. Very often, after we had been received into her house, I would hear remonstrance on his part relative to the expense of keeping us, and the reply of my grandmother, which would be, "*Eh bien, Monsieur Chatenoef, c'est mon argent que je dépense.*" I must describe Monsieur Chatenoef. As I before stated, he had been an officer in the French army; but had now retired upon his pension, with the rank of major, and decorated

with the Legion of Honour. At the time that I first saw him, he was a tall, elegant old man, with hair as white as silver. I heard it said, that when young he was considered one of the bravest and handsomest officers in the French army. He was very quiet in his manners, spoke very little, and took a large quantity of snuff. He was egotistic to excess, attending wholly to himself and his own comforts, and it was because the noise of children interfered with his comfort, that he disliked them so much. We saw little of him, and cared less. If I came into his room when he was alone, he promised me a good whipping, I therefore avoided him as much as I could; the association was not pleasant.

Luneville is a beautiful town in the Department of Meurthe. The castle, or rather palace, is a very splendid and spacious building, in which formerly the Dukes of Lorraine held their court. It was afterwards inhabited by King Stanislaus, who founded a military school, a library and a hospital. The palace was a square building, with a handsome façade facing the town, and in front of it there was a fountain. There was a large square in the centre of the palace, and behind it an extensive garden, which was well kept up and carefully attended to. One side of the palace was occupied by the officers of the regiments quartered in Luneville; the opposite side, by the soldiery; and the remainder of the building was appropriated to the reception of old retired officers who had been pensioned. It was in this beautiful building, that my grandfather and grandmother were established for the remainder of their lives. Except the Tuileries, I know of no palace in France equal to that of Luneville. Here it was that, at seven years

old, I took up my quarters; and it is from that period that I have always dated my existence.

I have described my grandfather and my residence, but now I must introduce my grandmother; my dear, excellent, grandmother, whom I loved so much when she was living, and whose memory I shall ever revere. In person she was rather diminutive, but, although sixty years of age, she still retained her figure, which was remarkably pretty, and she was as straight as an arrow. Never had age pressed more lightly upon the human frame; for, strange to say, her hair was black as jet, and fell down to her knees. It was considered a great curiosity, and she was not a little proud of it, for there was not a grey hair to be seen. Although she had lost many of her teeth, her skin was not wrinkled, but had a freshness most remarkable in a person so advanced in years. Her mind was as young as her body; she was very witty and coquettish, and the officers living in the palace were continually in her apartments, preferring her company to that of younger women. Partial to children, she would join in all our sports, and sit down to play "hunt the slipper," with us and our young companions. But with all her vivacity, she was a strictly moral and religious woman. She could be lenient to indiscretion and carelessness, but any deviation from truth and honesty on the part of my brother or myself, was certain to be visited with severe punishment. She argued, that there could be no virtue, where there was deceit, which she considered as the hot-bed from which every vice would spring out spontaneously; that truth was the basis of all that was good and noble, and that every other branch of education was, comparatively speaking, of

no importance, and, without truth, of no value. She was right.

My brother and I were both sent to day-schools. The maid Catherine always took me to school after breakfast, and came to fetch me home about four o'clock in the afternoon. Those were happy times. With what joy I used to return to the palace, bounding into my grandmother's apartment on the ground floor, sometimes to frighten her, leaping in at the window and dropping at her feet, the old lady scolding and laughing at the same time. My grandmother was, as I observed, religious, but she was not a devotee. The great object was to instil into me a love of truth, and in this she was indefatigable. When I did wrong, it was not the fault I had committed which caused her concern; it was the fear that I should deny it, which worried and alarmed her. To prevent this, the old lady had a curious method—she dreamed for my benefit. If I had done wrong, and she suspected me, she would not accuse me until she had made such inquiries as convinced her that I was the guilty person; and then, perhaps, the next morning, she would say, as I stood by her side: "Valerie, I had a dream last night; I can't get it out of my head. I dreamt that my little girl had forgotten her promise to me, and when she went to the store-room had eaten a large piece of the cake."

She would fix her eyes upon me as she narrated the events of her dream, and, as she proceeded, my face would be covered with blushes, and my eyes cast down in confusion; I dared not look at her, and by the time that she had finished, I was down on my knees, with my face buried in her lap. If my offence was great, I had to say my prayers,

and implore the Divine forgiveness, and was sent to prison, that is, locked up for a few hours in my bedroom. Catherine, the maid, had been many years with my grandmother, and was, to a certain degree, a privileged person; at all events, she considered herself warranted in giving her opinion, and grumbling as much as she pleased, and such was invariably the case whenever I was locked up. "*Toujours en prison, cette pauvre petite*. It is too bad, madam; you must let her out." My grandmother would quietly reply, "Catherine, you are a good woman, but you understand nothing about the education of children." Sometimes, however, she obtained the key from my grandmother, and I was released sooner than was originally intended.

The fact is, that being put in prison was a very heavy punishment, as it invariably took place in the evenings, after my return from school, so that I lost my play-hours. There were a great many officers with their wives located in the palace, and, of course, no want of playmates. The girls used to go to the bosquet, which adjoined the gardens of the palace, collect flowers, and make a garland, which they hung on a rope stretched across the court-yard of the palace. As the day closed in, the party from each house, or apartments rather, brought out a lantern, and having thus illuminated our ballroom by subscription, the boys and girls danced the "*ronde*," and other games, until it was bedtime. As the window of my bedroom looked out upon the court, whenever I was put into prison, I had the mortification of witnessing all these joyous games, without being permitted to join in them.

To prove the effect of my grandmother's system of dreaming upon me, I will narrate a circumstance which occurred. My grandfather had a landed property about four miles from Luneville. A portion of this land was let to a farmer, and the remainder he farmed on his own account, and the produce was consumed in the house-keeping. From this farm we received milk, butter, cheese, all kinds of fruit, and indeed everything which a farm produces. In that part of France they have a method of melting down and clarifying butter for winter use, instead of salting it. This not only preserves it, but, to most people, makes it more palatable; at all events I can answer for myself, for I was inordinately fond of it. There were eighteen or twenty jars of it in the store-room, which were used up in rotation. I dared not take any out of the jar in use, as I should be certain to be discovered; so I went to the last jar, and by my repeated assaults upon it, it was nearly empty before my grandmother discovered it. As usual, she had a dream. She commenced with counting over the number of jars of butter; and how she opened such a one, and it was full; and then the next, and it was full; but before her dream was half over, and while she was still a long way from the jar which I had despoiled, I was on my knees, telling her the end of the dream, of my own accord, for I could not bear the suspense of having all the jars examined. From that time, I generally made a full confession before the dream was ended.

But when I was about nine years old, I was guilty of a very heavy offence, which I shall narrate, on account of the peculiar punishment which I received, and which might be advantageously pursued by the parents of the present day,

who may happen to cast their eyes over these memoirs. It was the custom for the children of the officers who lived in the palace, that is, the girls, to club together occasionally, that they might have a little *fête* in the garden of the palace. It was a sort of pic-nic, to which every one contributed; some would bring cakes, some fruit; some would bring money (a few sous) to purchase bon-bons, or anything else which might be agreed upon.

On those occasions, my grandmother invariably gave me fruit, a very liberal allowance of apples and pears, from the store-room; for we had plenty from the orchard of the farm. But one day, one of the elder girls told me that they had plenty of fruit, and that I must bring some money. I asked my grandmother, but she refused me; and then this girl proposed that I should steal some from my grandfather. I objected; but she ridiculed my objections, and pressed me until she overcame my scruples, and I consented. But when I left her after she had obtained my promise, I was in a sad state. I knew it was wicked to steal, and the girl had taken care to point out to me how wicked it was to break a promise. I did not know what to do: all that evening I was in such a state of feverish excitement, that my grandmother was quite astonished. The fact was, that I was ashamed to retract my promise, and yet I trembled at the deed that I was about to do. I went into my room and got into bed. I remained awake; and about midnight I got up, and creeping softly into my grandfather's room, I went to his clothes, which were on a chair, and rifled his pockets of—two sous!

Having effected my purpose, I retired stealthily, and gained my own room. What my feelings were when I was

again in bed I cannot well describe—they were horrible—I could not shut my eyes for the remainder of the night and the next morning I made my appearance, haggard, pale, and trembling. It proved, however, that my grandfather who was awake, had witnessed the theft in silence, and informed my grandmother of it. Before I went to school, my grandmother called me in to her, for I had avoided her.

“Come here, Valerie,” said she, “I have had a dream—a most dreadful dream—it was about a little girl, who, in the middle of the night, crept into her grandfather’s room—”

I could bear no more. I threw myself on the floor, and, in agony, screamed out—

“Yes, grandmamma, and stole two sous.”

A paroxysm of tears followed the confession, and for more than an hour I remained on the floor, hiding my face and sobbing. My grandmother allowed me to remain there—she was very much annoyed—I had committed a crime of the first magnitude—my punishment was severe. I was locked up in my room for ten days: but this was the smallest portion of the punishment: every visitor that came in, I was sent for, and on my making my appearance, my grandmother would take me by the hand, and leading me up, would formally present me to the visitors.

“Permettez, madame (ou monsieur), que je vous présente Mademoiselle Valerie, qui est enfermée dans sa chambre, pour avoir vole deux sous de son grand-père.”

Oh! the shame, the mortification that I felt. This would take place at least ten times a day; and each succeeding presentation was followed by a burst of tears, as I was again led back to my chamber. Severe as this punishment was,

the effect of it was excellent. I would have endured martyrdom, after what I had gone through, before I would have taken what was not my own. It was a painful, but a judicious, and most radical cure.

For five years I remained under the care of this most estimable woman, and, under her guidance, had become a truthful and religious girl; and I may conscientiously add, that I was as innocent as a lamb—but a change was at hand. The Emperor had been hurled from his throne, and was shut up on a barren rock, and soon great alterations were made in the French army. My father's regiment of huzzars had been disbanded, and he was now appointed to a dragoon regiment, which was ordered to Luneville. He arrived with my mother and a numerous family, she having presented him with seven more children; so that, with Auguste and me, he had now nine children. I may as well here observe that my mother continued to add yearly to the family, till she had fourteen in all, and out of these there were seven boys; so that, had the Emperor remained on the throne of France, my father would certainly have secured the pension.

The arrival of my family was a source both of pleasure and pain to me. I was most anxious to see all my brothers and sisters, and my heart yearned towards my father and mother, although I had no recollection of them; but I was fearful that I should be removed from my grandmother's care, and she was equally alarmed at the chance of our separation. Unfortunately for me, it turned out as we had anticipated. My mother was anything but gracious to my grandmother, notwithstanding the obligations she was

under to her, and very soon took an opportunity of quarrelling with her. The cause of the quarrel was very absurd, and proved that it was predetermined on the part of my mother. My grandmother had some curious old carved furniture, which my mother coveted, and requested my grandmother to let her have it. This my grandmother would not consent to, and my mother took offence at her refusal. I and my brother were immediately ordered home, my mother asserting that we had been both very badly brought up; and this was all the thanks that my grandmother received for her kindness to us, and defraying all our expenses for five years. I had not been at home more than a week, when my father's regiment was ordered to Nance; but, during this short period, I had sufficient to convince me that I should be very miserable. My mother's dislike to me, which I have referred to before, now assumed the character of positive hatred, and I was very ill-treated. I was employed as a servant, and as nurse to the younger children; and hardly a day passed without my feeling the weight of her hand. We set off for Nance, and I thought my heart would break as I quitted the arms of my grandmother, who wept over me. My father was very willing to leave me with my grandmother, who promised to leave her property to me; but this offer in my favour enraged my mother still more; she declared that I should not remain; and my father had long succumbed to her termagant disposition, and yielded implicit obedience to her authority. It was lamentable to see such a fine soldierlike man afraid even to speak before this woman; but he was completely under her thraldom, and never dared to contradict.

As soon as we were settled in the barracks at Nance, my mother commenced her system of persecution in downright earnest. I had to make all the beds, wash the children, carry out the baby, and do every menial office for my brothers and sisters, who were encouraged to order me about. I had very good clothes, which had been provided me by my grandmother; they were all taken away, and altered for my younger sisters; but what was still more mortifying, all my sisters had lessons in music, dancing, and other accomplishments, from various masters, whose instructions I was not permitted to take advantage of, although there would have been no addition to the expense.

“Oh! my father,” cried I, “why is this?—what have I done?—am not I your daughter—your eldest daughter?”

“I will speak to your mother,” replied he.

And he did venture to do so; but by so doing, he raised up such a tempest, that he was glad to drop the subject, and apologise for an act of justice. Poor man! he could do no more than pity me.

I well remember my feelings at that time. I felt that I could love my mother, love her dearly, if she would have allowed me so to do. I had tried to obtain her good-will, but I received nothing in return but blows, and at last I became so alarmed when in her presence that I almost lost my reason. My ears were boxed till I could not recollect where I was, and I became stupefied with fear. All I thought of, all my anxiety, at last, was to get out of the room where my mother was. My terror was so great that her voice made me tremble, and at the sight of her I caught my breath and gasped from alarm. My brother Auguste was very nearly as

much an object of dislike to my mother as I was, chiefly because he had been brought up by my grandmother, and moreover because he would take my part.

The great favourite of my mother was my second brother Nicolas; he was a wonderful musician, could play upon any instrument and the most difficult music at sight. This talent endeared him to my mother, who was herself a first-rate musician. He was permitted to order me about just as he pleased, and if I did not please him, to beat me without mercy, and very often my mother would fly at me and assist him. But Auguste took my part, and Nicolas received very severe chastisement from him, but this did not help me; on the contrary, if Auguste interfered in my behalf, my mother would pounce upon me, and I may say that I was stunned with her blows. Auguste appealed to his father, but he dared not interfere. He was coward enough to sit by and see his daughter treated in this way without remonstrance; and, in a short time, I was fast approaching to what my mother declared me to be—a perfect idiot.

I trust that my own sex will not think me a renegade when I say, that, if ever there was a proof that woman was intended by the Creator to be subject to man, it is, that once place power in the hands of woman, and there is not one out of a hundred who will not abuse it. We hear much of the rights of woman, and their wrongs; but this is certain, that in a family, as in a State, there can be no divided rule—no equality. One must be master, and no family is so badly managed, or so badly brought up, as where the law of nature is reversed, and we contemplate that most despicable of all *lusi naturae*—a hen-pecked husband. To

proceed, the consequence of my mother's treatment, was to undermine in me all the precepts of my worthy grandmother. I was a slave; and a slave under the continual influence of fear cannot be honest. The fear of punishment produced deceit to avoid it. Even my brother Auguste, from his regard and pity for me, would fall into the same error. "Valerie," he would say, running out to me as I was coming home with my little brother in my arms, "your mother will beat you on your return. You must say so and so." This so and so was, of course, an untruth; and, in consequence, my fibs were so awkward, and accompanied by so much hesitation and blushing, that I was invariably found out, and then punished for what I did not deserve to be; and when my mother obtained such triumphant proof against me, she did not fail to make the most of it with my father, who, by degrees, began to consider that my treatment was merited, and that I was a bad and deceitful child.

My only happiness was to be out in the open air, away from my mother's presence, and this was only to be obtained when I was ordered out with my little brother Pierre, whom I had to carry as soon as I had done the household work. If Pierre was fractious, my mother would order me out of the house with him immediately. This I knew, and I used to pinch the poor child to make him cry, that I might gain my object, and be sent away; so that to duplicity I added cruelty. Six months before this, had any one told me that I ever would be guilty of such a thing, with what indignation I should have denied it!

Although my mother flattered herself that it was only in her own domestic circle that her unnatural conduct towards

me was known, such was not the case, and the treatment which I received from her was the occasion of much sympathy on the part of the officers and their wives, who were quartered in the barracks. Some of them ventured to remonstrate with my father for his consenting to it; but although he was cowed by a woman, he had no fear of men, and as he told them candidly that any future interference in his domestic concerns must be answered by the sword, no more was said to him on the subject. Strange, that a man should risk his life with such indifference, rather than remedy an evil, and yet be under such thralldom to a woman!—that one who was always distinguished in action as the most forward and the most brave, should be a trembling coward before an imperious wife! But this is a world of sad contradictions.

There was a lady in the barracks, wife to one of the superior officers, who was very partial to me. She had a daughter, a very sweet girl, who was also named Valerie. When I could escape from the house, I used to be constantly with them; and when I saw my name-sake caressing and caressed, in the arms of her mother, as I was sitting by on a stool, the tears would run down at the thoughts that such pleasure was debarred from me.

“Why do you cry, Valerie?”

“Oh! madam, why have I not a mother like your Valerie? Why am I to be beat instead of being caressed and fondled like her? What have I done?—But she is not my mother—I’m sure she cannot be—I will never believe it!”

And such had really become my conviction, and in consequence I never would address her by the title of

mother. This my mother perceived, and it only added to her ill-will. Only permit any one feeling or passion to master you—allow it to increase by never being in the slightest degree checked, and it is horrible to what an excess it will carry you. About this time, my mother proved the truth of the above observation, by saying to me, as she struck me to the ground—

“I’ll kill you,” cried she; and then, catching her breath, said in a low, determined tone, “Oh! I only wish that I dared.”



Chapter Two.

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One day, a short time after this, I was walking out as usual with my little brother Pierre in my arms; I was deep in thought; in imagination I was at Luneville with my dear grandmother, when my foot slipped and I fell. In trying to save my brother I hurt myself very much, and he, poor child, was unfortunately very much hurt as well as myself. He cried and moaned piteously, and I did all that I could to console him, but he was in too much pain to be comforted. I remained out for an hour or two, not daring to go home, but the evening was closing in and I returned at last. The child, who could not yet speak, still moaned and cried, and I told the truth as to the cause of it. My mother flew at me, and I received such chastisement that I could be patient no longer, and I pushed my mother from me; I was felled to the ground and left there bleeding profusely.

After a time I rose up and crawled to bed. I reflected upon all I had suffered, and made up my mind that I would no longer remain under my father's roof. At daybreak I dressed myself, hastened out of the barracks, and set off for Luneville, which was fifteen miles distant. I had gained about half the way when I was met by a soldier of the regiment who had once been our servant. I tried to avoid him, but he recognised me. I then begged him not to interfere with me, and told him that I was running away to my grandmother's. Jacques, for that was his name, replied that I was right, and that he would say nothing about it.

"But, mademoiselle," continued he, "you will be tired before you get to Luneville, and may have a chance of a

conveyance if you have money to pay for it.”

He then slipped a five-franc piece into my hand, and left me to pursue my way. I continued my journey, and at last arrived at the farm belonging to my grandfather, which I have before mentioned, as being about four miles from the town. I was afraid to go direct to Luneville, on account of my grandfather, who, I knew from motives of parsimony, would be unwilling to receive me. I told my history to the farmer’s wife, showing her my face covered with bruises and scars, and entreated her to go to my grandmother’s and tell her where I was. She put me to bed, and the next morning set off for Luneville, and acquainted my grandmother with the circumstances. The old lady immediately ordered her *char-à-banc* and drove out for me. There was proof positive of my mother’s cruelty, and the good old woman shed tears over me when she had pulled off the humble blue cotton dress which I wore and examined my wounds and bruises. When we arrived at Luneville, we met with much opposition from my grandfather, but my grandmother was resolute.

“Since you object to my receiving her in the house,” said she, “at all events you cannot prevent my doing my duty towards her, and doing as I please with my own money. I shall, therefore, send her to school and pay her expenses.”

As soon as new clothes could be made for me, I was sent to the best *pension* in Luneville. Shortly afterwards my father arrived; he had been despatched by my mother to reclaim me and bring me back with him, but he found the tide too strong against him, and my grandmother threatened to appeal to the authorities and make an exposure; this he knew would be a serious injury to his

character, and he was therefore compelled to go back without me, and I remained a year and a half at the *pension*, very happy and improving very fast in my education and my personal appearance.

But I was not destined to be so happy long. True it was, that during this year and a half of tranquillity and happiness, the feelings created by my mother's treatment had softened down, and all animosity had long been discarded, but I was too happy to want to return home again. At the expiration of this year and a half, my father's regiment was again ordered to shift their quarters to a small town, the name of which I now forget, but Luneville lay in their route. My mother had for some time ceased to importune my father about my return. The fact was, that she had been so coldly treated by the other ladies at Nance, in consequence of her behaviour to me, that she did not think it advisable; but now that they were about to remove, she insisted upon my father taking me with him, promising that I should be well-treated, and have the same instruction as my sisters; in fact, she promised everything; acknowledging to my grandmother that she had been too hasty to me, and was very sorry for it. Even my brother Auguste thought that she was now sincere, and my father, my brother, and even my dear grandmother, persuaded me to consent. My mother was now very kind and affectionate towards me, and as I really wanted to love her, I left the *pension* and accompanied the family to their new quarters.

But this was all treachery on the part of my mother. Regardless of my advantage, as she had shown herself on every occasion, she had played her part that she might

have an opportunity of discharging an accumulated debt of revenge, which had been heaped up in consequence of the slights she had received from other people on account of her treatment of me. We had hardly been settled in our new abode, before my mother burst out again with a virulence which exceeded all her former cruelty. But I was no longer the frightened victim that I had been; I complained to my father, and insisted upon justice; but that was useless. My brother Auguste now took my part in defiance of his father, and it was one scene of continual family discord. I had made many friends, and used to remain at their houses all day. As for doing household work, notwithstanding her blows, I refused it. One morning my mother was chastising me severely, when my brother Auguste, who was dressed in his hussar uniform, came in and hastened to my assistance, interposing himself between us. My mother's rage was beyond all bounds.

“Wretch,” cried she, “would you strike your mother?”

“No,” replied he, “but I will protect my sister. You barbarous woman, why do you not kill her at once, it would be a kindness?”

It was after this scene that I resolved that I would again return to Luneville. I did not confide my intentions to anyone, not even to Auguste. There was a great difficulty in getting out of the front door without being perceived, and my bundle would have created suspicion; by the back of the house the only exit was through a barred window. I was then fourteen years old but very slight in figure. I tried if my head would pass through the bars, and succeeding, I soon forced my body through, and seizing my bundle, made all haste to

the diligence office. I found that it was about to start for Luneville, which was more than half a day's journey distant. I got in very quickly, and the conducteur knowing me, thought that all was right, and the diligence drove off.

There were two people in the coupé with me, an officer and his wife; before we had proceeded far they asked me where I was going, I replied to my grandmother's at Luneville. Thinking it, however, strange that I should be unaccompanied, they questioned, until they extracted the whole history from me. The lady wished me to come to her on a visit, but the husband, more prudent, said that I was better under the care of my grandmother.

About mid-day we stopped to change horses at an auberge called the Louis d'Or, about a quarter of a mile from Luneville. Here I alighted without offering any explanation to the conducteur; but as he knew me and my grandmother well, that was of no consequence. My reason for alighting was, that the diligence would have put me down at the front of the palace, where I was certain to meet my grandfather, who passed the major portion of the day there, basking on one of the seats, and I was afraid to see him until I had communicated with my grandmother. I had an uncle in the town, and I had been very intimate with my cousin Marie, who was a pretty, kind-hearted girl, and I resolved that I would go there, and beg her to go to my grandmother. The difficulty was, how to get to the house without passing the front of the palace, or even the bridge across the river. At last I decided that I would walk down by the river side until I was opposite to the bosquet, which adjoined the garden of the palace, and there wait till it was

low water, when I knew that the river could be forded, as I had often seen others do so.

When I arrived opposite to the bosquet I sat down on my bundle, by the banks of the river for two or three hours, watching the long feathery weeds at the bottom, which moved gently from one side to the other with the current of the stream. As soon as it was low water, I pulled off my shoes and stockings, put them into my bundle, and raising my petticoats, I gained the opposite shore without difficulty. I then replaced my shoes and stockings, crossed the bosquet, and gained my uncle's house. My uncle was not at home, but I told my story and showed my bruises to Marie, who immediately put on her bonnet and went to my grandmother. That night I was again installed in my own little bedroom, and most gratefully did I pray before I went to sleep.

This time my grandmother took more decided steps. She went to the commandant of the town, taking me with her, pointing out the treatment which I had received, and claiming his protection; she stated that she had educated me and brought me up, and that she had a claim upon me. My mother's treatment of me was so notorious, that the commandant immediately decided that my grandmother had a right to detain me; and when my father came a day or two after to take me back, he was ordered home by the commandant, with a severe rebuke, and the assurance that I should not return to a father who could permit such cruelty and injustice.

I was now once more happy; but as I remained in the house, my grandfather was continually vexing my

grandmother on my account; nevertheless, I remained there more than a year, during which I learnt a great deal, particularly lace-work and fine embroidery, at which I became very expert. But now there was another opposition raised, which was on the part of my uncle, who joined my grandfather in annoying the old lady. The fact was, that when I was not there, my grandmother was very kind and generous to my cousin Marie, who certainly deserved it; but now that I was again with her, all her presents and expenses were lavished upon me, and poor Marie was neglected.

My uncle was not pleased at this; he joined my grandfather, and they pointed out that I was now more than fifteen, and my mother dare not beat me, and as my father was continually writing for me to return, it was her duty not to oppose. Between the two, my poor grandmother was so annoyed and perplexed that she hardly knew what to do. They made her miserable, and at last they worried her into consenting that I should return to my family which had now removed to Colmar. I did not know this. It was my grandmother's birthday. I had worked for her a beautiful sachet in lace and embroidery, which, with a large bouquet, I brought to her as a present. The old lady folded me in her arms and burst into tears. She then told me that we must part, and that I must return to my father's. Had a dagger been thrust to my heart, I could not have received more anguish.

"Yes, dear Valerie," continued she, "you must leave me to-morrow; I can no longer prevent it. I have not the health and spirits that I had. I am growing old—very old."