

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer George
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke Bebel Proust
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Strachwitz Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Gibbon Tschchow
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke
Nestroy Marie de France
Nietzsche Nansen Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht
Marx Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz
von Ossietzky May vom Stein Lawrence Irving
Petalozzi Platon Pückler Michelangelo Knigge Kock Kafka
Sachs Poe Liebermann Kock Korolenko
de Sade Praetorius Mistral Zetkin



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Gerfaut –Volume 2

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Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: Charles de Bernard

Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)

ISBN: 978-3-8491-8651-7

www.tredition.com

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GERFAUT

By
CHARLES DE BERNARD

BOOK 2.

CHAPTER VI

GERFAUT'S STORY

While the two friends are devouring to the very last morsel the feast prepared for them by Madame Gobillot, it may not be out of place to explain in a few words the nature of the bonds that united these two men.

The Vicomte de Gerfaut was one of those talented beings who are the veritable champions of an age when the lightest pen weighs more in the social balance than our ancestors' heaviest sword. He was born in the south of France, of one of those old families whose fortune had diminished each generation, their name finally being almost all that they had left. After making many sacrifices to give their son an education worthy of his birth, his parents did not live to enjoy the fruits of their efforts, and Gerfaut became an orphan at the time when he had just finished his law studies. He then abandoned the career of which his father had dreamed for him, and the possibilities of a red gown bordered with ermine. A mobile and highly colored imagination, a passionate love for the arts, and, more than all, some intimacies contracted with men of letters, decided his vocation and launched him into literature.

The ardent young man, without a murmur or any misgivings, drank to the very dregs the cup poured out to neophytes in the harsh career of letters by editors, theatrical managers, and publishers. With some, this course ends in suicide, but it only cost Gerfaut a portion of his slender patrimony; he bore this loss like a man who feels that he is strong enough to repair it. When his plans were once made, he followed them up with indefatigable perseverance, and became a striking example of the irresistible power of intelligence united to will-power. Reputation, for him, lay in the unknown depths of an arid and rocky soil; he was obliged, in order to reach it, to dig a sort of artesian well. Gerfaut accepted this heroic labor; he

worked day and night for several years, his forehead, metaphorically, bathed in a painful perspiration alleviated only by hopes far away. At last the untiring worker's drill struck the underground spring over which so many noble ones breathlessly bend, although their thirst is never quenched. At this victorious stroke, glory burst forth, falling in luminous sparks, making this new name—his name—flash with a brilliancy too dearly paid for not to be lasting.

At the time of which we speak, Octave had conquered every obstacle in the literary field. With a versatility of talent which sometimes recalled Voltaire's "proteanism," he attacked in succession the most difficult styles. Besides their poetic value, his dramas had this positive merit, the highest in the theatre world they were money-makers; so the managers greeted him with due respect, while collaborators swarmed about him. The journals paid for his articles in their weight in gold; reviews snatched every line of his yet unfinished novels; his works were illustrated by Porret and Tony Jannot—the masters of the day— and shone resplendent behind the glass cases in the Orleans gallery. Gerfaut had at last made a place for himself among that baker's dozen of writers who call themselves, and justly, too, the field-m Marshals of French literature, of which Chateaubriand was then commander-in-chief.

What was it that had brought such a person a hundred leagues from the opera balcony, to put on a pretty woman's slipper? Was the fair lady one of those caprices, so frequent and fleeting in an artist's thoughts, or had she given birth to one of those sentiments that end by absorbing the rest of one's life?

The young man seated opposite Gerfaut was, physically and morally, as complete a contrast to him as one could possibly imagine. He was one of the kind very much in request in fashionable society. There is not a person who has not met one of these worthy fellows, destined to make good officers, perfect merchants, and very satisfactory lawyers, but who, unfortunately, have been seized with a mania for notoriety. Ordinarily they think of it on account of somebody else's talent. This one is brother to a poet, another son-in-law to a historian; they conclude that they also have a right to be poet and historian in their turn. Thomas Corneille is their model;

but we must admit that very few of our writers reach the rank attained by Corneille the younger.

Marillac was train-bearer to Gerfaut, and was rewarded for this bondage by a few bribes of collaboration, crumbs that fall from the rich man's table. They had been close friends since they both entered the law school, where they were companions in folly rather than in study. Marillac also had thrown himself into the arena of literature; then, different fortunes having greeted the two friends' efforts, he had descended little by little from the role of a rival to that of an inferior. Marillac was an artist, talent accepted, from the tip of his toes to the sole of his boots, which he wished to lengthen by pointed toes out of respect for the Middle Ages; for he excelled above all things in his manner of dressing, and possessed, among other intellectual merits, the longest moustache in literature.

If he had not art in his brain, to make up for it he always had its name at his tongue's end. Vaudeville writing or painting, poetry or music, he dabbled in all these, like those horses sold as good for both riding and driving, which are as bad in the saddle as in front of a tilbury. He signed himself "Marillac, man of letters"; meanwhile, aside from his profound disdain for the bourgeois, whom he called vulgar, and for the French Academy, to which he had sworn never to belong, one could reproach him with nothing. His penchant for the picturesque in expression was not always, it is true, in the most excellent taste, but, in spite of these little oddities, his unfortunate passion for art, and his affection for the Middle Ages, he was a brave, worthy, and happy fellow, full of good qualities, very much devoted to his friends, above all to Gerfaut. One could, therefore, pardon him for being a pseudo-artist.

"Will your story be a long one?" said he to the playwright, when Catherine had conducted them after supper to the double-bedded room, where they were to pass the night.

"Long or short, what does it matter, since you must listen to it?"

"Because, first, I would make some grog and fill my pipe; otherwise, I would content myself with a cigar."

"Take your pipe and make your grog."

"Here!" said the artist, running after Catherine, "don't rush downstairs so. You are wanted. Fear nothing, interesting maid; you are safe with us; but bring us a couple of glasses, brandy, sugar, a bowl, and some hot water."

"They want some hot water," cried the servant, rushing into the kitchen with a frightened look; "can they be ill at this hour?"

"Give the gentlemen what they want, you little simpleton!" replied Mademoiselle Reine; "they probably want to concoct some of their Paris drinks."

When all the articles necessary for the grog were on the table, Marillac drew up an old armchair, took another chair to stretch his legs upon, replaced his cap with a handkerchief artistically knotted about his head, his boots with a pair of slippers, and, finally, lighted his pipe.

"Now," said he, as he seated himself, "I will listen without moving an eyelid should your story last, like the creation, six days and nights."

Gerfaut took two or three turns about the room with the air of an orator who is seeking for a beginning to a speech.

"You know," said he, "that Fate has more or less influence over our lives, according to the condition of mind in which we happen to be. In order that you may understand the importance of the adventure I am about relating to you, it will be necessary for me to picture the state of mind which I was in at the time it happened; this will be a sort of philosophical and psychological preamble."

"Thunder!" interrupted Marillac, "if I had known that, I would have ordered a second bowl."

"You will remember," continued Gerfaut, paying no attention to this pleasantry, "the rather bad attack of spleen which I had a little over a year ago?"

"Before your trip to Switzerland?"

"Exactly."

"If I remember right," said the artist, "you were strangely cross and whimsical at the time. Was it not just after the failure of our drama at the Porte Saint-Martin?"

"You might also add of our play at the Gymnase."

"I wash my hands of that. You know very well that it only went as far as the second act, and I did not write one word in the first."

"And hardly one in the second. However, I take the catastrophe upon my shoulders; that made two perfect failures in that d--d month of August."

"Two failures that were hard to swallow," replied Marillac, "We can say, for our consolation, that there never were more infamous conspiracies against us, above all, than at the Gymnase. My ears ring with the hisses yet! I could see, from our box, a little villain in a dress coat, in one corner of the pit, who gave the signal with a whistle as large as a horse-pistol. How I would have liked to cram it down his throat!" As he said these words, he brought his fist down upon the table, and made the glasses and candles dance 'upon it.

"Conspiracy or not, this time they judged the play aright. I believe it would be impossible to imagine two worse plays; but, as Brid Oison says, 'These are things that one admits only to himself'; it is always disagreeable to be informed of one's stupidity by an ignorant audience that shouts after you like a pack of hounds after a hare. In spite of my pretension of being the least susceptible regarding an author's vanity of all the writers in Paris, it is perfectly impossible to be indifferent to such a thing—a hiss is a hiss. However, vanity aside, there was a question of money which, as I have a bad habit of spending regularly my capital as well as my income, was not without its importance. It meant, according to my calculation, some sixty thousand francs cut off from my resources, and my trip to the East was indefinitely postponed.

"They say, with truth, that misfortunes never come singly. You know Melanie, whom I prevented from making her debut at the Vaudeville? By taking her away from all society, lodging her in a comfortable manner and obliging her to work, I rendered her a valuable service. She was a good girl, and, aside from her love for the theatre and a certain indolence that was not without charm, I

did not find any fault in her and grew more attached to her every day. Sometimes after spending long hours with her, a fancy for a retired life and domestic happiness would seize me. Gentlemen with brains are privileged to commit foolish acts at times, and I really do not know what I might have ended in doing, had I not been preserved from the danger in an unexpected manner.

"One evening, when I arrived at Melanie's, I found the bird had flown. That great ninny of a Ferussac, whom I never had suspected, and had introduced to her myself, had turned her head by making capital out of her love for the stage. As he was about to leave for Belgium, he persuaded her to go there and dethrone Mademoiselle Prevost. I have since learned that a Brussels banker revenged me by taking this Helene of the stage away from Ferussac. Now she is launched and can fly with her own wings upon the great highway of bravos, flowers, guineas — "

"And wreck and ruin," added Marillac. "Here's to her health!"

"This triple disappointment of pride, money, and heart did not cause, I hope you will believe me, the deep state of melancholy into which I soon fell; but the malady manifested itself upon this occasion, for it had been lurking about me for a long time, as the dormant pain of a wound is aroused if one pours a caustic upon its surface.

"There is some dominant power in each individual which is developed at the expense of the other faculties, above all when the profession one chooses suits his nature. The vital powers thus condensed manifest themselves externally, and gush out with an abundance which would become impossible if all the faculties were used alike, and if life filtered away, so to speak. To avoid such destruction, and concentrate life upon one point, in order to increase the action, is the price of talent and individuality. Among athletes, the forehead contracts according as the chest enlarges; with men of thought, it is the brain which causes the other organs to suffer, insatiable vampire, exhausting at times the last drop of blood in the body which serves as its victim. This vampire was my torturer.

"For ten years I had crowded romance upon poetry, vaudeville upon drama, literary criticism upon leader; I proved, through my own self, in a physical way, the phenomena of the absorption of the

senses by intelligence. Many times, after several nights of hard work, the chords of my mind being too violently stretched, they relaxed and gave only indistinct harmony. Then, if I happened to resist this lassitude of nature demanding repose, I felt the pressure of my will exhausting the sources at the very depths of my being. It seemed to me that I dug out my ideas from the bottom of a mine, instead of gathering them upon the surface of the brain. The more material organs came to the rescue of their failing chief. The blood from my heart rushed to my head to revive it; the muscles of my limbs communicated to the fibres of the brain their galvanic tension. Nerves turned into imagination, flesh into life. Nothing has developed my materialistic beliefs like this decarnation of which I had such a sensible, or rather visible perception.

"I destroyed my health with these psychological experiments, and the abuse of work perhaps shortened my life. When I was thirty years old my face was wrinkled, my cheeks were pallid, and my heart blighted and empty. For what result, grand Dieu! For a fleeting and fruitless renown!

"The failure of my two plays warned me that others judged me as I judged myself. I recalled to mind the Archbishop of Granada, and I thought I could hear Gil Blas predicting the failure of my works. We can not dismiss the public as we can our secretary; meanwhile, I surrendered to a too severe justice in order to decline others' opinions. A horrible thought suddenly came into my mind; my artistic life was ended, I was a worn-out man; in one word, to picture my situation in a trivial but correct manner, I had reached the end of my rope.

"I could not express to you the discouragement that I felt at this conviction. Melanie's infidelity was the crowning touch. It was not my heart, but my vanity which had been rendered more irritable by recent disappointments. This, then, was the end of all my ambitious dreams! I had not enough mind left, at thirty years of age, to write a vaudeville or to be loved by a grisette!

"One day Doctor Labanchie came to see me.

"'What are you doing there' said he, as he saw me seated at my desk.

"'Doctor,' said I, reaching out my hand to him, 'I believe that I am a little feverish.'

"'Your pulse is a little rapid,' said he, after making careful examination, 'but your fever is more of imagination than of blood.'

"I explained to him my condition, which was now becoming almost unendurable. Without believing in medicine very much, I had confidence in him and knew him to be a man who would give good advice.

"'You work too much,' said he, shaking his head. 'Your brain is put to too strong a tension. This is a warning nature gives you, and you will make a mistake if you do not follow it. When you are sleepy, go to bed; when you are tired, you must have rest. It is rest for your brain that you now need. Go into the country, confine yourself to a regular and healthy diet: vegetables, white meat, milk in the morning, a very little wine, but, above all things, no coffee. Take moderate exercise, hunt— and avoid all irritating thoughts; read the 'Musee des familles' or the 'Magasin Pittoresque'. This regime will have the effect of a soothing poultice upon your brain, and before the end of six months you will be in your normal condition again.'

"'Six months!' I exclaimed. 'You wretch of a doctor, tell me, then, to let my beard and nails grow like Nebuchadnezzar. Six months! You do not know how I detest the country, partridges, rabbits and all. For heaven's sake, find some other remedy for me.'

"'There is homoeopathy,' said he, smiling. 'Hahnemann is quite the fashion now.'

"'Let us have homoeopathy!'

"'You know the principles of the system: 'Similia similibus!' If you have fever, redouble it; if you have smallpox, be inoculated with a triple dose. So far as you are concerned, you are a little used up and 'blase', as we all are in this Babylon of ours; have recourse, then, as a remedy, to the very excesses which have brought you into this state. Homoeopathize yourself morally. It may cure you, it may kill you; I wash my hands of it.'

"The doctor was joking, I said to myself after he had left. Does he think that passions are like the Wandering Jew's five sous, that there is nothing to do but to put your hand in your pocket and take them out at your convenience when necessary. However, this idea, strange as it seemed, struck me forcibly. I decided to try it.

"The next day at seven o'clock in the evening, I was rolling along the road to Lyons. Eight days later, I was rowing in a boat on Lake Geneva. For a long time I had wanted to go to Switzerland, and it seemed as if I could not have chosen a better time. I hoped that the fresh mountain air and the soft pure breezes from the lakes would communicate some of their calm serenity to my heart and brain.

"There is something in Parisian life, I do not know what, so exclusive and hardening, that it ends by making one irresponsive to sensations of a more simple order.

"My kingdom for the gutter in the Rue du Bac!" I exclaimed with Madame de Stael from the height of the Coppet terrace. The spectacle of nature interests only contemplative and religious minds powerfully. Mine was neither the one nor the other. My habits of analysis and observation make me find more attraction in a characteristic face than in a magnificent landscape; I prefer the exercising of thought to the careless gratification of ecstasy, the study of flesh and soul to earthly horizons, of human passions to a perfectly pure atmosphere.

"I met at Geneva an Englishman, who was as morose as myself. We vented our spleen in common and were both bored together. We travelled thus through the Oberland and the best part of Valais; we were often rolled up in our travelling robes in the depths of the carriage, and fast asleep when the most beautiful points of interest were in sight.

"From Valais we went to Mont-Blanc, and one night we arrived at Chamounix —"

"Did you see any idiots in Valais?" suddenly interrupted Marillac, as he filled his pipe the second time.

"Several, and they were all horrible."

"Do you not think we might compose something with an idiot in it? It might be rather taking."

"It would not equal Caliban or Quasimodo; will you be so kind as to spare me just now these efforts of imagination, and listen to me, for I am reaching the interesting part of my story?"

"God be praised!" said the artist, as he puffed out an enormous cloud of smoke.

"The next day the Englishman was served with tea in his bedroom, and when I asked him to go to the 'Mer de Glace' he turned his head toward the wall; so, leaving my phlegmatic companion enveloped in bedclothes up to his ears, I started alone for the Montanvert.

"It was a magnificent morning, and small parties of travellers, some on foot, others mounted, skirted the banks of the Arve or climbed the sides of the mountain. They looked like groups of mice in the distance, and this extreme lessening in size made one comprehend, better than anything else, the immense proportions of the landscape. As for myself, I was alone: I had not even taken a guide, this was too favorite a resort for tourists, for the precaution to be necessary. For a wonder, I felt rather gay, with an elasticity of body and mind which I had not felt in some time.

I courageously began climbing the rough pathway which led to the Mer de Glace, aiding myself with a long staff, which I had procured at the inn.

"At every step I breathed with renewed pleasure the fresh, pure, morning air; I gazed vaguely at the different effects of the sun or mist, at the undulations of the road, which sometimes rose almost straight up in the air, sometimes followed a horizontal line, while skirting the open abyss at the right. The Arve, wending its course like a silvery ribbon, seemed at times to recede, while the ridges of the perpendicular rocks stood out more plainly. At times, the noise of a falling avalanche was repeated, echo after echo. A troupe of German students below me were responding to the voice of the glaciers by a chorus from Oberon. Following the turns in the road, I

could see through the fir-trees, or, rather, at my feet, their long Teutonic frock-coats, their blond beards, and caps about the size of one's fist. As I walked along, when the path was not too steep, I amused myself by throwing my stick against the trunks of the trees which bordered the roadside; I remember how pleased I was when I succeeded in hitting them, which I admit was not very often.

"In the midst of this innocent amusement, I reached the spot where the reign of the Alpine plants begins. All at once I saw, above me, a rock decked with rhododendrons; these flowers looked like tufts of oleanders through the dark foliage of the fir-trees, and produced a charming effect. I left the path in order to reach them sooner, and when I had gathered a bouquet, I threw my staff and at the same time uttered a joyous cry, in imitation of the students, my companions on this trip.

"A frightened scream responded to mine. My staff in its flight had crossed the path and darted into an angle in the road. At that same moment, I saw a mule's head appear with ears thrown back in terror, then the rest of its body, and upon its back a lady ready to fall into the abyss. Fright paralyzed me. All aid was impossible on account of the narrowness of the road, and this stranger's life depended upon her coolness and the intelligence of her beast. Finally the animal seemed to regain its courage and began to walk away, lowering its head as if it could still hear the terrible whistle of the javelin in his ears. I slipped from the rock upon which I stood and seized the mule by the bridle, and succeeded in getting them out of a bad position. I led the animal in this way for some distance, until I reached a place where the path was broader, and danger was over.

"I then offered my apologies to the person whose life I had just compromised by my imprudence, and for the first time took a good look at her. She was young and well dressed; a black silk gown fitted her slender form to perfection; her straw hat was fastened to the saddle, and her long chestnut hair floated in disorder over her pale cheeks. As she heard my voice, she opened her eyes, which in her fright she had instinctively closed; they seemed to me the most beautiful I had ever seen in my life.

"She looked at the precipice and turned away with a shudder. Her glance rested upon me, and then upon the rhododendrons which I held in my hand.

"The frightened expression on her face was replaced immediately by one of childish curiosity.

"'What pretty flowers!' she exclaimed, in a fresh, young voice. 'Are those rhododendrons, Monsieur?'

"I presented her my bouquet without replying; as she hesitated about taking it, I said:

"'If you refuse these flowers, Madame, I shall not believe that you have pardoned me.'

"By this time, the persons who were with her had joined us. There were two other ladies, three or four men mounted upon mules, and several guides. At the word rhododendron, a rather large, handsome fellow, dressed in a pretentious style, slipped from his mule and climbed the somewhat steep precipice in quest of the flowers which seemed to be so much in favor. When he returned, panting for breath, with an enormous bunch of them in his hand, the lady had already accepted mine.

"'Thank you, Monsieur de Mauleon,' said she, with a rather scornful air; 'offer your flowers to these ladies.' Then, with a slight inclination of the head to me, she struck her mule with her whip, and they rode away.

"The rest of the company followed her, gazing at me as they passed, the big, fashionable fellow especially giving me a rather impertinent glance. I did not try to pick a quarrel with him on account of this discourteous manifestation. When the cavalcade was at some distance, I went in search of my stick, which I found under a tree on the edge of the precipice; then I continued climbing the steep path, with my eyes fastened upon the rider in the black silk gown, her hair flying in the wind and my bouquet in her hand.

"A few moments later, I reached the pavilion at the Montanvert, where I found a gay company gathered together, made up principally of English people. As for myself, I must admit the frivolous, or, rather mundane, bent of my tastes; the truly admirable spectacle

presented to my eyes interested me much less than the young stranger, who at this moment was descending with the lightness of a sylph the little road which led to the Mer de Glace.

"I do not know what mysterious link bound me to this woman. I had met many much more beautiful, but the sight of them had left me perfectly indifferent. This one attracted me from the first. The singular circumstances of this first interview, doubtless, had something to do with the impression. I felt glad to see that she had kept my bouquet; she held it in one hand, while she leaned with the other upon a staff somewhat like my own. The two other ladies, and even the men had stopped on the edge of the ice.

Monsieur de Mauleon wished to fulfil his duties as escort, but at the first crevasse he had also halted without manifesting the slightest desire to imitate the chamois. The young woman seemed to take a malicious pleasure in contemplating her admirer's prudent attitude, and, far from listening to the advice he gave her, she began to run upon the ice, bounding over the crevasses with the aid of her stick. I was admiring her lightness and thoughtlessness, but with an uneasy feeling, when I saw her suddenly stop. I instinctively ran toward her. An enormous crevasse of great depth lay at her feet, blue at its edges and dark in its depths. She stood motionless before this frightful gulf with hands thrown out before her in horror, but charmed like a bird about to be swallowed by a serpent. I knew the irresistible effect upon nervous temperaments of this magnetic attraction toward an abyss. I seized her by the arm, the suddenness of the movement made her drop her staff and flowers, which fell into the depths of the chasm.

"I tried to lead her away, but after she had taken a few steps, I felt her totter; she had grown pale; her eyes were closed. I threw my arm about her, in order to support her and turned her face toward the north; the cold air striking her revived her, and she soon opened her beautiful brown eyes. I do not know what sudden tenderness seized me then, but I pressed this lovely creature within my grasp, and she remained in my arms unresistingly. I felt that I loved her already.

"She remained for a moment with her languishing eyes fixed on mine, making no response, perhaps not even having heard me. The

shouts of her party, some of whom were coming toward her, broke the charm. With a rapid movement, she withdrew from my embrace, and I offered her my arm, just as if we were in a drawing-room and I was about to lead her out for a dance; she took it, but I did not feel elated at this, for I could feel her knees waver at every step. The smallest crevasse, which she had crossed before with such agility, now inspired her with a horror which I could divine by the trembling of her arm within mine. I was obliged to make numerous detours in order to avoid them, and thus prolonged the distance, for which I was not sorry. Did I not know that when we reached our destination, the world, that other sea of ice, was going to take her away from me, perhaps forever? We walked silently, occasionally making a few trivial remarks, both deeply embarrassed. When we reached the persons who awaited her, I said, as she disengaged my arm:

"You dropped my flowers, Madame; will it be the same with your memory of me?"

"She looked at me, but made no reply. I loved this silence. I bowed politely to her and returned to the pavilion, while she related her adventure to her friends; but I am quite sure she did not tell all the details.

"The register for travellers who visit the Montan-Vert is a mixture of all nationalities, and no tourist refuses his tribute; modest ones write down their names only. I hoped in this way to learn the name of the young traveller, and I was not disappointed. I soon saw the corpulent Monsieur de Mauleon busily writing his name upon the register in characters worthy of Monsieur Prudhomme; the other members of the little party followed his example. The young woman was the last to write down her name. I took the book in my turn, after she had left, and with apparent composure I read upon the last line these words, written in a slender handwriting:

"Baroness Clemence de Bergenheim."