

PUNISHED ENOUGH.

ADAPTED FROM AN OLD FRENCH FEUILLETON.

ONE night in September, 1789, near a little village on the outskirts of the forest of Fontainebleau—at the commencement of that Revolution in which “human nature threw off all formulas and came out *human*”—a brave, old, rough, retired, and, we must add, half-drunken soldier reeled home from a debauch, in which he and others like him had been denouncing royalty, aristocracy, priestcraft, and matrimony.

Upon the slab of stone which formed the front step to his cottage door he stumbled over an abandoned child. For a moment he believed himself asleep; then he took up the infant and laid it on one side, while he sought some trace of whence it came. But he found nothing. The desertion had been complete. The baby was wrapped in flannel, but that flannel was fine. This was the only indication of the station in life to which its mother belonged.

The great surprise of the event made Grégoire sober; and he sat down to consult his various impulses as to what he should do with the child. His meditations resulted in his resolving to keep the boy, whom he caused to be baptized Grégoire Valvins, these being respectively his own name and the name of the nearest village.

Till the boy was a year old the elder Gregory went every day to see him at the house of the woman to whom he was committed for maternal care; when he was weaned, he took him home with him.

The Revolution went on. The old soldier enlisted in one of those regiments which served under Dumouriez. His front teeth were knocked out in his first battle, and as he had a good knowledge of music (having, indeed, at one time in his life been a subordinate singer at the opera), he was made drum-major. The little boy became the *fil du régiment*. He wore a little uniform and beat a little drum. He even attracted the notice of Napoleon, when the fine regiment to which he was attached marched down to re-enforce the glorious Army of Italy, after the battle of Arcola.

The drum-major might have risen, being a cool, brave man, who, in spite of his propensity to drink, attracted the notice and good-will of his superiors; but when any offer of promotion was made him, he always begged that all consideration for his own services might be transferred to the benefit of his little Valvins. Thus it happened that he got the boy into the military school at St. Cyr, which he quitted in 1809 with a second lieutenant's commission.

At nineteen Valvins was a reserved, calm, self-contained, ambitious man; brilliantly brave, of course, as every soldier will be when he has nothing but his life to lose,

and nobody in all the world to grieve if he were gone. He had never in his life had any thing to do with women. No mother had given him his first lessons in affection; no sisters, cousins, or female friends had taught him the most graceful and most needful of all lessons—consideration and respect for women. Grégoire, his father (a *sans culotte* under his gold knots, fringes, and embroideries), had his own ideas upon this subject. Some early passage in his life had given him a deep grudge against those he called *grandes dames*, and he labored diligently to inspire the boy with a like feeling. To this end, he always insisted that the mother who abandoned him had been a great lady. Many a time he made young Valvins swear he would revenge him (if ever the opportunity occurred) by the humiliation of some noble lady. It did not seem as if the young military student or sub-lieutenant in a regiment actively employed in an enemy's country was likely to have much chance of meeting high-born ladies; but it so happened that during his first year of active service he was stationed in a town on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, in which was a convent wherein three or four young French girls, daughters of noble *émigrés*, were receiving their education.

One or two of the young officers of the regiment managed to open a clandestine correspondence with these school-girls. They held some stolen interviews by night, though with the garden wall between them. Valvins remembered his promise to his adoptive father, and contrived to join them. The young girl he appropriated was named Léonie. She was not giddy like the rest, but had a fund of undeveloped tender feeling. She was the daughter of a noble of distinguished name, and equally distinguished hostility to the “usurper.” He had no idea of submitting himself to any tyrant *parvenu*, of humiliating himself by appearing at a make-believe sham court, among blacksmiths, horse-boys, cow-boys, and the rest, who bore sham titles to disguise plebeian names, and were called the Marshals of the Empire.

The other young French officers on various pretexts soon retired from the field, but Valvins pushed his suit with Léonie. She was a pretty girl, with promise of great beauty when time should have developed her (for she was not sixteen); but Valvins was perfectly indifferent to her charms, although he set himself to persuade her to elope with him. His wooing was conducted with little that would have made it acceptable to one who knew the world, for, as we said, he had no sentiment, no tenderness, and no respect for women. The strongest argument he used was that he had her in his power. He alarmed her with fierce prayers that were more like threats than