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“You will understand with what joy,” continued Duguesclin, innocent or careless of the sinister thoughts which occupied his companion, “I received and answered this unmistakable token of friendship. That day no further opportunity of intercourse occurred, but I narrowly watched him on the morrow, and saw that he was dragging his feet in an irregular way. Ha! thought I, a drag for long, an ordinary pace for short. I imitated him eagerly, giving the Morse letter A. His alert mind grasped instantly my meaning; he altered his code (which had been of a different order) and replied with a Morse B on my own system. I answered C; he returned D. From that moment we could talk fluently and freely as if we were on the terrace of the Café de la Paix in our beloved Paris. However, conversation in such circumstances is a lengthy affair. During the whole march to our work he only managed to say, ‘Escape soon—please God.’ Before his crime he had been an atheist. I was indeed glad to find that punishment had brought repentance.”

Bevan himself was relieved. He had carefully refrained from admitting the existence of a French Freemason; that one should have repented filled him with a sense of almost personal triumph. He began to like Duguesclin, and to believe in him. His wrong had been hideous; if his vengeance seemed excessive and even indiscriminate, was not he a Frenchman? Frenchmen do these things! And after all Frenchmen were men. Bevan felt a great glow of benevolence; he remembered that he was not only a man, but a Christian. He determined to set the stranger at his ease.

“Your story interests me intensely,” said he. “I sympathise deeply with you in your wrongs and in your sufferings. I am heartily thankful that you have escaped, and I beg you to proceed with the narration of your adventures.”

Duguesclin needed no such encouragement. His attitude, from that of the listless weariness with which he had descended from the train, had become animated, sparkling, fiery; he was carried away by the excitement of his passionate memories.

“On the second day Dodu was able to explain his mind. ‘If we escape, it must be by stratagem,’ he signalled. It