

neighbors do not talk loudly when they gossip together, and the cattle lie down in the fields long before noon. Everything has the air of repose; contentment seems to brood everywhere.

Very well. But suppose you were compelled to remain in St. Valerien, and partake of its peace and contentment from year's end to year's end? A few weeks in the summer, when the children are picking wild raspberries in the fields near by, and singing their songs, — that is not much. But a whole lifetime! Well, yes, that is another matter. Look at Monsieur Phaneuf. Seventy-seven years here at St. Valerien, and every hour of them spent within sight of the shining church steeple. You think he is contented? Well, then, keep away from him, if you do not want to hear your funeral preached. Look at Madame Delima Benoit. Born here at St. Valerien; married three husbands here, and buried two. You think she ought to be happy and contented? Well, then, don't pass her doors without putting your fingers in your ears. You see Aimé Joutras, the tall shoemaker; Aimé, but yes, it is a friendly name. You see him there on the corner — tap, tap, tap,