

A Stylistic Analysis of 'Two Friends' Short Story by Guy de Maupassant In terms of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar

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Abstract

In this study, a stylistic analysis is conducted to 'Two Friends' short story by Guy de Maupassant in terms of M. A. K. Halliday's systemic functional grammar theory. Halliday believes that grammar is functional because it is designed to account for how the language is used. He assumed that there are two very general purposes underlying all uses of language; to understand the environment (ideational) and to act on the others in it (interpersonal). Combined with these purposes, Halliday added a third component (textual), which is relevant to the other two.

This stylistic analysis is conducted on three main levels; grammatical, phonological and lexical. At the end, one may have a clear picture of the literary work and it would be an objective way through which we can have a new interpretation of the short story.

Key words: Stylistics, Systemic Functional Grammar, Guy de Maupassant, Two Friends.

1. Introduction:

A stylistic analysis studies a literary text from three main levels; the phonological level, the grammatical level and the lexical level. The combination of these three levels would lead to an ostensible interpretation for the literary text in an objective way.



The benefit of such a study is that it does not rely on subjective factors to interpret literary texts. Sometimes, such an analysis may come identical or equivalent to the literary criticism works done earlier to the same text. However, in many cases the stylistic analysis gives totally different interpretation than that provided by literary criticism.

The problem tackled in this study is that a new interpretation of Maupassant's (Two Friends) short story can be attained by applying Halliday's systemic functional grammar model in the analysis of this literary work.

The study aims at analyzing the text of the short story from a functional perspective in order to reach an accurate and authentic interpretation of the whole literary work.

It is hypothesized here that the mental processes are mostly used in the short story and the content words are mostly used as lexical items in the text. The study also hypothesizes that the sounds related to tranquility and peace of mind are mostly used on the phonological level. These hypotheses might be approved or refuted at the end of the study.

The significance of this study lies in offering another way to interpret literary texts rather than literary criticism. This sort of interpretation is considered more reliable and objective as it relies on certain criteria and strategies, contrary to literary criticism which might be considered mostly subjective. Both linguistic theories and literary criticism may lead to similar interpretations in one way or another and in many occasions the interpretations provided by the linguistic models are different from those established by literary criticism. At the end, we would have a new interpretation of the literary text provided an added value.

Guy de Maupassant (1850 – 1893) is the greatest French short story writer. Maupassant's literary works are thoroughly realistic. His characters dwell a world of material desire in which greed, ambition and lust are the driving forces. The tragic power of the majority of his stories derives from the fact that Maupassant manifests his characters as victims of ironic necessity, smashed by a fate that they have dared to challenge yet struggling against it hopelessly.





"Two Friends" is a short story published in 1882. The story is set in Paris during the Franco-Prussian War, when the city lay under siege. The short story examines French bravery, discusses the nature and justification of war in the form of a conversation between the two protagonists.

2. Literature Review

Style is a variety of language. Charles Bally emphasized the role of expressiveness in language and the function of language in interaction. There are three key aspects of stylistics; the use of linguistic tools to approach literary texts, the discussion of texts according to objective criteria rather than subjective and impressionistic values and the emphasis on the aesthetic properties of language. Stylistics is a way of explaining how "meaning" in a text is created through a writer's linguistic choices (McRae & Clark, 2005: 328-329).

Stylisticians have become more interested in the systematic ways of using language to create texts, and to link choices in texts to social and cultural context (Thornborrow & Wareing, 1998: 4-5). This means that stylisticians have taken greater account of the relationship between the text and the context in which it is produced, and to consider the text as a part of discourse. Thus, stylistics has shifted away from the Saussurian structuralism which saw the text as monologic, stable, and self-referential, toward a more Bakhtinian notion of dialogism and the realization that artistic form and meaning emerge from the exchange of ideas between people (Carter & McCarthy, 1994: 10).

Leech and Short (1981), though giving much emphasis to the concept of style as choice, would virtually consider any linguistic study of literature as stylistics. Leech affirms that "we cannot understand the nature of language without studying both domains [grammar and pragmatics] and the interaction between them" (Leech, 1983: 4).

Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar Theory

Functional grammar construes the clauses and phrases as organic configuration of functions. Furthermore, it interprets all these linguistic units. Halliday proposed three broad meta-functions; ideational, interpersonal and textual. The ideational is about the natural world in its broadest sense including our own



consciousness and is concerned with clauses as representations (Sepbrina, 2019: 9)

Six types of process were identified by Halliday. However, the divisions between these processes will always be more provisional than absolute. (Simpson, 2004:22-26)

1. *Material processes*: processes of *doing*. Associated with material processes are two inherent participant roles which are the *Actor*, an obligatory role in the process, and a *Goal*, a role which may or may not be involved in the process. Example: I kicked the ball. (I) Actor, (kicked) Process and (the ball) Goal.

2. *Mental processes*: Essentially processes of *sensing*. Unlike material processes which have their origin in the physical world, mental processes inhabit and reflect the world of consciousness, and include verbs such as thinking or wondering, reaction as in 'liking' or 'hating' and perception as in 'seeing' or 'hearing'. The two participant roles associated with mental processes are the *Sensor* (the conscious being doing the sensing) and the *Phenomenon* (the entity which is sensed, felt, thought or seen). Example: Mary understood the story. (Mary) Sensor, (understood) Process and (the story) Phenomenon.

3. *Behavioural processes* embody physiological actions like 'breathe' or 'cough', 'stare', 'dream' or 'worry'. Example: She frowned at the mess. (She) Behavior, (frowned) Process and (at the mess) Circumstances.

4. *Verbalisation processes*: processes of 'saying' and the participant roles associated with verbalisation are the *Sayer* (the producer of the speech), the *Receiver* (the entity to which the speech is addressed) and the *Verbiage* (that which gets said). Thus: Mary claimed that the story had been changed. (Mary) Sayer, (claimed) Process and (that the story had been changed) Verbiage.

5. *Relational processes*: processes of 'being' in the specific sense of establishing relationships between two entities. There are two main types of relational process. First, an *intensive* relational process posits a relationship of equivalence,

an 'x is y' connection, between two entities, as in: 'Joyce is the best'. Second, A possessive relational process plots an 'x has y' type of connection between two entities, as in 'Peter has a piano'.

6. *Circumstantial* relational processes are where the circumstantial element becomes upgraded, as it were, so that it fulfills the role of a full participant in the process. The relationship engendered is a broad 'x is at/is in/is on/is with/ y' configuration, realized in constructions like 'The forces of darkness are against you' *attributive* and *identifying* relational processes.

The transitivity model has proved an important methodological tool in stylistics and in more general investigations of text.

3. The practical Side of the study

3.1 The phonological level

Musicality in the story can be achieved by means of phonetic effects of some phonemes. Also sound associations are evoked due to alliteration, consonance and assonance.

Alliteration: using words that have the same sound at the beginning.

Consonance: A stylistic literary device – repetition of identical or similar consonants in words whose vowel sounds are different.

Assonance: Repetition of vowel sounds to create internal rhyme within phrases or sentences .The vowel Diphthong sound such as /eI/ , /aI/ and /əU/ are repeated many times in different places within words such as (floated , thrown , gave , replied, etc.) .

Sound symbolism

The connection between phonetic features and linguistic items is non-arbitrary. Every phoneme has its suggestion and implications.

Mostly repeated phonemes



No	phoneme	Repetition	Percentage
1	/d/	102	43.96%
2	/t/	44	18.96%
3	/ŋ/	20	8.62%
4	/n/	15	6.46%
5	/k/	21	9.05%

6	/v/	10	4.31%
7	/m/	5	2.15%
8	/l/	6	2.58%
9	/ʃ/	2	0.86%
10	/z/	5	2.15%
11	/s/	2	0.86%
12	/i:/	18	13.95%
13	/æ/	22	17.05%
14	/ɔ/	19	14.72%
15	/ɜ:/	13	10.07%
16	/u:/	15	11.62%
17	/ə/	13	10.07%
18	/ʌ/	10	7.75%
19	/ɑ:/	6	4.65%
20	/p/	13	10.07%
Total consonants			232
			100%





Total vowels 100%	129
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Consonant sounds:

De Maupasant in this story used 232 consonants which represent 100% of the whole sounds used in the story.

/d/ sound is the most repeated consonant in this story. It was repeated 102 times in the story in the end of the words such as (Agreed, Said, entered, etc.). It is a voiced plosive consonant denotes power.

/t/ sound was repeated 44 times in the end of the words such as (get, meet, let, etc.) .It is a voiceless plosive consonant. It denotes power on beings a plosive.

/ŋ/ sound was repeated 20 times in the end of the words such as (walking, coming, having, etc.). It is a voiced Nasal consonant repetition gives hint for the close and of breathing on both protagonists will die and sank.

/n/ sound was repeated 15 times in the end of some words like (seen, gain, ran, etc.). It is a voiced nasal consonant denoting close ending of breath and referring to death.

/k/ sound was repeated 21 times in the story in the end of some words such as (make, broke, took, etc.). It is a voiceless velar consonant. So, the flow of air is blocked between the tongue and the velum and this is a hint for the siege imposed on the city.

/v/ sound was repeated 10 times in the end of some words like (have, gave, etc.). It is a voiced labiodental fricative; impeding the flow of air somewhere in the vocal apparatus to produce a friction sound and this denotes constrictions of life.

/m/ sound was repeated 5 times in the beginning of some words like (made, meet, murmured, etc.). This is a voiced nasal consonant.

Vowel sounds:

De Maupasant in this story used 129 vowel sounds. Hereunder are some:

Y



/æ/ sound was used 22 times and it is the most repeated phoneme in the story. It is a front low vowel and described as lax.

/ə/ sound was used 19 times. It is a mid-vowel halfway between close and open and central halfway between front and back; generally described as lax as it is not articulated with much energy as many weak syllables contain this vowel. It refers to the feebleness of the two friends.

/ʌ/ sound was used 10 times and it is a mid-vowel too and does not require much energy to be articulated.

3.2 The grammatical level

Going through this short story, one would find 139 clauses. The latter are classified in the following table:

Clauses	Number	Percentage
Verbal process clauses	39	28.05%
<i>Relational process clauses</i>	35	25.17%
<i>Behavioural process clauses</i>	25	17.98%
<i>Mental process clauses</i>	24	17.26%
<i>Material process clauses</i>	11	7.91%
<i>Existential process clauses</i>	5	3.59%
Total	139	100%



One can see that **the verbal process clauses** are mostly used in this short story "two friends". Here we have 39 verbal process clauses out of 139 total clauses equivalent to 28.05% of the content of the whole short story. This would suggest that this literary work is all about deeds and relations; to be specific, 'Two friends' is a story dominated by verbal and relational clauses; which means that it is a call for debate instead of fight and a call for peace and good relations instead of war.

Now, let's take Halliday's systemic functional grammar as a model in the analysis of some of these clauses.

Morissot	Would occasionally	Remark to his neighbor
Sayer	Process	Circumstantial element

We	Were to meet	Any of them
Sayer	Process	Circumstantial element

The relational process clauses are used in this short story. Here we have 35 relational process clauses out of 139 total clauses equivalent to 25.17% of the content of the whole short story. This would suggest that this literary work is all about relations and mainly emotional. Let us see the following clauses:

They	are	worse	
Carrier		Attribute	Circumstantial element (-)

They	Seemed to be	Utter
Identified		Identifier

We	be	Able	
Carrier		Attribute	Circumstantial element (-)

The material action process clauses are 11; forming 7.91% of clause in the whole literary work. So, earlier we knew that it is all about relations and emotions that is why we have less material action process clauses.

Example:

They	made their way through	Deserted Colombes	
Actor	Process	Goal	

The mental process clauses are 24, which means that we have here a good mass of emotions and sensual activities. However, they are more than the material action process clauses which asserts that the relation is more emotional than materialistic. Example:

They	understood	each other	
Sensor	Process	Phenomenon	

Behavioural process clauses are 25 out of 139 total clauses equivalent to 17.98% in this short story. This indicates that these behavioural actions are taking place in this short story. Example:

They	ran	across this	
Behavior	Process	Circumstances	

Existential process clauses are 5 only. This indicates that life and death are not considered important or are ignored. Example:

They	Came out		
Existent entity	Process		

3.3 The lexical level

There are many lexical cohesion devices and usages that may suggest supporting ideas to the understanding we get after the phonological and grammatical analysis.

First, we need to classify the lexis used in Maupassant "Two Friend" short story into open class items and close class items.

Open class words				Close class words
Nouns	Verbs	Adverb	Adjective	pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, determiners
Paris X2	Besieged	quickly	One	In X34
Famine	Growing	occasionally	Two	The X164
Sparrow	Met	Now	Ten	On X12
Roofs	Get X2	Simultaneously	Even	They X23
Rats	Strolling		Humble	As X7
Sewers	Came		Sunny	By X14
People	Broke		calm	For X5
Morissotes	Been X3			His X24
Watch maker	Got			He X16
Profession	Walked			To X44
Boulevard	Arrived			With X27

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January	Fished			An X6
Morning X13	Fishing X3			Every X3
Hands X7	Spent			At X20
Stomach X2	did X3			This X46
Face X4	Speak			Up X5
Sunday X2	Chatted			Other X9
	Understood			But X48
	Caused			Each X3
	Float			Without X2
	Warmed			About X4
	Is X6			When X4
	Reply X2			My X3
	Sufficed			It X58
	Make X2			Which X9
	Understand			I X10
	Appreciate			These X3
	Brought			Them X14
	Turning			Whose X2
	Smile			What X3
	Say			From



	X2			X8
	Answer			Than X3
	Taking			Under
	Recogni zed			Such X2
	Shook X4			And X77
	Affected			We X11
	Think X3			Their X22
	Used			You X16
	Fish X2			If X4
	Asked			Where X2
	Entered X2			Why
	Resume d X3			Themselves X3
	Walk			Before X2
	Stopped X2			Of X58
	Like			A X61
	Panned			Any
	Comple ted			That X9
	Saying			Nothing X3
	Go X2			Us
	Know X4			Through X2
	Pass			Anything X3



	Trembled X2			No X3
	Trembling			Its X4
	Cried			Into X25
	Swayed			Or X2

3.4 Results and conclusions

The degree of optimism is more than pessimism. Lexis that indicate the optimistic atmosphere of the short story are much more than those that indicate the opposite. Also, despite the fact that there are many circumstances that may lead to pessimism, the close relationship of friendship between the two protagonists provides us with a charge of optimism.

There is always a hope that things will get better. And there will come a time where true friendship prevails and revives.

De Maupassant was successful in describing the atmosphere of war and took his audience into a sudden after a description of a calm and quiet place and amiable for fishing. However, the surprise was enormous that our protagonists were captured in the hands of their enemy who killed them with cold blood and this was clear through his last words 'Fish will get even now'; denoting that those two guys were fishing but now they became a meal for fish.



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INDEX I

‘TWO FRIENDS’ SHORT STORY BY GUY DE MAUPASANT

Besieged Paris was in the throes of famine. Even the sparrows on the roofs and the rats in the sewers were growing scarce. People were eating anything they could get.

As Monsieur Morissot, watchmaker by profession and idler for the nonce, was strolling along the boulevard one bright January morning, his hands in his trousers pockets and stomach empty, he suddenly came face to face with an acquaintance--Monsieur Sauvage, a fishing chum.

Before the war broke out Morissot had been in the habit, every Sunday morning, of setting forth with a bamboo rod in his hand and a tin box on his back. He took the Argenteuil train, got out at Colombes, and walked thence to the Ile Marante. The moment he arrived at this place of his dreams he began fishing, and fished till nightfall.

Every Sunday he met in this very spot Monsieur Sauvage, a stout, jolly, little man, a draper in the Rue Notre Dame de Lorette, and also an ardent fisherman. They often spent half the day side by side, rod in hand and feet dangling over the water, and a warm friendship had sprung up between the two.

Some days they did not speak; at other times they chatted; but they understood each other perfectly without the aid of words, having similar tastes and feelings.

In the spring, about ten o'clock in the morning, when the early sun caused a light mist to float on the water and gently warmed the backs of the two enthusiastic anglers, Morissot would occasionally remark to his neighbor:

"My, but it's pleasant here."

To which the other would reply:

"I can't imagine anything better!"

And these few words sufficed to make them understand and appreciate each other.

In the autumn, toward the close of day, when the setting sun shed a blood-red glow over the western sky, and the reflection of the crimson clouds tinged the whole river with red, brought a glow to the faces of the two friends, and gilded the trees, whose leaves were already turning at the first chill touch of winter, Monsieur Sauvage would sometimes smile at Morissot, and say:





"What a glorious spectacle!"

And Morissot would answer, without taking his eyes from his float:

"This is much better than the boulevard, isn't it?"

As soon as they recognized each other they shook hands cordially, affected at the thought of meeting under such changed circumstances.

Monsieur Sauvage, with a sigh, murmured:

"These are sad times!"

Morissot shook his head mournfully.

"And such weather! This is the first fine day of the year."

The sky was, in fact, of a bright, cloudless blue.

They walked along, side by side, reflective and sad.

"And to think of the fishing!" said Morissot. "What good times we used to have!"

"When shall we be able to fish again?" asked Monsieur Sauvage.

They entered a small cafe and took an absinthe together, then resumed their walk along the pavement.

Morissot stopped suddenly.

"Shall we have another absinthe?" he said.

"If you like," agreed Monsieur Sauvage.

And they entered another wine shop.

They were quite unsteady when they came out, owing to the effect of the alcohol on their empty stomachs. It was a fine, mild day, and a gentle breeze fanned their faces.

The fresh air completed the effect of the alcohol on Monsieur Sauvage. He stopped suddenly, saying:

"Suppose we go there?"

"Where?"

"Fishing."

"But where?"

"Why, to the old place. The French outposts are close to Colombes. I know Colonel Dumoulin, and we shall easily get leave to pass."



Morissot trembled with desire.

"Very well. I agree."

And they separated, to fetch their rods and lines.

An hour later they were walking side by side on the-highroad. Presently they reached the villa occupied by the colonel. He smiled at their request, and granted it. They resumed their walk, furnished with a password.

Soon they left the outposts behind them, made their way through deserted Colombes, and found themselves on the outskirts of the small vineyards which border the Seine. It was about eleven o'clock.

Before them lay the village of Argenteuil, apparently lifeless. The heights of Orgement and Sannois dominated the landscape. The great plain, extending as far as Nanterre, was empty, quite empty-a waste of dun-colored soil and bare cherry trees.

Monsieur Sauvage, pointing to the heights, murmured:

"The Prussians are up yonder!"

And the sight of the deserted country filled the two friends with vague misgivings.

The Prussians! They had never seen them as yet, but they had felt their presence in the neighborhood of Paris for months past--ruining France, pillaging, massacring, starving them. And a kind of superstitious terror mingled with the hatred they already felt toward this unknown, victorious nation.

"Suppose we were to meet any of them?" said Morissot.

"We'd offer them some fish," replied Monsieur Sauvage, with that Parisian light-heartedness which nothing can wholly quench.

Still, they hesitated to show themselves in the open country, overawed by the utter silence which reigned around them.

At last Monsieur Sauvage said boldly:

"Come, we'll make a start; only let us be careful!"

And they made their way through one of the vineyards, bent double, creeping along beneath the cover afforded by the vines, with eye and ear alert.

A strip of bare ground remained to be crossed before they could gain the river bank. They ran across this, and, as soon as they were at the water's edge, concealed themselves among the dry reeds.



Morissot placed his ear to the ground, to ascertain, if possible, whether footsteps were coming their way. He heard nothing. They seemed to be utterly alone.

Their confidence was restored, and they began to fish.

Before them the deserted Ile Marante hid them from the farther shore. The little restaurant was closed, and looked as if it had been deserted for years.

Monsieur Sauvage caught the first gudgeon, Monsieur Morissot the second, and almost every moment one or other raised his line with a little, glittering, silvery fish wriggling at the end; they were having excellent sport.

They slipped their catch gently into a close-meshed bag lying at their feet; they were filled with joy--the joy of once more indulging in a pastime of which they had long been deprived.

The sun poured its rays on their backs; they no longer heard anything or thought of anything. They ignored the rest of the world; they were fishing.

But suddenly a rumbling sound, which seemed to come from the bowels of the earth, shook the ground beneath them: the cannon were resuming their thunder.

Morissot turned his head and could see toward the left, beyond the banks of the river, the formidable outline of Mont-Valerien, from whose summit arose a white puff of smoke.

The next instant a second puff followed the first, and in a few moments a fresh detonation made the earth tremble.

Others followed, and minute by minute the mountain gave forth its deadly breath and a white puff of smoke, which rose slowly into the peaceful heaven and floated above the summit of the cliff.

Monsieur Sauvage shrugged his shoulders.

"They are at it again!" he said.

Morissot, who was anxiously watching his float bobbing up and down, was suddenly seized with the angry impatience of a peaceful man toward the madmen who were firing thus, and remarked indignantly:

"What fools they are to kill one another like that!"

"They're worse than animals," replied Monsieur Sauvage.

And Morissot, who had just caught a bleak, declared:

"And to think that it will be just the same so long as there are governments!"

"The Republic would not have declared war," interposed Monsieur Sauvage.



Morissot interrupted him:

"Under a king we have foreign wars; under a republic we have civil war."

And the two began placidly discussing political problems with the sound common sense of peaceful, matter-of-fact citizens--agreeing on one point: that they would never be free. And Mont-Valerien thundered ceaselessly, demolishing the houses of the French with its cannon balls, grinding lives of men to powder, destroying many a dream, many a cherished hope, many a prospective happiness; ruthlessly causing endless woe and suffering in the hearts of wives, of daughters, of mothers, in other lands.

"Such is life!" declared Monsieur Sauvage.

"Say, rather, such is death!" replied Morissot, laughing.

But they suddenly trembled with alarm at the sound of footsteps behind them, and, turning round, they perceived close at hand four tall, bearded men, dressed after the manner of livery servants and wearing flat caps on their heads. They were covering the two anglers with their rifles.

The rods slipped from their owners' grasp and floated away down the river.

In the space of a few seconds they were seized, bound, thrown into a boat, and taken across to the Ile Marante.

And behind the house they had thought deserted were about a score of German soldiers.

A shaggy-looking giant, who was bestriding a chair and smoking a long clay pipe, addressed them in excellent French with the words:

"Well, gentlemen, have you had good luck with your fishing?"

Then a soldier deposited at the officer's feet the bag full of fish, which he had taken care to bring away. The Prussian smiled.

"Not bad, I see. But we have something else to talk about. Listen to me, and don't be alarmed:

"You must know that, in my eyes, you are two spies sent to reconnoitre me and my movements. Naturally, I capture you and I shoot you. You pretended to be fishing, the better to disguise your real errand. You have fallen into my hands, and must take the consequences. Such is war.

"But as you came here through the outposts you must have a password for your return. Tell me that password and I will let you go."

The two friends, pale as death, stood silently side by side, a slight fluttering of the hands alone betraying their emotion.



"No one will ever know," continued the officer. "You will return peacefully to your homes, and the secret will disappear with you. If you refuse, it means death-instant death. Choose!"

They stood motionless, and did not open their lips.

The Prussian, perfectly calm, went on, with hand outstretched toward the river:

"Just think that in five minutes you will be at the bottom of that water. In five minutes! You have relations, I presume?"

Mont-Valerien still thundered.

The two fishermen remained silent. The German turned and gave an order in his own language. Then he moved his chair a little way off, that he might not be so near the prisoners, and a dozen men stepped forward, rifle in hand, and took up a position, twenty paces off.

"I give you one minute," said the officer; "not a second longer."

Then he rose quickly, went over to the two Frenchmen, took Morissot by the arm, led him a short distance off, and said in a low voice:

"Quick! the password! Your friend will know nothing. I will pretend to relent."

Morissot answered not a word.

Then the Prussian took Monsieur Sauvage aside in like manner, and made him the same proposal.

Monsieur Sauvage made no reply.

Again they stood side by side.

The officer issued his orders; the soldiers raised their rifles.

Then by chance Morissot's eyes fell on the bag full of gudgeon lying in the grass a few feet from him.

A ray of sunlight made the still quivering fish glisten like silver. And Morissot's heart sank. Despite his efforts at self-control his eyes filled with tears.

"Good-by, Monsieur Sauvage," he faltered.

"Good-by, Monsieur Morissot," replied Sauvage.

They shook hands, trembling from head to foot with a dread beyond their mastery.

The officer cried:

"Fire!"

The twelve shots were as one.





Monsieur Sauvage fell forward instantaneously. Morissot, being the taller, swayed slightly and fell across his friend with face turned skyward and blood oozing from a rent in the breast of his coat.

The German issued fresh orders.

His men dispersed, and presently returned with ropes and large stones, which they attached to the feet of the two friends; then they carried them to the river bank.

Mont-Valerien, its summit now enshrouded in smoke, still continued to thunder.

Two soldiers took Morissot by the head and the feet; two others did the same with Sauvage. The bodies, swung lustily by strong hands, were cast to a distance, and, describing a curve, fell feet foremost into the stream.

The water splashed high, foamed, eddied, then grew calm; tiny waves lapped the shore.

A few streaks of blood flecked the surface of the river.

The officer, calm throughout, remarked, with grim humor:

"It's the fishes' turn now!"

Then he retraced his way to the house.

Suddenly he caught sight of the net full of gudgeons, lying forgotten in the grass. He picked it up, examined it, smiled, and called:

"Wilhelm!"

A white-aproned soldier responded to the summons, and the Prussian, tossing him the catch of the two murdered men, said:

"Have these fish fried for me at once, while they are still alive; they'll make a tasty dish."

Then he resumed his pipe.