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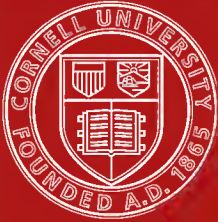
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FRENCH VIGNETTES



Roland née Pétipoc

MADAME ROLAND PAR HEINSIUS
(Musée de Versailles)

[Frontispiece.]

FRENCH VIGNETTES

A SERIES
OF DRAMATIC EPISODES

1787—1871

BY

M. BETHAM-EDWARDS

OFFICIER DE L'INSTRUCTION PUBLIQUE DE FRANCE

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NOTE INTRODUCTORY

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Lastly, and as this work goes to press, I have to add my thanks to Monsieur le Maire of La Réole, also M. Augeyrolles, photographic artist, for the portraits of the celebrated Twins, the Generals Faucher, of their town.

M. BETHAM-EDWARDS

Hastings, March 1909.

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Note to p. 161.

Mlle. de Lavalette married the Baron de Forget and left no descendants. (See *Drames de l'Histoire*, par le Comte de Fleury.)

MIRABEAU'S LETTRES À JULIE

MIRABEAU'S LETTRES À JULIE

I

IT has ever seemed to me that one of the most astounding facts in Revolutionary annals is the work got through by men cut off in their prime.

There were, indeed, giants in those days, and, unlike "the mighty men of old" of whom Sir Walter Raleigh so eloquently wrote, their names have not perished with them. To the Revolutionary leaders, initiative seemed inexhaustible, powers alike mental and physical were Titanic. As if moved by a prescience of premature death, Mirabeau and those following in his steps gave themselves no rest. The body was taken small account of, intellectual forces were as lavishly expended, and when the end came, superhuman as were these leaders, ebullient health and animal spirits must have been well-nigh spent.

Later generations in France show no such energy or powers of endurance. Especially among literary workers is witnessed physical deterioration. One and all appear to have been chronic invalids or at least sickly. In their correspondence Sainte-Beuve, Taine—and how many others?—perpetually dwell on their ill health. "Ma santé, ma pauvre santé": and such expressions recur with afflicting

reiteration. Literary renown and valetudinarianism with these men and their brethren have gone hand in hand.

Mirabeau, from whose lips fell the sentence that recreated France, and for once and for all changed the course of civilization, was forty when he died, an exceptional age. Few of his fellow revolutionaries attained that sum-total. Danton, Robespierre, Vergniaud and others met their fate at thirty-five, Gensonné, Buzot and Barbaroux at thirty-three, Barnave and Camille Desmoulins at thirty-two. But like a great tribune of our own day, Gambetta, Mirabeau was "an old man at forty," and unlike many of his contemporaries, among these the noble visionaries of the Gironde, he did not die too soon for his fame. In a single utterance he fulfilled his destiny, later achievements proving mere *parerga*, or a by-work, and ending in *il gran rifiuto*, an apostasy.

But it is not with Mirabeau's political part that these pages are concerned, nor shall I relate the storm-tossed youth that had aged him before entering public life. Not "the demi-god Mirabeau" as one of his recent English biographers calls him, could say—

"Many a green isle needs must be
In the deep wide sea of misery."

Every stage of early existence was a combat. From childhood upwards he remained at war with his family, with circumstances and the world.

Again and again imprisoned by *lettres de cachet* for irregularities and even criminal acts, the victim

of hereditary vice and uncontrolled self-indulgence, Mirabeau has left a personal history which is neither more nor less than a *chronique scandaleuse*. Many a time another biographer, this time a lady, must have felt sorely inclined to throw aside such a subject. Miss Tallentyre plodded on, and, despite inheritance, bringing-up, and surroundings, Mirabeau as represented by her, is very human and almost lovable.

The close student of the Revolution cannot but compare Mirabeau's career and the society depicted in these pages with the *bourgeois* element so conspicuous during the same period. Whilst the aristocracy of the *ancien régime* was corrupt to the core, austerity and patriarchal manners characterized the middle, the non-privileged classes. Take, by way of example, the charming domestic pictures described by Madame Roland, the love-story of Camille and Lucile Desmoulins, the Danton group, two or three families living harmoniously together in the big, handsome house by the Aube; or let us glance at the members of the Convention, working eighteen hours a day, taking in hand by turns a vast system of national education, the codification of French law, scheme after scheme of material, social, and intellectual development, and at the same time quelling insurrection within and vanquishing allied forces without. Not of riot and excess did these men die; in the plenitude of physical and mental powers were they one by one prematurely cut off.

After various imprisonments, paternal *lettres de cachet* doing duty for judicial sentence, in 1777,

being just twenty-eight, Mirabeau was flung into the donjon of Vincennes, this time by order of the States-General. Some years before, the ironically called *Ami des Hommes*, his father, had married him willy nilly to an uncongenial wife. The pair hated each other from the first. A little later, partly out of pique, and partly because he fancied himself in love, Mirabeau eloped with Sophie Meonnier, the very pretty and sentimental girl-wife of a crabbed septuagenarian. For some months the runaways contrived to hide themselves, first in Switzerland, later at Amsterdam, there Mirabeau staving off want by his pen. Meanwhile he had been sentenced to death by the Parliament of Besançon, his offences being robbery and abduction. Discovered and brought back to France, the lover's sentence was commuted to imprisonment in a fortress, as we have seen, Sophie being shut up within conventual walls at Gien.

For three years and a half the pair languished in their separate prisons, both spending the time in impassioned outpourings to each other. Mirabeau's *Lettres d'amour*, or letters to Sophie, have long been classed with the love-letters of literature, and are constantly reprinted. But his *Lettres à Julie*, also written whilst a prisoner at Vincennes, were only published a few years ago. It is of these I propose to give some account.

Unlike his great compeer Danton, Mirabeau, throughout his short life, was an unwearied penman, an incorrigible scribbler, some might call him. Of Danton, on the contrary, in this respect—thrice enviable Danton!—not so much as a line remains.

The other's career as journalist, pamphleteer and romancer à la *Boccace*, had begun in boyhood ; his collected works, published in 1820-1 and republished in 1825-7, filling nine volumes. In 1834 his *Mémoires* were issued by his adopted son, and in 1851 appeared his correspondence in three volumes. The famous *Essai sur les Lettres de Cachet* proved of immense service at the time, but with the rest is now forgotten.

The two excellent English biographies already alluded to and published respectively in 1907 and 1908, give fullest particulars of Mirabeau's domestic—if indeed the word can be applied to such a man—literary and political career. By neither biographer, however, are these *Lettres à Julie* more than touched upon. If not of literary or historic value the collection is nevertheless interesting, throwing as it does considerable light on the episode of a life peculiarly episodal.

II

Rank, family connections, character and abilities made Mirabeau appear in the light of a possible Providence to fellow-prisoners more unfortunate than himself. This fast-and-loose member of a noble and well-known house was supposed to wield occult influences, in fine, to be a wire-puller, despite prison walls. Thus came about the intrigue not without difficulty gathered from their letters, an intrigue, in the words of Mr. Trowbridge, which as a comedy of manners would have made a brilliant play.

In a few words, the sordid comedy—rather a tragedy must we regard such a blot on a great career—was as follows :—

Among Mirabeau's fellow-prisoners at Vincennes was a certain fraudulent bankrupt by name Baudoin, who hoped to obtain rehabilitation through the young aristocrat's influence. Baudoin's former secretary, named Lafage, also placed faith in Mirabeau's promises of another kind which had evidently been extorted by money. Lafage's *fiancée*, Julie Dauvers, formerly holding a humble post in the quiet household of Madame Louise, sister of Louis XVI, now wanted a rise in life, nothing less than an appointment as maid of honour to some great lady and leader of society. Egged on by her lover and father, the quick-witted and ambitious little *bourgeoise* sent messages through Baudoin to Mirabeau, first of all expressions of feminine interest and sympathy, next ingratiating little missives.

Mirabeau saw his opportunity. The money that he so urgently needed might be here obtained. Leading her on by little and little, he next forged a letter from the Princesse de Lamballe, expressing interest in the young lady of whom she had heard so favourably, and her readiness to be of use. In fine, Mirabeau's *protégée* believed that the desired advancement was at hand, and on the strength of the deception Dauvers advanced 5000 francs.

Correspondence and intrigue were cut short by Mirabeau's enlargement in 1781. The letters, however, possess an interest wholly irrespective of the wire-pulling which originated them, not only giving, as they do, curious glimpses of prison life under *lettres*

de cachet, but also throwing light on Mirabeau's character and intellect, scintillations here and there amply compensating for much literary lumber. The routine at Vincennes in this case was not of the most rigid. Every morning, a turnkey named Huguenain, who also filled the office of barber, visited his aristocratic charge, not only shaving him but bringing the day's news. Supposedly by virtue of bribes, Mirabeau was allowed the companionship of a fellow-prisoner in the little garden adjoining their cells. We also learn from these letters that he was permitted to receive visitors and even invite friends to dinner, whilst intercourse with the outer world was freely carried on by correspondence.

One much-coveted luxury circumstances compelled Mirabeau to forego. He had not the wherewithal to pay a manservant. "My *valet de chambre*, my liveries, my people," he writes, but ironically, as Don Japhet in Scarron's burlesque. These existed in his imagination only.

Again and again had a friend, de Rougemont by name, urged him to follow the usual course and keep an attendant. Want of money stood in the way. Grinding poverty suggested the dishonourable courses made clear by this correspondence, fictitious letters, forged signatures, delusive promises and the rest.

The first missive to Julie is dated October 22, 1780. The last, written from Vincennes, was penned just before Mirabeau's liberation, that is to say, in December of the same year. During this short interval the recluse of Gien was not neglected. Of the celebrated *Lettres à Sophie*, several belong

to this period. By turns Mirabeau apostrophized his beloved Sophie and his new friend, soon with equal tenderness and fervour caressed on paper.

At first his tone is of profound deference. "You take an interest in me, mademoiselle," his first letter begins, "which would make me without a second thought brave a fiery furnace for your sake. Confidence, frankness, sincerity, I have never known how to resist. Is it likely that I could do so now when all these qualities are enhanced by charms your sex renders so touching? Permit me for the present to remain anonymous. But rest assured that you are addressed by a man of honour, a man come into the world with the slight advantages of rank and influence, and with the much greater advantage of profound sensibility."

Three pages of large octavo are followed by a frank confession, one of those self revelations that gained for the writer so many hearts, winning lifelong friendships among men diametrically unlike himself—

"Mademoiselle," he continues, "do not for a moment fear that you may have expressed yourself too openly. I have committed and expiated great follies, but I have never given another evil counsel. Honour, truth and love, (*l'honneur, la vérité and l'amour*, italicised) these are my gods, these war against ambition, and circumstances also standing in the way of a career. But to merit the esteem and affection of sensitive natures, to serve those thus endeared to me, are motives outweighing all other considerations, preventing me from entering upon any unworthy course."

A little later a correspondence is opened with Julie's lover, Lafage. To him Mirabeau writes in a strain equally confidential. "I am an unfortunate young man," he tells him, "who has been impelled by force of circumstances to commit no end of faults and follies, one and all characterized by sensibility, honourable feeling and staunchness, one and all proving disastrous in their effects."

As the epistolary acquaintance ripens he takes a different tone. "The unfortunate young man" is now addressing a *protégé*, at one moment urging him to study English, at another uttering worldly-wise, epigrammatic maxims. "I can lend you a dictionary, *The Spectator*, *Tom Jones*, an excellent novel spoiled by our translators, Hume, Smollett, Swift, *Paradise Lost*, anything you want," he writes in one letter, in another speaks the future tribune—"A well-ordered society is incompatible with hereditary *noblesse*. Personal nobility, ah, that is quite another thing and outside human interference!"

Elsewhere he says—"Vulgar minds follow the thermometer of prosperity," and he chides Lafage in an obsequious tone—"No more foolish talk, I beg, concerning my rank," the last words being italicized.

Here is a piece of literary criticism also addressed to Lafage—

"In my youth, I was only too ready to admire Ajax; but my opinion on this subject changed in later years, and accept the experience of one who has been guilty of many more errors than yourself, who has also seen much of men and manners. These experiences have taught me to my cost that

Homer was not wrong in preferring Ulysses to Ajax, and in making the former his favourite hero. The *rôle* of Ulysses was in reality the noblest of any. To him were awarded the protection of Minerva and the arms of Achilles; when forced to fight he showed as much valour as the rest, but he also took good care not to use his brains when his muscles would do as well."

Here is another Homeric criticism—

"Men were not born to hold forth till they are old and feeble in body. Nestor, for example, talked when it was no longer in his power to be either an Achilles, a Diomed, or a Ulysses."

III

There are points of similarity between this correspondence and Balzac's *Lettres à une Étrangère*. In the first place, it is one-sided, no letters of the lady being included; further, the pair, introduced to each other by pen and ink, were strangers, and lastly, acquaintance rapidly became lover-like. The "Mademoiselle" of the first two missives was replaced by "My charming friend," "My fair, my much-esteemed friend" in the next five, whilst in the seventh the unknown Julie, Lafage's *fiancée*, is styled good, beautiful, tender, worthy; indeed, Mirabeau exhausts the vocabulary of endearment. Soon he finds for her a pretty pet name, the fair angel becomes his dear, his darling Liriette. Liriette not proving sufficiently sweet, she is next called by the baby appellation of "Fan-fan," a

diminutive of *enfant* perhaps rendered by our word, toddles.

Of his adored Sophie he writes much ; now he tells Liriette that next to Sophie she is the friend of his heart. Somewhat later occurs this somewhat cynical utterance—

“Amid many anxieties your image is ever before me, an image that does me more good than that of Sophie, because you still remain an ideal whilst she is a reality.” We are thus prepared for the *dénouement* of this tripartite story.

Meanwhile, and very deftly, the bait is thrown out. In the tenth letter, Liriette's reply is asked to the following query—would she leave her parents and enter the service of a young and influential princess, such a step ensuring her own and her lover's fortune? And then—for this uniquely great, this so ill-used Mirabeau, was not without small vanities—he adds, that his *valet de chambre*, as we have seen, a personage existing in imagination only, would carry the letter and receive her answer. Finally he writes—

“I shall shortly send you a little collection of stories which will appear without my name. These bagatelles are a thousand leagues removed from my ordinary grave and systematic studies. Note also that I send Sophie a weekly letter of twenty closely written pages, and that I am overdone with correspondence of all kinds and yet bother my friend with four sheets. Judge how I love my Liriette!”

What those ordinary grave and systematic studies consisted of, the Marquis, his father, tells us in a letter to his brother, the excellent Bailli.

“Honoré,” he wrote in February 1781, “has profited by his imprisonment, having whilst in Vincennes acquired English, Italian, Greek, and given much attention to the classics, above all to Tacitus, whose history he has translated.”

In writing to his pupil, Lafage, Mirabeau shows the close attention given by him to native literature ; and no more generous critic ever took pen in hand. The following passages occur in undated letters—

“Voltaire is one of the most admirable geniuses that have adorned humanity. Without exception he is the most tragic of dramatic writers. If he did not possess all the domestic virtues of the divine Racine, he is often his superior on the stage. Ah, whom would not Voltaire have excelled as a poet but for the precocious successes that rendered him too indulgent to himself!”

Here is a second passage—

“*Britannicus* is the *chef d'œuvre* of pieces to be read and meditated upon. One admires it before reading Tacitus, when reading Tacitus and after reading Tacitus. It is in *Britannicus*¹ that Racine shows a genius by its elasticity and imaginativeness, realizing not only past ages, but the characters and modes of thought belonging to them. Nevertheless, *Britannicus* as an acted play is far less impressive than as a study. *Athalie* is a splendid work for the stage, but from that point of view *Mahomet*” (Voltaire) “is incontestably superior. As to *Zaïre*, why its reproduction is thus delayed I cannot conceive, seeing that in this,

¹ No one who has witnessed this play superbly performed at the Français will question Mirabeau's judgment.

Voltaire's masterpiece, we hear the rare language of the heart, and also that he here approaches Racine as an enchanting stylist.

"You are right, my dear Lafage, to pride yourself on having at one time received a present from Rousseau. You must have shown a real love of music, or he would not have presented you with his dictionary (*Dictionnaire de Musique*), a work which might have been better, but is nevertheless a very good one, and containing some sublime passages."

Then after a long dissertation upon La Harpe, Delisle and others, he adds—

"But I have no time to chatter, and here I am chattering away. Adieu, if you value my friendship; if I am ever able to serve you, remember that it is to Julie's freak that you owe both. *Addio, caro.*"

In his letters to Julie also are found literary criticisms interspersed with terms of endearment, cryptic utterances as to her future and dithyrambs about Sophie.

"The little nothings you have read of mine," he writes, "were composed as pastime, occupying the hours stolen from daily studies. I have written upon every conceivable literary subject, and a prodigious amount considering my age. This has been an error. The basis of Rousseau's unparalleled success, the explanation of his ever-glorious but unhappy career, is to be found in the fact that he did not write till he was past forty-five."

Thus ends one of these letters—

"Adieu, Liriette, my darling, adieu. You whom I love as a second Sophie, with this difference only,

that to Sophie belong the rights accorded by marriage and the interchange of solemn vows. Love, esteem your friend, and believe that, always as now, his soul will be at one with your own."

The threads of this serio-comedy were suddenly and unexpectedly cut asunder. Mirabeau's correspondence with Julie opened, as has been seen, on the twentieth of October, 1780. On the thirteenth of the following December, Amelot, minister, received this intimation—

"Vincennes,
"December 13, 1780.

"MONSEIGNEUR,

"I have the honour to inform you that by virtue of the King's order I have to-day released Monsieur le Comte de Mirabeau, *fils* (junior) detained within these walls by his orders.

(Signed) "DE ROUGEMONT."

Although aware of his imminent liberation Mirabeau kept up the farce. A few days before the three and a half years' reclusion came to an end we find him gravely discussing Julie's future under the Princess de Lamballe's roof.

"Although your duties will be strictly confined to the house," he writes to Liriette, "you will have to dress with great care. On this matter Urgande (Madame de Lamballe) has caprices, of which oftener than not she bears the cost.

"My dear, good little angel, do give me some notion of your views as to pecuniary arrangements. You will have the servants (*la livrée*) at your orders, but I imagine that you will prefer a maid of your own,

at any rate so long as you remain unmarried. Reckon up expenses and let me know. I must not conceal from you that Urgande's fancies constitute somewhat of a stumbling-block, but this point we must go into thoroughly. It is incumbent on me to know your precise views as well as her own. In fine, my dear, we can only arrive at a satisfactory understanding by means of a frank, intimate talk. To-morrow, like Cæsar, I cross the Rubicon, but between to-morrow, the day after and the day after that, as you may imagine, I have five hundred visits to make and a thousand things to do. It may, therefore, be impossible for me to have the inexpressible happiness of seeing you immediately. If, however, I can steal two hours from my parents they will be devoted to you. Believe me, my sweet friend, Sophie is the only other being for whose presence I feel equally impatient. I long to be near her, a meeting with her would overwhelm me with delight. But I doubt whether I should be really happier than were I with yourself, that is to say, whether I should feel more pleasure and satisfaction." The prison doors were not opened till a week later and Mirabeau's correspondence still continued.

In his next note to Julie he tells her she is too modest in her pecuniary forecast—

"If my plan succeed, my dear, I count on your situation bringing in at least *deux mille éens d'argent sec* (6000 francs in ready money). Tell me if the sum suffices. The place will prove much more lucrative, if you succeed in filling it satisfactorily, of which I have no doubt. Your little calculation pleased me prodigiously, because it shows an aptitude for

figures, rarer as a quality than is generally supposed and which exercises an incalculable influence on women's conduct of life. I find your sum-total somewhat exiguous, three hundred livres (francs) for your dress, for example, is too little. But as you properly remark, all these details can be settled when we meet."

On the eve of enlargement, with projects innumerable in his brain, Mirabeau nevertheless finds time for literary and political pronouncement. In a letter to Lafage closely following the above, he writes—

"Yes, my friend, I shall visit you in your attic, but not to accept the proposed cup of coffee, which I have long renounced, instead a draught of milk," immediately afterwards taking up another theme—

"You do not know what you are talking about when you assign Buffon a place among little great men (*petits illustres*). Buffon is one of the greatest figures in the republic of letters and the foremost of our writers, a fact averred by Jean Jacques, indeed, his only rival. For myself I prefer Rousseau; less correct as a stylist, he is more animated; by very reason of his inequalities, he is more moving. Buffon's uniform dignity lapses into sameness. But—but," (*sic*) "Buffon is the only man we have whom the English envy, and the English know a man when they see him. As to Voltaire you are right. He too persistently sought theatrical effects. Do you know why? Because the world talked too much of him before his face."

Writing a day or two later he still turns from personal matters, engrossing although they were, to

great questions. After descanting on Frederick the Great he adds—

“Partisan of war I have never been, and if there is one superb plan in the universe, it is that of associating the grandeur of France with the grandeur of England, her enormous power being consolidated on an equitable basis.”

On the twentieth of December l'Ami de l'Homme wrote as follows—

“Yesterday Du Saillant fetched his brother-in-law (from prison) and although by no means of an enthusiastic disposition, expresses himself thoroughly satisfied with his attitude. Instead of being overwhelmed, as he expected, with bombast and tears, he found a man, really penitent, really touched and full of concern for his father and family. He was taken to Paris in order to be supplied with clothes, for he was stark naked (*nu comme un ver*). He has grown considerably both in stature and bulk, and he avers that the fact should give me faith in equal moral development. Forty-two solitary months amid gothic arches and the lugubrious echoes of subterranean passages make up a medicine strong enough one would suppose to turn any head. I have hoped so. Man stands in need of misfortune, but we are not out of the wood with him yet. His wife may rely on my doing my duty.”

With Mirabeau's liberation the sorry farce soon came to an end. The three correspondents made each other's acquaintance and occasionally met. But the eyes of the quick-witted little *bourgeoise* were now opened, and a few weeks later we find the would-be patron accused of trumped-up letters, of

nothing less, indeed, than a forged missive from Madame de Lamballe.

The insinuation is haughtily rebutted and, evidently anxious to get clear of the imbroglio, Mirabeau demands his letters, promising the return of her own. Julie proving hesitant, again he took up the threads of the intrigue. At a masked ball of the opera his *protégée* was induced to believe that she had interchanged a few words with the Princess de Lamballe and even the Queen!

What happened afterwards we do not know. The last note to his *belle amie*, no longer his Liriette or Mademoiselle, assigning an interview was written on the thirteenth of the following April. There the story ends. Did Liriette, as some suppose, for a time supplant affection? Had she any share in that crowning delusion?

For when the long-separated husband and wife at last met they discovered that passion had evaporated in ink. On one side, indeed, indifference was followed by positive dislike. A few years later and Mirabeau's splendid but besmirched career came to an end, the demi-god in his lifetime crowned with Olympian honours, the ashes of the renegade being soon after scattered to the winds. But as the first living historian of France has written, Mirabeau's treachery must not render his country oblivious of the services rendered by him in '89. Nor must we overlook the qualities that under better circumstances might have ennobled a tremendous personality. By an old schoolfellow, that eminent Scotchman who became Governor-General of India and first Earl of Minto, he is described as "one of the ugliest and most un-

fortunate dogs in Europe, but none the less an ardent friend." And he adds, "I believe a sincere one." Of another Scotchman, the Earl's brother, he was also a close friend. During his stay in England, indeed, Mirabeau won many hearts.

One Englishman, alas! missed his opportunity. Arthur Young was present on that memorable *Séance Royal* of June 23, 1789. He heard Mirabeau's defiance of the King's messenger. And thus prosaically he relates the scene. "Then it was that superior talents bore the sway, that overpowers in critical moments all other considerations."

Perhaps, however, the honest farmer's cut-and-dry version was the best to give us. What could even a transcendent master of words have done with the theme?

A GREAT LIFE-STORY—
MADAME ROLAND AND BUZOT

A GREAT LIFE-STORY—MADAME ROLAND AND BUZOT

I

“PLEASANT Meudon! How often under thy woodland shades have I blessed the Author of my existence, hoping without impatience that it might be worthily completed. How often in thy cool recesses have I gathered ferns and orchids! How I loved to rest beneath some lofty tree watching the timid fawns as they fleeted across the glade! I recall shady spots in which we used to spend the hot afternoon hours, my father stretched upon the grass, my mother reclining on leaves that I had piled for her, both peacefully taking their siesta, whilst as I contemplated the majestic woods, I became lost in admiration of nature and of a beneficent Providence. For myself these scenes represented a terrestrial paradise. I wept from sheer sentiment and feeling.”

Not under summer foliage and in sight of playful fawns, but under the shadow of the guillotine and watched by stern-visaged gaolers, were such idyllic scenes depicted, neither sorrow, privation, nor imminent doom, paralysing a charmed pen. Madame Roland's prose matched her speech, as

we are told, ever of the purest, choicest French. Few youthful lives were happier than that of this "dreadless" woman, in her case as in Charlotte Corday's the Miltonic¹ epithet being allowable. Whilst conversation was cultivated as a fine art in Parisian salons, a virile education was often the portion of a *bourgeois* maiden. Penned, as was the case, with a horrible death staring the writer in the face, we can easily forgive the candour which under ordinary circumstances would look like vanity. It must be remembered, moreover, that Madame Roland wrote not only for her friends, but for her enemies and detractors. From beginning to end the prison memoirs were intended as justificatory. The world, perhaps posterity, should learn what manner of woman was Robespierre's victim.

Jeanne-Marie Phlipon, usually called Manon, was a Parisian by birth and bringing-up, but early acquired the passionate love of nature that consoled and uplifted her last hours. Under the peaceful paternal roof, flowers could always delight and absorb. With flowers and books she had been happy in childhood. Flowers and books made her forget the follies and injustice of mankind in prison.

The worthy engraver, her father, and his wife, made every effort to give their only surviving child an education worthy of extraordinary gifts. It was no trouble to teach her anything, she says, the difficulty was not to let her want for books. Nevertheless, masters were engaged who gave her lessons at home in calligraphy—an art in those days—geography, history, music and dancing. "My

¹ Rather, Spenserian, "The Dreadless Courage," etc., Bk. I, ch. vi.

masters," runs her narrative, "became greatly attached to me. Not one but seemed as flattered to teach their pupil as she was grateful to learn. Each dismissed himself when he could carry her no farther."

Then follow some amusing sketches of these various professors ; being as we read it difficult to realize under what circumstances pages so sprightly were written. Cajon, the music-master, lively, garrulous little man, a native of Mâcon, by turns, chorister, soldier, deserter, Capuchin, clerk, and vagabond ; Mazon, teacher of dancing, a terribly ugly but excellent Savoyard, "of whom I could tell many a diverting story ; also of poor Mignard, who taught me the guitar, a gigantic Spaniard with hands hairy as Esau's, and who in stateliness, gravity and rodomontades was outdone by none of his compatriots. Not many times had I lessons of the violinist, Watrin by name, a timid man of fifty, whose wig and spectacles became awry, and whose face grew red as fire, when he touched the bow."

Then she recalls a reverend father named Collomb, a Barnabite monk of seventy-five, "who used to accompany my guitar with his base viol ; I greatly astonished him one day by seizing his instrument and playing several airs tolerably well. The memory of good M. Marchand I will here honour. From my fifth year this wise, gentle and patient man, on account of his gentleness named by me M. Doucet (from *douceur*), taught me history and geography. In after years, then being eighteen, I visited him as he lay on the point of death.

"It was from my mother's brother, a young

parish priest, that I was prepared for the first communion, and also received lessons in Latin. Beautiful, austere, yet of the happiest disposition, I recall his personality with emotion, in him losing my last maternal relation. He died a *chanoine* of Vincennes, on the eve of the Revolution. From my father I had some lessons in drawing, although the instruction did not go very far. I used to get up at five o'clock whilst every one was fast asleep, throw on a little jacket and without troubling about shoes and stockings, steal into my mother's room, there in a corner copying and recopying my models with such ardour that I made rapid progress."

As is so often the case with genius, Madame Roland was her own chief educator. This middle-class home possessed a small library, supplemented by that of her maternal grandmother; the young student was thus enabled to fortify her understanding and cultivate the imaginative faculty. Art is grist that comes to the mill of genius! Among other *vieilles* (old-fashioned books), as she calls them, devoured in early years were the *Memoirs of de Pontis* and of *Mademoiselle de Montpensier*. Both these works, it may be added by the way, hold their place in the vast library of French memoirs, and those of the *Grande* or over-tall Mademoiselle have recently been translated into English. Then this voracious little reader read a French version of Appian's history, a treatise on heraldry, in this case coloured illustrations lending enchantment, a folio edition of the *Lives of the Saints*, and a work upon Contracts which she owned she found a trifle dull; of the Bible she never tired.

Her acquaintance with Plutarch she most carefully notes. It was in 1763, when just nine years of age, that Dacier's translation fell into her hands. "Plutarch was my veritable nutriment," she tells us, "and I shall never forget Holy Week of that year when I carried a volume with me to church instead of a Prayer-book. From that moment date the impressions and ideas which without a notion of becoming one, made me a Republican."

Poetry and romance influenced her in other ways. Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered* and Fénelon's *Télémaque* afforded exquisite delight. Later on we find her reading Locke on Education, naturally in French, and Fénelon on the same subject.

Then came, methodically, a devotional frame of mind. In tears and on her knees she wrung from her parents the permission to prepare for her first communion within conventual walls. For twelve months, not more, she might become a boarder of the Ladies of the Congregation in the Faubourg Saint Marcel. The compact on both sides was religiously kept. At the end of the stipulated period she returned home, sorrowful at parting with her school friends, Agathe and Sophie Cannel, and carrying away fondly cherished memories.

"How," she writes, "from the depths of prison, my country torn to pieces with political factions, all that I loved being swept away, can I recall those calm, delicious days. What pen, however airy, could depict the emotions of a young, impressionable heart, hungering after happiness, beginning to realize nature, in all things discerning the Divine?"

And as she recalls those scenes, the hours of study, shared by beloved companions, the little events varying daily routine, the half holidays spent with her parents, comes back to memory a certain wintry walk in what was then called *Le jardin du Roi*, now the Jardin des Plantes. In later life a student of English and a lover of Thompson, she here cites some favourite and appropriate lines, from "Winter"—

"Pleased was I in my cheerful morn of life,
When nursed by careless solitude I lived
And sung of nature with unceasing joy,
Pleased was I wandering through your rough domain,
Through the pure virgin snows, myself as pure."

The citation is made in English, *The Seasons* having been one of her favourite books during captivity.

II

Gaily as if writing in a boudoir and amid surroundings rose-tinted as those she recalls, the Queen of the Gironde continues her narrative. If at times enchanting souvenirs are marred by an overwhelming sense of actual desolation, she resolutely goes on with her self-appointed task. The indomitable spirit is but transiently overcome. Over her pen Madame Roland holds command as when inditing the *Lettre au Roi*, that famous epistle handed to Louis XVI by her husband when Minister of the Interior, and which was at the same time a Phillipic and a Sibylline prophecy.

It is an ingratiating picture of *bourgeois* life that we gather from these pages, idyllic scenes alternating with lively sketches of character and not a few bitterly satirical sketches. Here is one experience of early life—she was just twelve—which may well have aculeated her democratic leanings. The insulting “Mademoiselle,” applied to an elderly and highly respected matron, requires elucidation.

In Racine’s delightful correspondence¹ we find several letters addressed to a certain “Mademoiselle Vitart,” who was in reality a married lady of good social position. But she belonged to the *bourgeoisie*, and as such remained Mademoiselle to the end of her days. The title of Madame implied noble birth every whit as much as the coveted particle *de*. “One day my grandmother took it into her head to call upon Madame de Boismorel” (evidently a great lady) “either for the pleasure of seeing her or for the sake of showing off her little granddaughter. Accordingly, great preparations. Carefully dressed as befitted a morning visit, we set off accompanied by my aunt Angélique, reaching the Rue Saint Louis at noon. As we entered the hotel (town mansion) alike porter and lacqueys received ‘Madame’ Phlipon with every mark of respect and cordiality, her own behaviour being friendly and dignified. Then her little granddaughter was noticed and complimented, the glances bestowed upon me I could put up with, compliments coming from such quarters

¹ See Lettre vi., Tôme vii., *Œuvres de Racine*, Edition Doudey-Dupie, 1828. In a note are mentioned “*Satires sur les femmes bourgeoises qui se sont appeler Madame*, par un chevalier Nisard,” published in 1712. The anecdote cited by Madame Roland shows that the antiquated prejudice had not wholly died out.

seemed an impertinence. A servant in fine livery then ushered us into a salon where we found Madame de Boismorel seated with her dog on what was no longer called an ottoman but a sofa gravely embroidering. About the age and height of my grandmother and like her corpulent, Madame de Boismorel was not so becomingly dressed. Her costume rather advertised wealth and social position, her countenance betokening rather the exaction of homage than the desire to please. On the top of the head she wore a rich lace cap with hanging ends so fashioned as to recall a hare's ears, her hair, probably false, was arranged with the care necessary at sixty years, and the hardness of eyes was heightened by thickly laid rouge.

“‘Ah, good morning, Mademoiselle Rotisset,’ she cried, rising from her seat (Mademoiselle, said I to myself, my grandmother called Mademoiselle!)— ‘Really I am very glad to see you, and this beautiful child, your grandchild of course? She promises well. Come here, my love, sit down beside me. Your grandchild is timid, Mademoiselle Rotisset; how old is she? She is a little brown but her complexion will improve with time. She has a good figure. You ought to have a lucky hand at cards, my little friend. Have you never bought a lottery ticket?’ ‘Never, Madame, I do not like games of chance.’ ‘Oh! yes, I understand, at your age one prefers certainties. What a voice she has, soft and expressive. But how serious she is! Are you not a trifle devout?’ ‘I know my duty, Madame, and my religious obligations, and try to fulfil them.’ ‘Good, good, you would like to enter

a convent, would you not?' 'As yet, Madame, I do not know, nor care to inquire what my destiny will be!' 'How she speaks by the book! Your granddaughter has a turn for reading, Mademoiselle Rotisset?' 'Yes, reading is her chief relaxation.' 'I see that, but take care, do not let her become a blue-stocking. That would be a sad pity.'

"The ladies then gossiped of friends and neighbours, discussing their health, doings and whimsicalities, the latter not without a touch of somewhat ill-natured raillery. Then grandmamma, aunt and the twelve-year-old Jeanne-Marie took leave, their hostess exclaiming at the door—

" 'Do not forget to take a lottery ticket for me, and let your granddaughter choose the number; you understand, Mademoiselle Rotisset, I want my good luck to come through her hands. Permit me to embrace you. And you, my little love, do not cast down your eyes, they are good to look at, those eyes of yours, and a confessor would not forbid you to open them. Ah! Mademoiselle Rotisset, you will have suitors taking off their hats to you on her account, and that pretty soon. Good morning to you, ladies.'

"Ordering a footman to purchase for her a lottery ticket in two days' time at 'Mademoiselle Rotisset's,' and quieting her dog, she had re-seated herself on the sofa before we were fairly at the door."

This admirably described little scene left more than a disagreeable impression behind. With other impertinences described in her Memoirs, the perpetually reiterated "Mademoiselle," applied to an elderly and highly respectable matron, early biased

the young listener's mind. It may be said, indeed, of Madame Roland that if from the cradle an enthusiast for the lofty and the beautiful, from the cradle also she was what Dr. Johnson loved—a good hater.

In striking contrast to such experiences are the following, glowingly narrated as if of yesterday.

“We often visited my favourite resort, Meudon,” she writes. “I preferred its untouched woodland, lonely meres, closely serried firs and lofty forest trees, to the frequented alleys of the Bois de Boulogne and Saint Cloud.

“‘If fine, where shall we go to-morrow?’ my father would say on Saturday evenings in summer-time; then eyeing me with a smile would add, ‘The waters play at Saint Cloud, plenty of people will be there.’

“‘Oh! papa,’ I always exclaimed, ‘if only it might be Meudon!’

“Accordingly at five o'clock next morning we were all astir. Wearing a light dress of simplest make, a gauze veil, with flowers fastened to my girdle, the *Odes of Rousseau*, a volume of Corneille or some other favourite author, forming my only luggage, we set off. Our starting-place was the Pont-Royal over against our own windows, and in a little boat we were gently but swiftly carried to the heights of Belle-Vue, and thence by steep, rocky paths we reached the avenue of Meudon. Upon one occasion noticing a cottage, thither we directed our steps and found that it was kept by a widow who sold milk and poultry. With this good woman we made friends, and henceforth always halted at her house on the way home, making there a *gouter* (afternoon

meal) of new milk and coarse bread, the little repast being rendered all the more appetizing by good humour. Naturally we left a souvenir of our visit in the hostess's pocket. Our dinner we had always taken at the house of a Swiss (park keeper) till one day we happened to find a place much more to my taste. After a long ramble in the most unfrequented portion of the forest we came upon a tiny well-built two-storeyed house, on either side and at the back hidden by magnificent trees, immediately around lying a belt of green. 'What is that?' we all cried with a breath. Two pretty children were playing before the front door, not town-bred children, nor the little tatterdemalions so often found in the country. We approached, finding to the left a small vegetable garden in which an old man was working, with whom we at once made friends. He was, he said, what is called a *fontainier*, that is say, he attended to certain canals in the park, but such services were very poorly paid, and himself, daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren, chiefly depended on the products of the garden, which were sold in Paris.

"The beds formed four squares divided by trees, in the centre being a pond. A stone bench under a group of ilexes offered grateful shade, whilst abundance of flowers brightened the scene. The hale, cheerful old host recalled Virgil's veteran on the banks of the Galesus.¹ His conversation showed both geniality and shrewdness, and if only simple tastes were needed to appreciate the meeting on my own part, imagination added to its charm. We

¹ Here Madame Roland confuses the veteran of the *Aeneid*, Book VII, p. 535, with the river mentioned in the fourth *Georgic*.

asked if holiday-makers like ourselves ever found their way to this retreat.

“‘Very seldom,’ was the reply. ‘If by chance any visitors find it out, we willingly offer them what our poultry yard and garden afford.’

“Straightway we ordered dinner. New-laid eggs, vegetables, salad, were served in a honeysuckle arbour behind the house. Never did I partake of a more delicious meal. My heart swelled with joy amid surroundings so artless and so delightful. I played with the children, respectfully listened to the old man, chatted with the young mother. Before leaving we learned that two bedrooms were at our disposal should we at any time wish to spend the summer at Ville-Bonne, thus was the place called. Enchanted at the idea, we determined to return thither another year and for a lengthened stay. But the project was never realized.”

“The beautiful days at Aranjuez,” the thrice-happy picnics at her beloved Meudon, had nearly come to an end when Ville-Bonne and its occupants were discovered.

With equal detail and picturesqueness Madame Roland sketches the friends of her childhood. A veritable portrait gallery are these pages. As we read we feel that had history been otherwise ordered, the writer would have attained immortality, not by “dying grandly,” to quote De Quincey, but by her pen. Poetry, romance, history, the drama, were fields in which she might have shone, as much by virtue of literary gifts as by depth of feeling and intense enthusiasm. With her, “the wild joys of living” were tempered, a tremendous sense of moral

responsibility underlying every act. Revolution or no revolution, she was born to be great, to leave behind the remembrance of a sovereign personality.

A touch of feminine vanity, rather of self-consciousness, completes the character, renders her still nearer to us; a touch also of "the good hater," that determinative of her career as a revolutionist, is equally evident from the first.

III

At eighteen, Jeanne-Marie Phlipon was something more than exceptionally accomplished. A skilled musician, artist and linguist, with Mrs. Browning's heroine she had also "swept the circle of the sciences." Mathematics and philosophy were her favourite studies; these and lighter subjects never standing in the way of domestic claims. She would quit books, piano, violin, burin, and crayon, to make an omelette, shell peas, or skim the soup. And crowning other endowments was that supreme literary gift to which we owe the immortal *Memoirs*.

Beautiful, witty, magnetically attractive, sure also as it seemed of a modest dowry, ever a consideration in France, she was not likely to want suitors. Childhood and early girlhood having been chronicled, she next gives us piquant sketches of one wooer after another, none as yet realizing her ideal. It seems, moreover, that in bourgeois circles any demoiselle with similar prospects, and even if much less endowed than herself, had here ample choice.

"No sooner," she writes, "is a girl grown up, than a crowd of aspirants hover about her as bees

around newly opened flowers. The austere reared daughter of a highly respectable mother, I only appealed to honourable wooers, the fact of being an only child, and presumably entitled to a small heritage, rendering me in the eyes of these a most desirable bride. They presented themselves in flocks, usually, in the first instance, addressing themselves by letter to my father. The answering of such missives was my business, that is to say, I composed each reply, my father making an exact copy. It was under such circumstances that differences arose between us, worldly conditions in his eyes being the first recommendation; for myself, I detested wealth, amassed, as it seemed to me, by avarice and underhand dealing."

The marriageable young men of the neighbourhood having been one by one passed in review and dismissed, in sprightly terms Madame Roland sketches more favoured outsiders.

"'Is this to be the last of the kind, Mademoiselle?' asked my father, with an air of supreme satisfaction, one day. 'Read the enclosed.'

"I read the letter, from a M. Morizot de Rozain, blushing as I did so. Extremely well written it was, and full of pretty things, the only fault being an allusion to his titles of nobility, an advantage that I did not possess and which he had no right to think I coveted. I shook my head.

"'There is nothing here on which to base an opinion,' I observed; 'however, there is no harm in learning a little more. Another letter or two, and I shall have seen the bottom of the sack. I will prepare your reply.'

“It amused me thus to play the papa on paper. I looked to my own interests with due seriousness, at the same time affecting a fatherly air. M. Morizot de Rozain wrote only three letters, but these revealed the want of judgment and elevation of mind, compensated by no other gifts. I kept the correspondence by me for some time on account of his excellent literary style; there were also material obstacles to such a union, M. Rozain being an advocate without private fortune, and my own dowry being modest.

“In speaking of this *lévee en masse* (general rising) of suitors I did not of course intend to name them all, and the reader will easily excuse such an omission. I have only in mind the strangeness of my position, my hand being sought by so many men whom I had never even seen.”

The next wooer named is Lablancherie, young, travelled, musical, and an author, in her opinion, of some merit. More fortunate than the rest, he made her acquaintance and created a favourable impression. Small, dark of complexion, and very plain, he did not, she tells us, appeal to her imagination, but in other respects she found him sympathetic, whilst on his part, admiration soon ripened into love. From her letters to Sophie Cannel it would appear that later on this feeling was reciprocated. Lablancherie, however, turned out to be a fortune-hunter, and something worse, points not touched upon in the Memoirs. An advocate by profession, he settled at Orleans, and in the meantime, in sprightly terms, Madame Roland sketches one or two more favoured suitors.

“A medical man wearing professional costume,” she writes, “is not a seductive figure in the eyes of a

young girl. I was never able to accept the notion of a periwigged Cupid. Gardanne, with his three hammers,¹ his professional air, his southern accent, his meeting black eye-brows, seemed to me more calculated to give one a fever than to cure it. But having such serious ideas on the subject of marriage, I saw nothing in his advances to smile at.

“ ‘ Well,’ asked my mother gently, after the introduction, ‘ how does the doctor strike you ? Would he prove a suitable husband ? ’

“ ‘ Mamma, how can I possibly tell so soon ? ’

“ ‘ But one thing you must know ; does he inspire liking or the reverse ? ’

“ ‘ Neither the one nor the other ; how it might be after further acquaintance I cannot say.’

“ ‘ Oh ! but we must know what to say if he makes formal proposals, you know.’

“ ‘ And a favourable answer would mean an engagement ? ’

“ ‘ Assuredly. After giving one’s word to an honest man, one cannot draw back.’

“ ‘ Supposing on knowing him better my feelings would be antipathetic ? ’

“ ‘ A reasonable girl does not give way to caprice. Having weighed the for and against of a step so momentous her resolution is taken for once and for all.’

“ ‘ I am bound then to make up my mind at once ? ’

“ ‘ Not that exactly, my child ; but we know enough of M. Gardanne’s character and circum-

¹ *Perruque à trois marteaux*, wig having a central loop and two pendants.

stances to arrive at a favourable decision. Personal acquaintance is a secondary consideration.'

“‘Ah! mamma, I am in no haste to get married.’”

And with this and a maternal kiss the interview ended. Time was given for reflection.

A second interview with the doctor convinced Jeanne-Marie “that he was a man with whom a woman who thinks for herself could live,” and the marriage seemed on the point of taking place when the engraver’s paternal solicitude brought negotiations to a close. So anxious was M. Phlipon as to the means and prospects of a son-in-law that he employed secret agents in order to obtain full information. Naturally much affronted, the doctor made his bow and retired.

And still they came, the claimants for this much-coveted hand, among others one not mentioned in the Memoirs. This was a certain worthy man, whose only fault was his name. Could the brilliant Jeanne-Marie bring her mind to become Madame Coquin, which in plain English is Madame Scoundrel? The thing was not for a moment to be thought of, so the fatally named admirer, although wealthy and highly esteemed, had to seek a wife elsewhere.

Singled out for mention is a cultivated and travelled sexagenarian bearing the aristocratic name of de Sainte-Lette, with whom she interchanged views on literature and art; the pair also showed each other their own manuscripts in prose and verse. M. de Sainte-Lette was a poet, and had written many pretty things. Her musings on paper evoked

in turn highly favourable criticism from him, and one day a prophecy.

“Mademoiselle,” he said, “disdain the imputation as you may, at some time or other you will certainly write a book.”

“Then,” she replied, “it will be under an assumed name. I would eat my fingers rather than appear before the world as an authoress.”

Another sexagenarian, the friend of M. de Sainte-Lette, and, like himself, lettered and an aristocrat, figures on the long list of suitors.

Finally we are introduced to the man whose fortunes she was destined to share and whose name with her own lives in history.

IV

Fraternal generosity characterizes Frenchmen's letters in dealing with their colleagues, no matter nationality or sex. No fellow author knocks at the doors of the busiest in vain. The following pages are mainly indebted to M. Join-Lambert's interesting work, *Le Mariage de Madame Roland*. In 1888 Madame Champagneux, great-granddaughter of the heroine, handed her great ancestress' unpublished correspondence to the Bibliothèque Nationale, and a few years later, accompanied by a biographical sketch, the love-letters of Jeanne-Marie Phlipon and Roland de la Platière were given to the world. With M. Join-Lambert's courteous permission I have freely cited his volume. To his liberality I am also indebted for the admirable portrait embellishing these pages.



JM ROLAND DE LA PLATIÈRE
Inspecteur des manufactures à Lyon

Lemoine del 1774

[Facing p. 43]

The magnetically attractive engraver's daughter was twenty-three when introduced by letter to her future husband. "This note," wrote her bosom friend Sophie Cannet, "will be presented by the philosopher of whom you have often heard me speak. Enlightened, of irreproachable character, M. Roland de la Platière's only failings are an overwhelming admiration for antiquity and a contempt for all that is modern ; he also is accustomed to talk over-much of himself."

With a delicate pen Roland was sketched, as just seventeen years before he had presented himself to his young hostess. If Madame Roland's pen is often steeped in gall, suave and gracious as her correspondence of happier days is many a passage.

"I saw," she writes, "a man of forty and odd years, tall, unceremonious, blunt as is often the scholar without the polish acquired in society, yet with manners simple and easy, good-breeding being in his case allied with philosophic gravity. Attenuation, partial baldness, a sallow complexion did not detract from the advantage of regular features, his whole appearance inspiring respect rather than admiration. He possessed, moreover, a smile of uncommon winningness, a smile that quite transformed his physiognomy when animated by narrative or discussion. His voice was virile, his sentences rapid as those of a man suffering from shortness of breath ; rich in ideas, his speech set one thinking rather than charmed, whilst at intervals piquant, his delivery was brusque and unharmonious. Rare and potent, I hold, is the spell of the human

voice, depending as it does not on vocal quality alone, but on the varying modulations inspired by feeling." Jean-Marie Roland de la Platière was descended from an ancient and noble family of Thizy, (Rhône). Occupying a good official position, much travelled, enjoying the laboriously attained repute of an economist and writer, such a man could but appeal to a dazzlingly endowed and ambitious girl born of bourgeois stock. It was in 1776 that the pair met for the first time. Already Roland had visited Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, England, Germany and the greater part of France. The object of these journeys being an inquiry into the condition of European arts, trades, manufactures and agriculture. His numerous monographs on special subjects, and published under the auspices of the Academy of Sciences, were ultimately to form a comprehensive treaty in the famous *Encyclopédie*, a design never carried out.

Among these pamphlets were a study of the manufacture of velvet, a manual of sheep-rearing, a paper on peat-collecting, and a dictionary of manufactures in four quarto volumes. These works were published subsequently to the meeting that decided Jeanne Phlipon's fate; but we can imagine that as she writes his conversation would be informing rather than seductive. Years of travel, often on foot, and under most fatiguing circumstances, had impaired a naturally feeble constitution, and had depressed his spirits. The meeting came as a fillip; probably for the first time he encountered feminine attractions so happily combined, radiant loveliness, and sparkling speech. "Beautiful is thy countenance, and witty are

thy words," could he have said in the language of the Apocryphal lover. On her side, if of quite other kind, the fascination was quite as strong. As we have seen, the proud young bourgeoisie keenly resented those distinctions of rank that under the *ancien régime* amounted to caste. "From the age of fourteen to sixteen," moreover, she had confided to her friend Sophie, "I had dreamed of a polished man of the world, from sixteen to eighteen of a wit, from eighteen my ideal has been a philosopher."

The ideal of eighteen was now before her. Flattering as well as stimulative must have proved this new acquaintance, and very soon the pair evidently found topics more moving than the manufacture of velvet or the nutritive qualities of the recently introduced potato.

It was in January, 1776, that Roland, then stationed at Amiens as inspector of commerce and industry, presented his letter introductory. The correspondence began in September of the following year; a few letters were interchanged during 1778, and meantime the friends occasionally met, meantime also on both sides intellectual companionships had developed into deeper feeling.

In April 1779 Roland penned a letter to which we are indebted for as exquisite a page as French literature can show.

Writing in impassioned strains, and venturing on the thee and thou, only permissible among those bound by closest intimacy, the lover omitted the one word which alone could condone such familiarity. In this fervid declaration the word marriage did not

occur, nor was there any allusion to the future, or to a plan of an existence mutually shared.

Coming under the circumstances, such a missive bore double sting. Jeanne-Marie Phlipon had now lost both her mother and in part the small maternal fortune, formerly counted upon as an independence.

Before her lay one or other alternative, either marriage or the earning of her own livelihood.

Never was feminine dignity more eloquently vindicated. Next day, we may be sure, with tears restrained and lips compressed, she wrote her reply. From the four pages of large octavo I give the most striking passage, rather might it be called the peroration of a brilliant defence—

“I had looked upon the sweets of friendship as compensation for misfortune, revelling in the deliciousness of entire confidence, yet ever careful not to let my feelings carry me too far. In your strong, energetic nature and richly stored mind I discerned an ideal friend, loving as such to regard you and to be able to add tenderest sympathy. You also succumbed to the same emotions, encouraging the growth of a sentiment against which I struggled. Seeing this I threw off reserve, I let you discover the truth, relying on your generosity for the support of which I stood in need. Instead of acting thus, of letting me rest havened in perfect friendship, each day of late you have played upon my weakness, and now you dare to ask the reason of my altered behaviour, of my silence and embarrassment. Monsieur, the victim of feeling I may one day be, never a man’s plaything. You must have met in the world many women

a thousand times more attractive and more complacent than myself, women in whom the love of pleasure would easily overcome scruples of conscience. Brought up in seclusion—call me rustic, forbidding, if you will—it is not in my nature to regard love in the light of pastime. Love as I look upon it, is a passion terrible in its intensity, a passion that would take possession of my entire being and influence my whole life. Give me back, therefore, your friendship or fear—lest I ask you to see me no more.”

Roland's answer, no longer addressing her in the thee and thou of the lover, instead as Mademoiselle, was almost abjectly apologetic. But no more. Under a subtle spell, the middle-aged, sententious *savant* nevertheless held aloof from wedlock.

V

Roland's palinode was finally followed by the long-looked-for declaration. He no longer wrote as the mere adorer but as a suitor. Then for fifteen months longer intercourse was carried on by letter, marriage meanwhile seeming as remote as ever. No sooner did matters appear settled than fresh obstacles arose, Roland as it seemed by no means unwilling to remain a celibate. It was a prolonged *chassé-croisé*, game of hide-and-seek, a continued untying and re-entangling of threads. During the interval no less than ninety-seven missives were exchanged, and only Madame Roland's most enthusiastic admirers surely have gone through the entire collection. For these the correspondence has special interest,

throwing as it does new light on a many-faceted character. Instead of the Egeria of the Gironde, the Roman matron who "died grandly," we have here portrayed by herself, a brilliant aspiring girl who sees in such a union the fulfilment of her destiny, the opening of a larger, more satisfying life.

A reader of Plutarch from her ninth year, she had ever before her mind those who—

"Were able, therefore, to fulfil a course,
Nor missed life's crown, authentic attribute."

Short of this consummation her own existence must be vain and infructuous. The prematurely-aged dyspeptic appealed rather to intellect and ambition than to deeper feelings. Fondly as she caressed the illusion, she had not yet found her ideal, "the passion so terrible in its intensity" that would take possession of her entire being.

Their misunderstanding having been made up, we find both recurring to the thee and thou of earlier days. By far the larger proportion of letters were written by the lady, her epistles, too, being voluminous, whilst Roland's were infrequent and curt. Evidently as much in love as it was possible for such a man to be, he wrote circumspectly, always apparently keeping guard on himself. The period covered by this love-making on paper was one of heavy anxieties and petty cares to Jeanne-Marie Phlipon, her lover being the confidant of all. Her faithful maid falls ill, night and day the young mistress watches by her bedside. "I tend her," she writes, "as humanity, attachment and gratitude for faithful

services dictate," and in a later note she tells him : "My poor dear is dead ; she died on the seventh day of a malignant fever accompanied by bronchitis. She was fully conscious of her condition. 'I shall never get any better,' she said, 'and I am not sorry. I always wished to die under your roof, and had I lived longer I might perhaps not have had this satisfaction.' I watched by her during the last eight hours during which she never lost consciousness, and although unable to articulate, held tight my hand until strength failed her. I consoled and softened her dying moments with such hopes as she believed in, but to a simple nature and unenlightened mind, to one also whose existence has been hard, death comes easily. I know that she died as she had wished to do, by my side. All the same I cannot stay my tears."

Have we not here a foreshadowing of the immortal scene fifteen years later ? Not then to simple natures and unenlightened minds, not to those who die unregretfully, did she prove an angel of consolation, setting aside despair, cheerily, even gaily distracting sombre thoughts, calling up a smile to pallid lips.

In dealing with material things Jeanne-Marie Phlipon would not have been a true Frenchwoman had she left matters to chance. An excellent housewife, a skilful and devoted nurse, she was also an admirable woman in business.

As her mother's heir she saw herself confronted by opposing obligations. Filial duty enjoined generous dealing with the thriftless engraver, self-respect called for prudence. Of her small fortune,

fourteen thousand francs (£560) in all, her father had claimed four thousand, a sum which would be far safer on his own account in her hands.

All these vexations were confided to her future husband, as she now regarded him, the new and closer relations of the pair inspiring eloquent, even dithyrambic flights.

“Yes,” she writes, henceforth with himself using the second person singular, “I will ever prove worthy the title you offer me. Is it indeed true that my life is to pass by your side, that it will be in my power to sweeten your own? The thought absorbs my being. I begin to realize happiness, a happiness, rest assured of it, of which you are sole arbitrator. I belong to you, I desire this surrender, it is alike my delight and my pride. Your choice is my triumph, to justify it will be my most cherished task. . . . To you I leave every arrangement for the future. Be one and all at the same time, my master, my supporter, my crown. Let your soul elevate my own, making me better, more amiable, worthier of you. Your will will be my law. I shall joy in anticipating it. No longer I fear to be led astray as I journey through existence, I have only to follow your steps. Direct the command, make known your wishes. The only thing I covet is your esteem, for you and for you only I henceforth live.”

Roland's answer is tender and lover-like, but with a touch, just a touch of superiority. It is the letter of an elderly suitor who feels that in offering his name he may complacently accept the foregoing transports.

“I firmly believe,” he writes, “that you will become all that you wish and ought to be; not only do your words convince me of this, but the promptings of my own heart.”

Farther on he adds—

“With regard to the future, I will leave the arrangement of domicile and domestic details in your own hands, having no experience to guide me and no leisure to enter into them. Our home will be a second cottage of Philemon and Baucis, or nearly so. It will rest with yourself to turn it into a temple.”

In a later letter he does not disdain details, giving minute particulars as to circumstances and belongings. He possessed, he said, enough house and personal linen to last for two years, plate for eight covers and two gravy spoons, that was all; furniture he had none. Exact statements of income and prospects are given, information probably as delightful to his betrothed as amorous strains. But the engagement by Roland's desire as yet remained a secret, and Jeanne-Marie Philpon was not slow to perceive hesitations and signs of drawing back. This marriage on which she had evidently set her heart was indeed a veritable will-o'-the-wisp, now advancing, now retreating, never for an instant tangible or resting within reach.

As M. Join-Lambert writes, Roland felt himself under a spell, but quailed before surrender. And as there is ever a serio-comic side to human affairs, bad weather invariably affected his lover-like ardour. Unpromising circumstances also rendered him over-cautious.

With inexhaustible patience and enthusiasm the peripatetics of this long correspondence are followed by the editor, not an elucidating touch, not an interpreting sentence being missed.

Very reluctantly Roland had at last released his betrothed from the promise of secrecy. The engraver raised objections. Sharp contention arose between the sensitive wooer and his perspective father-in-law.

“With the fall of the leaf, 1779,” writes M. Join-Lambert, “the thermometer of Roland’s heart fell to zero.” On the twenty-first of October he writes from Amiens.

“The elements are not more disturbed in some chaotic manifestation of Nature than ideas now seething in my brain,” adding after a somewhat unlover-like rigmarole, “You earnestly desire an interview, myself no less so. But where, how and when? I may go to Paris in December, perhaps in the beginning of the month.” And with nothing more definite the letter closes.

Then womanly pride asserted itself. Motherless, at variance with her father, rejected—to put the matter plainly—by her lover, the future a blank, Jeanne-Marie Philpon followed the usual course of a girl similarly situated. She flew to a convent. Early in November she entered the house of *Les dames de la Congrégation*, Faubourg Saint Marcel, remaining under this roof for two months.

But silence, a haughty attitude and cloistral separation, soon brought the recalcitrant to his senses. “At the end of five or six months,” she writes, here her memory failing her, “M. Roland visited me, again falling desperately in love as he

beheld me through the grating, my appearance being that of happier days. He urged me to quit the convent and again offered his hand, his brother, the Benedictine, acting at mediator."

About the middle of January of the following year she quitted her retreat, and on the fourth of January the five years' courtship came to an end, with it, a correspondence as humanly interesting as any ever penned.

VI

Roland was now forty-six, his bride just twenty years younger, such disparity of years being levelled by her reflective habits, virile intellect, and a genius for sympathy rarer than either.

To Roland marriage brought the stimulus of intellectual companionship, the charm of a well-ordered home and the joys of paternity. If, indeed, on her side there had been self-deception from the first, this union was nevertheless a fulfilment, the larger, fuller life so long dreamed of was at last a reality. Existence would not in her own case prove an unresolved chord.

What a change, indeed, in worldly circumstances. The maternal dowry had slipped through her father's fingers, and, if remaining unmarried, she must have worked for a livelihood. As the wife of a highly esteemed *savant* and government official, she now occupied an enviable social position.

The first years of wedlock were spent in Paris and at Amiens, the birth of a little daughter lending

grace to "laborious days characterized by the sober happiness arising from a sense of duty fulfilled." Thus she described daily existence to a friend. In 1784 Roland was appointed Inspector of Arts and Manufactures at Lyons. In the same year he visited England, his wife accompanying him, bringing back unbounded enthusiasm for English political institutions and that consolation of prison hours, a love of English poetry. Later the pair travelled in Switzerland and in France. Meanwhile the household was established in Roland's ancestral home a few miles from Villefranche-sur-Saône, and about the same distance from Lyons. Here the greater part of the year was spent, only two months' residence in the *chef-lieu* of the Rhône being obligatory. It is from Villefranche that Madame Roland penned some of her most fascinating letters, none more suggestive than the following, dated November 10, 1786, and addressed to her husband and her own close friend Bosc—

"It is now eleven o'clock in the morning, and after a night of peaceful repose and early hours devoted to housewifely duties, picture me by the fireside, my husband in his study, my little one knitting, myself now chatting with the one, now overlooking the other, and now writing to a friend. The snow falls heavily, and whilst drinking deep of such domestic happiness I am saddened by the thought of those suffering from cold and hunger."

Then she speaks of a charming woman friend, who had lately spent two months at *Le Clos*—thus Roland's patrimonial home was named—"Whilst

she was with me I went into society on her account, this outer life being varied with quiet days in the country, and evenings devoted to reading aloud and discussions upon the volume in hand. I am now very glad to resume my daily routine. Once more we feel at home, and, despite the urgent solicitations of friends, I have decided not to spend part of the winter in Lyons, instead, not stirring from our dovecot. My good man will be obliged to absent himself for some time; to him I leave the taste of cultivating social relations and of attending to matters administrative and academic. Here for the present, therefore, I remain, not preening my feathers till the spring brings sunshine."

Further on she speaks of her little girl—

"You must know that Eudora, now five years and six months old, can read quite well. She begins to prefer her needle to toys, amuses herself with figures, and does not trouble her head about clothes, thinks herself pretty when she is called good, and desires no better reward for good conduct than a bon-bon and a kiss. Her fits of wilfulness occur less frequently and are more easy to curb. She is not in the least afraid of being alone in the dark, and being fearless in other respects, never dreams it worth her while to tell a lie. You must also know that so far she has right notions on important subjects, and if formerly her difficult temper, waywardness, and general indifference rendered me very anxious, we cannot now feel that our pains have been thrown away."

In a later letter she returns to Eudora. Madame Roland would not have been a Frenchwoman

had not motherhood and its duties been her first preoccupation. She had nursed Eudora herself, a quite exceptional course, despite Rousseau's fulminations against wet-nursing, and it may be remarked, by the way, a quite exceptional course to-day. Vainly have novels and plays been written in order to teach Frenchwomen their duty. *Donatienne* has found thousands of readers, *Les Remplaçantes* for months drew large audiences. The wet-nurse is still as much of an institution in all but humble French homes as it was a century ago.

Eudora, now aged six and a half, is described in several pages. Here are one or two citations—

“ I will speak of my daughter whom you love and who deserves your affection. She likes reading and dancing so long as these occupations do not trouble her and she succeeds in both. The piano makes her yawn when attention is exacted, nevertheless if an air pleases her she will repeat a few notes again and again. . . . She is very apt to say and to do the very things that are forbidden ; in other words, she likes to go her own way, a tendency sometimes carried much too far. This, however, she is beginning to find out, and praises herself for obedience as her elders would do after some heroic effort. Although her father is a constant playfellow she reveres him, always begging me to conceal her little naughtiness ; myself she fears less, and I am her confidant in everything. My husband and I are now deliberating as to whether or no we shall allow her to be vaccinated. This is a serious matter which much occupies my mind. If you can

do so, let me have some strong arguments in favour of inoculation."

In the following note Madame Roland appears under another aspect. Playfully she cites the raillery of Henri Quatre to his general who had missed a victorious engagement—

"Go hang thyself, brave Crillon," she writes to Bosc in October 1788. "We are up to our ears in making jam, preserving pears in wine, and the rest, and you are not here to degustate; such, my elegant sir, are our occupations at the present time. The vintage is meanwhile in full swing, and soon there will be no grapes except in the housewife's store-room and the master's cellar. . . . But you who have no vintage to look after, why do you not write?"

Louis-Augustin Bosc, the recipient of these delightful letters, was a naturalist of considerable distinction, and it was to his care that the little Eudora was confided on her mother's arrest, also the memoirs written in prison. Bosc outlived the first Empire, occupying highly honourable official positions.

A year later, in December 1789, Arthur Young visited Lyons, and provokingly elusive is the following entry—

"The 28th, waited on Mons. de Frossard, a Protestant minister, who with great readiness and liberality gave me much valuable information; and for my instruction on points with which he was not equally acquainted, introduced me to Mons. Roland de la Platière, inspector of the Lyons fabrics. This gentleman had notes upon many subjects which afforded an interesting conversation; and as he

communicated freely, I had the pleasure to find that I should not quit Lyons without a good portion of the knowledge I sought. This gentleman, somewhat advanced in life, has a young and beautiful wife."

"A young and beautiful wife!" that is all; what would we not give for a sketch, however brief, of the household: Roland staid, pedantic, austere, yet the playfellow of his eight-year-old Eudora; the little girl, fair, as we are told, with chestnut hair, who would, of course, be seated at table, and the matron with her inspiring face and still more inspiring speech, of whom it was said, that by none was French spoken more perfectly, by none did it wield subtler charm?

VII

The Revolution thus found Madame Roland ready to play her great part. A studious girlhood, habits of deep reflection, intercourse with intellectual and moral equals, a passionate interest in the welfare of humanity, last but not least, an assured social and official position fitted her for the tremendous stage. But Revolution came not only as an awakening of splendid capacities and as a wide sphere of action. In the person of Buzot it came as a complement of existence, the final, the all-embracing gift of destiny! There is a subtle passage in *Sordello*, appropriate to this phase, not only of the one in question but of all full and complex existences. Browning here speaks of the self, the individuality that must always

outweigh achievement, however shining, how from the really great poet, for instance, escapes some proof that—

“The singer’s life was ’neath—
The life his song exhibits, this a sheath
To that, a passion and a knowledge far
Transcending these, majestic as they are.”

To give in detail Madame Roland’s political career would be to re-write revolutionary history. My concluding pages will only touch upon political events in so far as is necessary, and especially as affecting her relations with Buzot.

It was on the fifteenth of December, 1791, that Roland and his wife settled in Paris, the quiet domestic existence of Villefranche being at an end.

Since “that wise and honest traveller’s” visit to Lyons two years before, how much had happened! What, indeed, had not happened? Nothing less than a break in universal history, a starting point given to civilization and the world. Here had been no filling of old bottles with new wine, no fatal patching up in the nature of a compromise. For once and for all French manhood had declared itself. Centuries of caste and privilege had been annihilated by a sentence.

Mirabeau’s defiance of the royal prerogative on the twenty-third of June, 1789, the taking of the Bastille on the fourteenth of July, in the words of our own Fox, “by how much the greatest event in history and by how much the best!” the abolition of the feudal system and the Declaration of the Rights of Man in August, the fête of the Federation, and the king’s constitutional oath in

the following year, the violation of that oath in 1791, the flight to Varennes, and the Pillnitz meeting, when with the sovereigns of Austria and Prussia the emigrés had concerted a descent upon France, and the restoration of the *ancien régime*—these tremendous events had swiftly come one after another, and the fate of France still trembled in the balance.

We can imagine with what passionate enthusiasm Madame Roland threw herself into the struggle, how in this Roman atmosphere, in an element calling forth all her powers, physical, moral and intellectual, she felt at last at home. Henceforth we have no more gracious pictures of *bourgeois* interiors from her pen, instead, heroic utterances breathing the loftiest patriotism and self-abnegation, also, bitter invectives against poltroonery or half-heartedness. She is thus described by a contemporary—

“Before 1789,” wrote Lamontey, “I had frequently seen Madame Roland. Her eyes, the shape of her head, and her hair, were remarkably beautiful, and a delicate complexion and bloom made her look years younger than she was in reality. During the Revolution I only met her once, namely, at the commencement of her husband’s ministry, and found that meanwhile she had lost nothing of her youthful freshness and simplicity. Roland, with his air of an elderly Quaker, might have been her father; about the pair flittered their little girl, her long hair hanging to her waist. It was as if a Pennsylvanian family figured in M. de Calonne’s salon! Madame Roland conversed on



(In the Bibliothèque Nationale)

Facing p. 61.

nothing but public affairs, and I could see that my own views, much more moderate than her own, awakened her pity. With great exaltation of mind was here combined a gentle, unaggressive temper. Although the monarchy had not yet fallen, she did not conceal her prognostics of a situation she was determined to fight to the death."

François-Nicolas-Léonard Buzot was born at Evreux, Eure, in 1760, and was consequently Madame Roland's junior by six years. An ardent republican, he represented his native town in the *États Généraux* and afterwards became member of the Convention, throwing in his lot with the high-souled, but self-deluded Girondins. His wanderings when an outlaw are given elsewhere in this volume.

The "Toi que je n'ose pas nommer!" (Thou whose name I dare not utter) of the prison memoirs immediately joined the political and social circle, of which Madame Roland was head and inspiration.

Buzot and his wife, described as "a good ordinary woman, by no means on his own mental level," lived close by. The friends constantly met, between Buzot and his hostess soon springing up something warmer, deeper, and more dangerous than intellectual and patriotic sympathy. Beautiful, refined, of sweet ingratiating manners, Buzot forms a figure apart, in many respects having little in common with his fellow-revolutionaries and colleagues.

Especially was he a contrast to the elderly sententious Roland as to matters of personal appearance. The Minister of the Interior dressed carelessly, paying no regard whatever to his outward

man, thereby offending Marat and Camille Desmoulins. The former sneered at his well-worn coat and woollen stockings, whilst the other (Le Vieux Cordelier, 10 Nivose An. 11) wrote of his out-at-elbow condition, with the taunt that indigence and liberty are not necessarily allied.

The first of Madame Roland's portraits written in prison, as we might expect, is Buzot's, it is also the most minute and the most carefully finished. We feel a woman's passion burning in every line. After dilating on his elevation of character, indomitable courage, patriotic ardour and domestic virtues, she writes—

“Mildness itself to his friends, Buzot is the redoubtable adversary of the unprincipled. Still in the flower of his youth, a ripe judgment and an irreproachable life have won for him the esteem and confidence of his fellows.

“By ordinary men his penetration is looked upon as visionariness, his powerful arguments are styled diatribes, his opposition to every kind of excess is called a revolt against the majority. Because he held morality and good manners to be necessary under a republic he has been accused of royalist sentiments, because he abominated the September massacres he was said to have insulted Paris. . . . Such are his crimes.

“Endowed with a noble presence and symmetrical proportions, his dress has ever been characterized by that care, appropriateness and fastidious attention to details bespeaking a love of order, good taste and at the same time respect for himself and for the world in general.”

But it was neither Buzot's engaging personality, nor his nobleness of mind, neither the mutually shared views, hopes and fears of two ardent republicans, nor the influence of what Goethe terms, "the mighty goddess called propinquity," that had dictated the above portrait. Here instead is revealed that magnetic attraction for once and for all drawing a man and a woman together, an attraction in this case held in check by duty.

In Buzot Madame Roland recognized her ideal. Here at last was found the complement of her own rare individuality, her second self. Here that supremely sympathetic nature was met by the sympathy that never asks for bread and is put off with a stone.

Not a shadow, be it remembered, obscures her fair fame. Passionate as was the attachment of these two, it remained in one sense Platonic. Whatever Madame Roland's failings might have been as a political leader, as a wife and mother her reputation matches that of the Roman matron and remains—

"Chaste as the icicle,
That's candied by the frost from purest snow,
And hangs on Dian's temple."

VII

In March 1792 was formed the Girondin ministry, Roland accepting the portfolio of the Interior, his wife acting as his secretary.

Then began that duel so fatal to France, so

suicidal to herself, her friends and all she held sacred, between Madame Roland and Danton, the umpires of national destiny, the master minds of the Gironde and the Montagne. Love and hate, hate and love by turns took possession of as noble a heart as ever beat in a woman's frame.

Untouchable by time, vicissitude or self-examination, remained her passion for Buzot, no less deep, fixed and impervious to reason remained her hatred of Danton.

A woman still, despite her tremendous valiancy of spirit and supreme intellectual gifts, Madame Roland was implacable. She could not forgive an insult, rather a gibe.

Perhaps Danton had in mind the irretrievable calamities due to political wire-pullers of the other sex, the harm recorded of feminine influence throughout French history. Perhaps also he resented the noisy interruption of Parisian *concierges* or door-keepers and fish-women in the Convention. Be this as it may, upon one occasion he uttered a sarcasm which possibly, indeed probably, changed the course of events, bringing about direst catastrophe.

"Roland is not alone in the ministry," he said, the sarcasm reaching Madame Roland's ears and ever after rankling in her mind.

Hence came about the light touch of a woman's fingers that turned the scale, the casting vote for war dropped by the same beautiful hand. It is now clear as daylight that the fusion of the Gironde and the Montagne so passionately desired by Danton and so vital to the national interests was

mainly prevented by Madame Roland. Dearly indeed did she pay not only for faults of temper but errors of judgment.

Perhaps for temper the word temperament should be substituted.

This woman, so refined in all that concerned personality, so sensitive to anything approaching repulsiveness in appearance, voice or gesture, and so accustomed to deference, even homage, might well be pardoned some shrinking from the Titan of Revolution, "le revolutionnaire gigantesque," of Michelet. In history Danton is a superbly heroic figure. What is his heavy frame, what are his uncomely, scarred features, his thunderous voice and coarse utterances to us? But with Madame Roland he was brought daily face to face, and she saw in him not only a blustering brow-beating adversary, but a reckless tyrant, above all—a legend now for once and for all disposed of—in him she saw the author of the September massacres.

We know in these days that the real Danton, like every true Frenchman, was a man of infinite domesticities, never so happy as when a member of the large opulent household at Arcis-sur-Aube, now fishing in the silvery stream close by, now gossiping with the old nurse to whom he left a small pension, now discussing affairs with his step-father and mother, or playing with his little sons, one of whom is represented by a descendant to-day, Danton's great-grandson having been born at San Francisco a few years back, his birth being registered at Arcis.

One English traveller at least can disprove that bitter sentence penned by his noble but misguided

adversary. How often during my sojourns at Arcis-sur-Aube when chatting with the late highly-respected mayor, Danton's great-nephew, have I thought of the Danton legend, its hollowness and absurdity! The bitterness of Madame Roland's caricature may well be condoned, considering the circumstances under which it was penned. But immeasurable has been the harm thereby done his memory as to her own. No pettifogging lawyer was the great citizen of Arcis; instead, an advocate of good, even high repute, the scion of worthy middle-class stock, and true representative of the French people at its best.

In the counsels of the Gironde, Madame Roland reigned supreme. To her thinking, the noble men composing that body represented France, which contemporary research has proved was not the case. The course of events occurring between Roland's appointment to the Ministry and its fall is briefly indicated by the following passage. I cite textually from the first living authority on the Revolution—

“The Montagnards, in view of the national struggle for independence waged with entire Europe, believed in the necessity of a dictatorship, such dictatorship to be exercised by the Convention under the auspices of the Jacobin Club and the Commune of Paris. The Girondins, on the contrary, repudiated the notion of such dictatorship, and desired the government to be carried on constitutionally as in times of peace. They failed to realize the *terrible necessity* of war.” The italics are M. Aulard's own. Danton, the one great

statesman of the Revolution, did realize that terrible necessity, and by his trumpet-call, "De l'audace, encore de l'audace and toujours l'audace" (Daring, yet more daring and always daring), saved France from the fate of Poland.

But if France was thus saved, the Republic was thereby lost. The *coup d'état* of the thirty-first of May and second of June, 1793, placing the Girondins under the ban, was a Mene Tekel Upharsin. Law being set aside, naturally personal liberties became a dead letter.

It was on the first of June, 1793, that Madame Roland was arrested and placed in the prison of the Abbaye. Set at liberty after her magnificent defence on the twenty-fourth, she was re-arrested on the same day and conveyed to the abominable house of correction known as Sainte Pélagie. Within those walls she remained till the thirty-first of the following October, a week's incarceration in the Conciergerie being followed by her condemnation and death.

Neither terrible surroundings nor conviction of impending death, neither separation from all she loved nor the frustration of patriotic aims and social utopias, could vanquish that proud spirit. No sooner did prison walls hem her in than she calmly arranged daily routine as if years of existence lay before her—friendly visits, books, drawing materials, her *forte-pian* or piano, above all, pen and ink, helping the laggard hours.

Helen Maria Williams has given invaluable records of prison life during the Terror, having herself been incarcerated in the Luxemburg. How

her tea-pot was always being called for and how a kindly turnkey, named Benoit, alleviated the sorrows and privations of his charges, is best told by herself. We have also from her pen a striking portrait of Madame Roland. The citations will help us to understand the condition of things at the Abbaye.

“The poor,” she writes of her fellow-prisoners, “lived not upon the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table, but shared the comforts of the repast; and here was formed a community of the small stock of goods which belonged to the whole without the necessity of a requisition. One broom which was the property of a countess was used by twenty delicate hands to sweep the respective apartments, and a tea-kettle with which a friend had furnished my mother, was literally, as Dr. Johnson observed of his own, ‘never allowed to get cool,’ but was employed from morning till night in furnishing the English with tea.” (Robespierre at this time having ordered the arrest of many English residents.) “In the afternoon,” she continues, “the prisoners met in an ante-chamber, which commanded a view of the gardens. Here they formed themselves into groups; some conversed, others walked up and down the room; others gazed from the windows on the walks below, where perhaps they recognized a relation or friend, who, being denied the privilege of visiting them, had come to soothe them by a look or tear of sympathy. During the first days of our confinement the prisoners were permitted to see their friends, and many a striking contrast of gaiety and sorrow did the ante-chamber then pre-

sent. . . . Benoît, the keeper of the prison, is a name which many a wretch has blessed, for many a sorrow his compassion and gentleness have softened. His heart was indeed but ill suited to his office. He was not to be intimidated into cruelty. Without deviating from his duty, he pursued his steady course of humanity, and may the grateful benedictions of the unhappy have ascended to heaven."

These first days of Madame Roland's imprisonment were softened in like manner. She tells us how the wife of the porter invited her to dine in their own room, being airier and more cheerful ; how she received visits from old friends and her faithful servants ; and how she was permitted to carry on her correspondence and to see the daily journals. She also tells us how, spreading a white cloth over a dingy, rickety table under her window, she arranged writing materials and books, calmly awaiting the worst.

Every moment was weighted with apprehension ; her own fate and those of her friends were jeopardized almost past hope. Yet she could handle burin and graver, play on her piano, pore over Plutarch, Hume, and Thompson's *Seasons*, and indite flowingly as in by-gone, brilliantly prosperous days.

The secret of such unflinching courage and unshakable stoicism was known to herself and one other only.

The awfulness of this situation for the first time enabled her to commune freely with her own heart, to lay it bare to her second self, the late-found ideal of early life. Under the shadow of the

guillotine the entire perspective of existence and all that composed it had changed. Conventionalities, worldly repute, accepted standards were dwarfed by one imperative necessity. She could not go down to the grave unaided by transparent sincerity, at war with her own conscience.

Thus impelled, she wrote those passionate letters to Buzot—Buzot, the “Toi que je n’ose pas nommer” of the *Memoirs*.

VIII

Towards the close of November 1863 a young man offered a second-hand bookseller in Paris some manuscripts that had been collected by his late father. The packet was glanced at and refused. “Your papers seem of little interest,” the bookseller replied. “But I have others at home,” was the rejoinder. A second and yet a third time he returned with a bundle of old letters, finally receiving fifty francs for his entire collection. Just four weeks later appeared an advertisement of manuscripts and autograph letters for sale, among these figuring Louvet’s *Memoirs*, a tragedy by Salles, notes by Barbaroux, Pétion, and others, and four letters from Madame Roland to Buzot, being the fifty francs’ worth of the lucky purchaser! How the papers had got into the hands of their former possessor to this day remains a mystery.

Exquisitely written, not a blot, not an erasure marring the semi-folios of coarse brown paper, Madame Roland’s letters may to-day be examined

by the curious in the Bibliothèque Nationale. Calligraphy, as an art, was sedulously cultivated during her girlhood, and, although evidently penned in haste and without a second thought as to style or construction, each missive is an epistolary *chef d'œuvre*. Every sentence glows with passion, patriotic exaltation, and altruistic fervour, and the phrase matches the thought. Crystal clear, flowing, of classic purity, the French language is here handled by a born master. "How I read and re-read your lines," she writes to Buzot from the Abbaye on the twenty-second of June. "I press them to my heart. I cover them with kisses, never having hoped to behold your handwriting again. Fearing lest I might compromise your safety, I dared not address a letter to yourself, but wrote to Le Tellier for news. I had been brought hither in a proud and tranquil state of mind. On learning that the twenty-two (Girondins) were arrested, I cried, 'My country is lost.' Your escape has in some measure quieted my apprehension. Pursue your generous aims, my friend. Too soon on the plains of Philippi Brutus despaired of Roman liberties. So long as any republican breathes, is free, and retains his energy, he must, he can, be useful. In any case, the southern departments offer you a place of refuge; if dangers hem you round, thither turn your steps; there honest men will find an asylum; there you will be able to live and serve your fellows."

Madame Roland had refused to quit Paris, in her home quietly awaiting arrest. Fearing lest her friends should now attempt a rescue, she adds—

“As for myself, my mind is made up. Calmly I await either the return to a *régime* of justice, or the worst that tyranny can inflict, feeling certain that such an example is not without its utility. If there is one thing that makes me tremble it is the thought of your efforts on my behalf. My friend, only in saving your country can you save me, and I would not accept safety on any other terms. Death, torture, pain are as nothing to me. One and all I can defy, aye, not for a single moment until my last, will I yield to unworthy weakness.”

Then she speaks of others who would suffer should their charge escape.

“It is to the humanity of my gaolers that I owe privileges rendering escape easy. Little kindnesses on the part of these are more binding than iron fetters. If for no other reason, I should refuse all chances of evasion. I would not imperil the good folks who thus alleviate the hardships of captivity.”

Now follows a deeper, tenderer note; a word interpreting hitherto secret passion. “Pity me not,” she writes. “My executioners will reconcile love and duty.”

What, indeed, should she do with freedom now, Buzot’s love, Roland’s honoured wife?

The second letter, dated ten days later, and written in the prison of Sainte-Pélagie, contains passages of equal fervour and moral elevation.

“I have your letter of the twenty-seventh; I seem to hear your courageous utterances, to participate in your resolution, your convictions. I honour myself in being loved and cherished by

you." The next sentence is evidently an allusion to the projects of escape against which she had now set her face. With Socrates she would suffer anything but ignominy.

"My friend, let us not be so far carried away by passion as to inflict a blow upon our country. Let us not depreciate that constancy for which we make cruellest sacrifices, but which are richly repaid. Say, do you not know moments too pure for disavowal, an affection controlled by duty, strengthened by the very reserve thus imposed? Is there a greater gift than that of indifference to misfortune and death, of finding in one's own heart joy and consolation until the end? I have already said it. Proud of being persecuted when character and honesty are under the ban, even without your love I should have supported evil days. You render them sweet."

Three days later, in a shorter letter, she speaks of having received two letters from Buzot. These had been handed to her by a friend named Vallée; indeed, vile as were her surroundings at St. Pélagie, she enjoyed privileges unknown to the victims of the White Terror a generation later. This we shall see later on. In her third missive, she comforts Buzot with regard to her change of prison. In the Abbaye her fellow-prisoners had been suspected persons belonging to the middle and upper ranks. Her present jail housed women in the last stage of moral and social degradation. Even such trials could not cow her lofty spirit. With every vicissitude she attained a higher degree of mental grandeur, day by day, seeming to drift farther and

farther from former ties and actualities, the only reality being Buzot's love.

Roland and Eudora are not forgotten ; but, worn out by suspense and suffering, agonized by the thought of her husband's danger and of final separation from her child, she takes refuge in an attachment, now for the first time confessed and openly reciprocated. Yet in this penultimate letter—was it to comfort him?—she speaks of possible deliverance.

“Calm yourself, dear friend,” she writes, “this change has not so far aggravated my situation that anything must be risked on my behalf. Our adversaries would momentarily triumph over my escape. The vaunting would be on their side, the fear of consequences on mine. My deliverance is inevitable if matters mend. There is nothing to do but wait. Such waiting is not painful to me ; indeed, with the exception of a few much-prized moments, I have been happier here than elsewhere during the last six months. . . . Four days ago I had *this dear picture* (sic) brought hither ; up till then, by a superstitious feeling, I would not let it be in prison. But why deprive myself of your dear portrait, faint yet precious substitute for its subject ? Bathed with tears, hidden from every eye, it lies next my heart. Those who love like ourselves possess a consolation for every evil, a motive for the grandest and best actions, a reward for the last sacrifice. Adieu, my beloved, adieu.”

The fourth letter, probably the last received by Buzot, follows next day, and is the longest of the series. No less than six quarto pages are filled, the handwriting growing smaller, the lines closer as

Madame Roland proceeds. Paper was, without doubt, difficult to procure, and time pressed. Who could say what the morrow might bring forth?

Her faithful maid was still permitted to visit her, and had just brought Buzot's letter. After a clarion note of exhortation and inspiring she gives in greater detail the routine of prison life.

"My friend," she writes, "I hasten to protest against your resolution of resorting to arms. I understand the course dictated by courage, and Heaven forbid that I should deprecate noble impulses. But here it is a question of the public good, not of a brave man's aspirations. Our wise counsellors are not so numerous that we can let them expose themselves in war. More powerful can you be against our adversaries where you are (Buzot was then actually at Caen) and occupied as you are than in abetting armed resistance. . . . Ah! my friend, my beloved, beware lest you imperil everything by inconsidered ardour. . . ."

Then she adds—

"I lately resorted to prison fare, pleased by such exercise of self-control, also by being able to spend on others the money hitherto laid out on myself. But I found that in my own case mental powers exceeded the physical, and have given up the experiment. Deprivation of exercise permits no radical change in diet.

"Here I enjoy more air than in the Abbaye, and whenever I choose I may use the porter's pleasant room; it is there that I receive the one or two friends whose visits are permitted. To reach this room I have to go from one end of the prison to

the other, all the while being stared at by the turnkeys and degraded women lodged near my own quarter. I therefore rarely quit my cell. It is just large enough to hold a chair by the bed. Here by a tiny table I sit and read, write and draw. Here, with your portrait in my bosom, I thank Heaven for having learned to know you, and for having tasted the ineffable happiness of love like our own, a love vulgar natures can never experience and which rises high above unworthy satisfaction.

“B. (Bosc) has sent me some flowers from the Jardin des Plantes, which beautify and render fragrant this bare retreat. A poor fellow-prisoner in an adjoining cell is thankful for a small sum to render such menial services as I require. Such is my present existence.”

Then, after repeated exhortations to courage and endurance—Buzot having evidently spoken of suicide—comes her farewell. Perhaps she had exhausted her stock of paper, for the last page of the six quartos shows gradually closing lines and diminished letters, just room and no more remaining for the final “Beloved, adieu.”

The last phase of this narrative has emblazoned history. No episode happening before, none following after, can dim its sombre splendour or lessen its nobleness.

The story is surely familiar to all. How on that murky November afternoon, like the Hebrew Judith bent on errand more awful still, “she put on her garments of gladness,” the white robe symbolizing purity. How, as she passed out of prison, the aged gaoler wept, and fellow-prisoners, women not wholly

hardened by misery and degradation, pressed round to kiss her hand. How, with the calm resoluteness of a Socrates, she traversed the crowded streets, unmoved alike by brutal hostility or hardly restrained compassion, herself forgotten in the effort to cheer and uplift her less virile companion of the other sex. How, after mounting the horrible ladder, in accents clear, far-sounding, apocalyptic, she thus addressed the statue facing the scaffold :

“ Oh, Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name ! ”

A MISPRISED PHILANTHROPIST,
DR. GUILLOTIN

CIVI OPTIMO



Quid vestiri auge decens cura et cura
et omnia in hoc sum

NOBILISSIMO

J. I. GUILLOTIN

Docteur-Regent, ancien Professeur de
la Faculté de Médecine de Paris.

Né à Nantes

Gravé par M. Chenu, sous le sceau de l'Académie de Médecine.

[Facing p. 80.]

A MISPRISED PHILANTHROPIST,
DR. GUILLOTIN

“What seems a fiend perchance may prove a saint.”

Sordello.

THE saint of mediæval legend shuddering before his own portrait, therein decrying Satanic lineaments, parallels this story. It is the narrative of a transcendent humanitarian whose name has been handed down with universal reprobation.

Availing myself of his most generous permission, I shall, for the most part, closely follow Dr. Guillotin's recent biographer.

On May 28, 1738, was baptized at Saintes, in Poitou, Ignace Joseph, son of Maître Joseph Guillotin, advocate, and of Catherine Agathe, his wife. No better stock existed throughout France than the sober, laborious class of that region. We next hear of the boy as a brilliant and indefatigable student at Bordeaux, in that city studying theology under the Jesuits. In 1761 he was named *Magister artium*, and for five years remained as professor within the walls of his old college. What had happened during the interim we do not know. Circumstances, material or intellectual, induced a radical change. Pedagogy and the tonsure were renounced for once and for all, and on a certain

morning of 1766 the stage coach set him down in Paris, one more ambitious youth seeking his fortune.

Uncommonly good brains must young Guillotin have possessed, to say nothing of an indomitable will. Another bourgeois characteristic he must have possessed in no small degree. Not a penny, not an hour could he have wasted upon the dissipations of the capital.

Straightway and with unabated ardour, he set to work on the study of medicine, joining the classes of Dr. Antoine Petit, a man celebrated in his day alike for his scientific attainments and benevolence.

His medical curriculum having been brilliantly gone through, he was first named member of the *Faculté* of Reims, afterwards *Doctum régent* in Paris, where he finally settled as a practitioner. At forty years of age he married the pretty Marie Louise Sangrain, a bookseller's daughter, and to this period belongs the portrait appended. Here, as his biographer writes, we have a typical citizen of the *Tiers État*, of a man looking years older than he really was, his forehead showing the lines imprinted by continuous thought and labour. And from under the bushy eyebrows shining piercingly intelligent eyes.

We now reach the turning point in Dr. Guillotin's career. To the Poitevin doctor as to every thinking Frenchman the Revolution had come as a new gospel. With the middle classes he threw himself heart and soul into the prodigious upheaval.

His initiatory act as a politician was a pamphlet which made considerable noise at the time, but any copy of which has hitherto eluded the most careful

research. Consisting of thirty-five pages and divided into three sections, the doctor's publication is known as the *Pétition des six corps*, the petition of the six municipal bodies of Paris. Therein the King was begged that the members of the Tiers État in the States-General should equal those of the two others taken together. The second part of the *brochure* described the happy result of the petition. The third gave "the very humble address of thanks, addressed by the said six bodies to his Majesty." The elections to the first States-General summoned since 1614 took place in May 1789, and Dr. Guillotin, not without considerable opposition, was named Deputy for Paris and duly took his seat in the Salle des Menus-Plaisirs, Versailles. The doctor very quickly justified the confidence of his constituents. His first step was to protest against the unhygienic conditions under which representatives of the people deliberated twelve hours daily.

"You will find that the arrangements of seats," he said, "is in the highest degree insalubrious, so closely are we packed that we can hardly breathe. The *banquettes* (wooden benches without backs or cushions) are not at all adapted for such prolonged sittings. In my opinion the addition of supports for the back are necessary."

In November the Assembly was installed in the Salle du Manège, Paris, and on the sixth of that month we find Dr. Guillotin again looking after hygienic improvements. The cold was intense, and, at his instigation, two hot-water pipes were added to the stove in *faïence* already standing, the gift of a potter named Ollivier, on its sides being

represented the Bastille and instruments of torture. The doctor is next found among the humanitarians. We all know the story of Latude, incarcerated for thirty-five years by the whim of a royal mistress. A homely saint in bonnet and shawl had ministered to the unhappy man whilst in the last and most horrible of his prisons. To this good woman, named Legros, had been accorded by the Académie the Prix Montyon, a money prize, some years before. A knot of benevolent men and women now wished to befriend her aider in the charitable work, a certain *Sieur* Girard; the titles of Monsieur and Madame, be it remembered, were aristocratic privileges during the *ancien régime*. As has been noticed elsewhere in this volume, a middle-class matron remained Mademoiselle in the eyes of the *noblesse*. The petition was successful, Girard being accorded a nominal post and small salary. For several years he had been a pensioner of Latude's benefactress.

Dr. Guillotin lost no time in joining the Club, or *Société de 1789*, afterwards affiliated with that of the Jacobins. Among the four hundred and odd members figured André Chénier, Rabant Saint-Étienne, Custine, Lavoisier, Le Chapelier, and many other Revolutionary leaders. He also enlisted himself in Freemasonry, the unpretentious medical practitioner remaining as yet a comparative nonentity.

His hour was, however, at hand, the moment rendering his name historic, in the words of Michelet, conferring upon him "une gloire macabre and néfaste," bedizened and reprehensible fame; in the words of his biographer, "tragic immortality."

Promptitude seems to have been the doctor's

leading characteristic. Hardly was the Assemblée Constitutionnel installed in Paris, than he mounted the tribune and proposed his tremendous resolution. The motion was at once and unanimously accepted. Since the fourth of the preceding August the people had ceased to be *taillable and corvéable, i. e.* taxable and rateable at the mercy of the upper classes, and on this first of December they ceased to be torturable at the mercy of venial judges. Dr. Guillotin had suggested and brought about the absolute equality of criminals, irrespective of crime, rank, or position; the swiftest, least painful possible execution for all condemned to death. Henceforward decapitation ceased to be as much of an hereditary privilege as that of grade in the army, or the entry of Versailles.

To understand the full import of such a measure we must glance at French history. With many admirable institutions, France had borrowed from Rome all the horrors of judicial torture. Vainly had Montesquieu and Voltaire protested against the system. It remained in full force till an obscure practitioner thus touched the national conscience.

Unnecessary is it here to recall the fate of Calas and La Barre, and of the magnanimous part played by Voltaire in both tragedies, nor of Damiens, who for a scratch inflicted on Louis XV suffered excruciating agonies throughout four hours; equally well known is Madame de Sévigné's narrative of the woman poisoner's long-protracted torments, borne, as the great letter-writer jauntily expressed herself, "si gentiment," so prettily. How greatly such practices had hardened the feelings is evidenced by a passage in Racine's delightful comedy *Les Plaideurs*.

“Have you never witnessed the application of torture?” asks Dandin of Isabelle. On her reply in the negative and adding the query, how could one witness the sufferings of some poor wretch? the other coolly remarks, that the spectacle helped to pass an hour or two. Less familiar than such facts as these is that of the torture preceding and following condemnation to a cruel death. The first, or *question préparatoire*, after much persuasion by his councillors Louis XVI was prevailed upon to abolish; the second, or *question préalable*, the so-called mild king insisted on retaining, and it was only now abolished.

The date, the speech and the doctor's political part was played. As far as history is concerned, after that second of December he becomes a nonentity. In the Assemblé his voice was heard no more.

Little dreaming that his title of honour would ere many years be regarded almost as a brand of Cain, he quietly settled down to his professional calling. At a corner house of the Rue de Sourdier, adjoining the Rue Saint Honoré, might his plate be seen, and by kind permission I give on opposite page one of his prescriptions; it is not, however, dated from the above address.

The Terror that came four years later left him undisturbed, his safety, perhaps, being insured by the aid so inadvertently lent to proscription. And later, whilst bitterly resenting the irony of fate, the actual odium and the prospect of posthumous reprobation, he bore alike raillery and reproach with tranquil fortitude. A deed inspired by pure bene-

violence had drawn upon its author a veritable avalanche of abuse. Personal character and professional skill now stood him in good stead. To some the inventor of an infernal machine and the aggravator of bloodshed and terrorism, to others a patriot

*Prunus Manna en Sortes, deux onces
 Rhubarbe, une once
 follicul. - deux gros b⁷b⁵-
 sel de Glauber, deux gros
 ams, une pincée
 fait, d'abord une médecine dans un
 verre de décalon de l'histoire Sauvage
 Paris 13 ventose, an 7.
 L' ~~apothicaire~~ Guillaudin
 rue pellier, n° 20
 Le 11 fructidor an 10 à heures soir*

and philanthropist who had done away with privilege on the scaffold, he lived on retaining his liberty and his clients. Through the Directoire, the Consulate and the Empire, he held his consultations; his manner, speech and surroundings, those of a scientist; himself described as amiable, polished and excessively reserved. He died, aged seventy-six, on the twenty-sixth of March, 1814, a few days before

Napoleon's first abdication at Fontainebleau, his death passing unnoticed. "M. Guillotin," wrote one who had known him intimately in his later years, "could never console himself for what he called the involuntary blot on his career. His venerable features wore an expression of great sadness, his hair had been blanched by anxiety. In endeavouring to mitigate the suffering of humanity, he felt that he had unwillingly been the means of destroying many lives."

Never, indeed, has the irony of history been bitterer or more striking than in this instance. For whilst the idea of death by decapitation alike for *noblesse* and *roturier* was Dr. Guillotin's, with the machine itself to which his name becomes irrevocably fastened he had nothing whatever to do. The inventor was another physician, one who had also risen to the foremost rank and who, like his colleague, was a humanitarian.

Dr. Antoine Louis, son of a surgeon attached to the military hospital of Metz, was born in 1723. After some years' service as army surgeon in Germany he set up as practitioner in Paris, over his door placing the following waggish inscription: "Those who come hither, do me honour; those who stay away, give me pleasure." A consulting doctor who could thus brave public opinion must have been sure of his position, and such is proved to have been the case. The doctor's reputation soon stood high, and he was named Perpetual Secretary to the Academy of Surgery. In that capacity he was charged by the Assembly with the carrying out of the Guillotin law, in other words, with the devising

of a method for putting condemned persons to death painlessly and instantaneously.

Here is an extract from his report which was laid before the Government on the seventh of March, 1792. The concluding sentence shows that, with his predecessor, he was actuated solely by philanthropic motives. In his official capacity he would naturally have been present at many tortures and executions. The entire document is cited in the third volume of *La Revue des documents Historiques*. "The Committee of Legislation has done me the honour to ask my opinion on two minutes laid before its members concerning Article three, Section one, of the (new) Penal Code.

"In these reports from the Minister of Justice and the Council of the Paris department respectively, immediate measures are urged for the proper carrying out of the said law. It is in the highest degree desirable that defective means, inexperience or other agencies, should be avoided by which the death penalty is rendered more horrible to the criminal and the person of the executioner infamous in the eyes of the people."

Not only was the writer delegated to hit upon a method but was entrusted with the design. The curious in such a subject may consult M. Fleischmann's volume. They will therein see for themselves that whatever uses the invention was put to afterwards, its projectors were actuated by humanity, and by humanity only. Especially was the engine of death to be as automatic as possible, the personality of the manipulator being thereby minimized to the utmost. So promptly and diligently did the

doctor set to work that by the end of the month he had accomplished his task. Here is his signature appended to the letter dated the 30th of March, in which he announces the fact to the Minister of Justice.

*voire très humble et
très obéissant serviteur
Louis*

It only now remained for a skilled mechanic, a German, by name Schmidt, to carry out Dr. Louis' design, a design of extreme minuteness, not the least little detail having been omitted. Schmidt's efforts were successful, and under the name of "La Louisette," the automatic and instantaneous decapitator forthwith replaced the breakings on the wheel, mutilations, burnings, and tortures unutterable of anti-Revolutionary times.

But every third French man and French woman bearing the name of Louis and Louise, such a designation was speedily discarded. The "guillotine" replaced "La Louisette," an honest and deservedly illustrious name being thus travestied for all time.

This gruesome subject has only been handled by me on one account. I have thus wished to remove the legendary blot on a noble, self-sacrificing and often an inadequately appreciated profession.

AN OUTLAW'S DIARY



J. B. LOUVET,
Député au Conseil des Cinq-Cents
par le D^{pt} de la Haute-Vienne.

(In the Bibliothèque Nationale)

[Facing p. 93.]

AN OUTLAW'S DIARY

BEING PASSAGES FROM THE MEMOIRS OF LOUVET
DE COUVRAY

I

No more striking day-book was ever penned than that of Louvet, one of the six proscribed Girondists who made good their escape, and again took their seats in the Convention. Never did men encounter more moving accidents by flood and field or "hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach." Never, amid much poltroonery and baseness did a band of outlaws oftener come in contact with human nature at its best and bravest. And never were harrowing scenes more picturesquely related.

A word or two concerning the hero of this terrible odyssey.

Jean Baptiste Louvet de Couvray, although entitled to the particle proclaiming noble birth, began life as a bookseller's clerk. As was the case with Byron, he awoke one morning to find himself famous ; a brilliantly written, but unedifying novel having placed him in the forefront of letters at the age of twenty-six. *Faublas* was followed by *Emilie de Varmont*, a story without the wit and also without the licentiousness of its predecessor.

More honourable than his literary career is the part played by Louvet as a republican and a fearless champion of liberty.

His indictment of Robespierre when the popular idol was in his *apogée*, is historic. By some writers it has even been called a second *Catilinaire*, inspired with Ciceronian verve and eloquence. But Louvet was not permitted to pronounce his discourse, and the scathing irony lost force in print. Nevertheless he continued his campaign both from the tribune and with his pen, arraigining Robespierre's dictatorship. The unsparing onslaughts did not cost their author his life, but during his long outlawry again and again with Agag he must have said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past!" so often, indeed, so constantly, had death stared him in the face.

In the finely written cameos with which Madame Roland beguiled her last hours, she describes Louvet as a second Philopœman, personally paying for a poor physique with double interest. Under-sized, attenuated, negligent as to personal appearance, Robespierre's accuser did not appeal to the casual observer unmindful of his noble brow, fiery glance, and play of features. And she adds, that, brave as a lion, simple as a child, the incarnation of practical wisdom, an admirable citizen and powerful orator from the rostrum, he could make Catiline tremble, and was equally at home when dining with the Muses or supping with the wits.

Alike when she steeped her pen in gall or was carried away by the loftiest enthusiasm, alike when



CHARLOTTE CORDAY

[Facing p. 95.]



BARBAROUX

Député des Bouches du Rhône à la C^{on}. Nat. le

(In the Bibliothèque Nationale)

[Facing p. 95.]

carelessly penning letters by a happy fireside years before, or when solemnly setting down last thoughts under the shadow of the guillotine, Madame Roland's prose is as delightful to read and much more moving than Madame de Sévigné's court chit-chat.

It was on the thirty-first of May and on the second of June, 1793, that the Girondins were proscribed by the Convention. With Vergniaud the majority defiantly remained in Paris, a few months later one by one mounting the guillotine, the strains of the Marseillaise on their lips. Louvet, Barbaroux, Guadet, Buzot, Pétion and one or two others, had sought safety in flight. Reaching Caen, they there endeavoured to raise the western provinces. At first kindly welcomed by the citizens, they were soon undeceived as to those dreams, and fortunate for France that it was so. A popular rising in Normandy would inevitably have led to others, more than one Terror must have been the result.

During his three weeks' stay in the city of magnificent churches, Louvet had many varied and curious experiences, none being so interesting to general readers as the following—

“Whilst we were lodged at official headquarters,” he writes, the charm of a practised pen never for a moment deserting him, “Barbaroux was occasionally visited by a young girl, tall, graceful, and exceedingly dignified in manner and carriage. Her face was both beautiful and lovely (*belle et jolie*), mingled pride and simplicity characterizing every word and gesture and announcing elevation of

mind. Always attended by a maid, she used to confer with Barbaroux in a salon open to us all, and in which the pair were perpetually intruded upon by one or another. Since that maiden's name has now become matter of history, myself and friends have recalled every circumstance of those visits. It afterwards seemed quite clear that a small favour solicited by her for a relation was merely a pretext, and that she sought personal acquaintance with the founders of that Republic for which she had determined to sacrifice her life. Perhaps also, foreseeing the consequences of her determination, she wished her features to be indelibly impressed on our memory. Never from mine will thy image be effaced, oh, Charlotte Corday! Vainly may hostile limners seek to travesty the portrait. Ever shall I see thee in spirit as I saw thee on the eve of thy fatal journey, proud and gentle, beautiful and reserved, maidenly modesty tempering patriotic fire."

Beautiful and lovely, Hebe-like freshness and bloom combined with the stately calm of a Roman matron, what a picture do Louvet's words call up!

The lounge in Caen to-day can see the spot from which the grand girlish figure emerged on her awful errand.¹ Every particular of her appearance has been recorded, the blue cambric dress, the dainty muslin kerchief covering her shoulders, the little mob-cap with blue ribbons and dark locks flowing underneath. In imagination we may here follow her step by step as outwardly a typical young *bourgeoise* she hastened towards the post house,

¹ No. 148, Rue St. Jean occupies the site of her aunt's house.

glancing, we may be sure, with unutterable thoughts at the familiar scenes she was quitting for ever. Long have I lingered in the ancient square from which the cumbersome Turgotine, or diligence, issued that July morning, 1793, with its sylph-like, sybilline fare, bent, as she fondly hoped, on proving her country's saviour, instead plunging it deeper and deeper into anarchy and bloodshed.

For the "angel of assassination," as Lamartine has daringly called her, in slaying Marat, already in the last stages of disease, but aculeated popular distrust and vindictiveness, not saving Louvet and his friends, more surely dooming them to outlawry and death.

II

It was not till the decree of the Convention had been placarded by the Caen authorities that the little band determined upon flight, at the onset in the hopes of rousing the southern provinces to revolt, very quickly to be again disenchanted. The long peregrination may be described under three heads: the opening stage, as we have seen, of high hopes and dauntless courage; the following was marked by increasing hardships and gradual awakening to cruellest realities; the third and last, a battling with despair and death, one only, and as it seems miraculously, being left to tell the tale.

Louvet's narrative runs smoothly. The pen of the accomplished *littérateur* had not lost its cunning when jotting down these dire experiences partly on the spot, and partly from memory.

One drawback to coherence is the almost total absence of dates. Unprovided, as he tells us, with a map, doubtless also with an almanack, we cannot follow his itinerary with anything like exactitude. Instead of reference to the calendar we have such entries as the following—"on the morrow," "next evening," "at dawn," and so on. The long zig-zag from one end of France to the other, that is to say, from Caen to Bordeaux, was often a *chassé-croisé*, often a flanking movement; now the fugitives were obliged to retrace their steps and now to lie in hiding for days, even weeks, at a time. The high road was at all times unsafe, and death was the penalty of any one offering food or shelter.

The little band nevertheless set off with considerable bravado. Numbering nineteen, including guides, all bearing arms, they were determined if need be to resist arrest. Among the number were Pétion, who, with less sympathy than Barnave, had escorted the Royal family from Varennes; Buzot, the comely, ardent Buzot, the "Toi, que je n'ose pas nommer!" ideal of Madame Roland's romantic soul; and Barbaroux, the implacable indicter of Robespierre from the tribune.

Being a scholar, perhaps from time to time Louvet may have recalled the words of the Greek dramatist—

"'Tis a saying that hosts look kindly on banished friends for a day and no more."

The refugees had not been long on the way ere they found the truth of this dictum; splendid examples of magnanimity nevertheless shining out from time to time. It is to women that Louvet



JÉRÔME PÉTION

*Député du Département d' Eure et Loir,
à la Convention Nationale
le 21^{me} 1^{er} An 1^{er} de la République Française.*

(In the Bibliothèque Nationale)

[Facing p. 98.]

here accords the palm. "In the midst of much demoralization," he writes, "a consolation is afforded in recalling those noble beings who proved themselves worthy of liberty. These my companions and myself chiefly found among the sex usually regarded as timid and frivolous. At the hands of women we met the most generous compassion, by them we were often overwhelmed with kindnesses."

What the long tramp through Brittany was like may be gathered from the following dramatic recital. The outlaws, soon reduced in number to seventeen, had reached the *Landes* or wilds of Finistère unmolested; they were now within a few miles of Carhaix and hoped from that place to gain Quimper, and thence a refuge beyond sea.

"Already by eight o'clock in the morning the heat was overwhelming, and although it was necessary to get as quickly as possible out of this desert, the half of us could hardly put one foot before the other. Cussy, tormented with gout, groaned at every step. Barbaroux, at twenty-eight corpulent as one of forty, having sprained an ankle, had to lean on my arm. Riouffe, lamed by tight boots, was obliged to walk on tiptoe. Buzot, worn out as any, kept up his spirits.

"In this condition we came at noon upon a hamlet and kind of *auberge*, having got over fifteen miles since one o'clock in the morning. As we devoured an omelette washed down with cyder, all the while singing patriotic songs, our host eyes us curiously. I asked him to drink with us, which he did, glass following glass. At last said he, '*Parbleu*, citizens,

I am enchanted to see you, you appear to be good patriots.’¹

“‘Certainly, we are,’ quoth I.

“‘How one makes enemies all the same,’ was the reply. ‘From what I have heard, I thought at first it must be after you that gendarmes were in search; some traitors were to pass by Carhaix, where two brigades are on the look-out for them.’

“Having disarmed suspicion, we set out, nevertheless, at nightfall, coming within sight of Carhaix. Here we held a consultation, our guides advising a halt for the night.

“‘All very well, my friends,’ I said, ‘but you hear ten struck by the clock. Every one by this time is sure to be asleep in the town, most likely the gendarmes also; they, as well as any of us know that a sound sleep is better than the interchange of a few shots. Let us then keep close together and march in file through the little side street that one of you says will lead us into the high road. By day-break we shall be at Quimper.’

“My words gave every one courage. Fatigue was forgotten. We pulled ourselves together, embraced each other, laughed, sang and marched on.

“As noiselessly as possible and in utter darkness we made our way through the side street already spoken of; three parts were safely traversed when from the out-buildings of a house in which a light was burning emerged a little girl.

“‘Here they come!’ we distinctly heard her exclaim.

“The alarm lent agility to the weariest. We

¹ Patriots here meant Jacobins or adherents of Robespierre.

suddenly turned about, taking a dark narrow lane leading we knew not whither. After an hour's plodding on, we found ourselves in a broad, pleasant way more like the avenue of a park than a high road, having lofty hedges on either side, behind which we were safe from all the gendarmes in the department. But were, indeed, gendarmes on our track? We halted for awhile, listening; all was perfectly silent. We now discovered that our two chief guides were missing. What could have happened to them? (We afterwards learned that, overcome with weariness and sleep they had fallen back and slept for several hours.) After throwing ourselves on the grass and resting a little while, once more we set out, the night being pitch dark and the two remaining guides as ignorant of the locality as ourselves.

“Under the circumstances we deemed it advisable to retrace our steps in search of the laggards, but lost our bearings. Instead of regaining the road head first we plunged into a thicket, next into a morass. Torn by brambles, soaked to the knees, half-dead with exertion, two hours later we found ourselves in the self-same spot quitted two hours before!

“After another rest on the turf once more we set forth—not to walk, the term were wholly inappropriate—but to drag ourselves along inch by inch. We were famished and worn out. Early in the morning, whilst still keeping the high road, we came upon a cluster of poor houses, windows and doors being close shut as soon as the inhabitants saw us advancing. By and by we met a pedestrian

who, to our great joy, informed us that we were within six miles of Quimper. This piece of good news was, however, soon discounted. We could not, of course, show ourselves in the town by daylight, and only the missing guides knew the neighbourhood, and could have hit upon a safe hiding-place. The sole course available seemed the dispatch of a guide in advance with letters to Quimper friends, ourselves awaiting him meanwhile. Risky enough was this course. How could a dozen armed men escape the notice of peasants passing to and fro, only understanding bas-Breton, and with whom, therefore, explanations would be impossible? But no other expedient could be hit upon; our guides concealed us as best they could in a thicket just behind the roadside, and one of the two set off for the town, promising to be back by noon. It was just eight o'clock, four hours must therefore elapse before he could possibly return. Foot-sore, aching in every limb, another misery had now to be endured. A deluging rain came on, we were soon literally lying in water. I confess it—despair at last overcame us. Riouffe and Girey-Dupré, hitherto gayest of the gay, could only just smile; Cussy, the ebullient Cussy, fiercely arraigned nature; Salle joined in his denunciations; Buzot had evidently lost heart; even the great-souled Barbaroux seemed overcome; as to myself, but for the thought of my Lodoiska, I should have perhaps resorted to my pistol. Pétion alone, at this juncture, as throughout every stage of our journey, remained imperturbable, even smiling at the unfriendly heavens. Unfriendly, did I say? What ingratitude! Only

Providential succour could have saved us now, and in less than a quarter of an hour that succour came!

“Our guide had been but a few minutes on the way when he encountered a horseman who pulled up, eyeing him curiously. A question or two met with evasive replies, a little hesitancy on both sides and the stranger discovered himself.

“He was one of our friends. Impelled by a sudden thought—shall I say instinct?—he had saddled his horse and set out, vaguely hoping to learn of our whereabouts.

“We were then taken to the house of a kindly *curé*, by whom we were fed, warmed, and sheltered till nightfall, when again we betook ourselves to the woods.”

III

With every step forward dangers now increased. Tracked like runaway slaves, the refugees were soon obliged to separate, some taking one direction, some another, one and all encountering disappointment after disappointment. Only here and there a friendly door was opened, rarer and rarer became the covert hospitalities just warding off starvation. Fear of the guillotine had paralyzed all but the most heroic.

And, as often happens, this rare heroism was manifested by humblest of the humble, and weakest of the weak, simple village priests and lone women offering the shelter or meal rendering them liable to death.

Escape by boat from the western sea-board having proved impracticable, the outlaws, reduced to ten in number, at last reached the Gironde. Here, if anywhere, they would surely find harbourage, in their own province at least the withstanders of tyranny would meet with support! It was not so. Guadet, who had been sent forward in advance, brought back a heart-sickening account. Thirty doors had been knocked at to no purpose. Alike friends and relations held aloof. After a hasty conference the little band decided upon separation as the only course now offering the slightest chance of safety. Salle and Guadet made up their minds to make for the Landes of Provence; Pétion and Buzot to take another direction. Barbaroux, Valady and a friend whose name is not given, resolved upon sharing Louvet's fortunes and if possible reach Paris. The outlaws embraced each other sadly enough and parted. Barbaroux was to figure as a scientist bound upon mineralogical researches, the remaining three as commercial men travelling on business.

The desperate project of tramping three hundred and forty miles under such circumstances was speedily given up. After plodding for four and a half hours to find themselves southward they approached a village presbytery.

"Let us knock," said Barbaroux boldly.

"To ask the way?" I rejoined.

"Aye," retorted he, "and something more."

"A worthy *curé* opened," Louvet narrates. We described ourselves as travellers who had lost their bearings.

“‘You are hounded down men,’ was the answer. ‘Do not deny it, and as such accept my hospitality for four-and-twenty hours. Would that I might more frequently be the means of succouring others in the same case.’

“Touched by this reception, we told him exactly how matters stood, the recital moving the good man to tears, making him embrace each by turns; Providence indeed seemed to have led our footsteps thither. In this village priest at least we found one of those choice souls on whom Guadet had in the first instance relied.

“Next morning our host said that he could keep us for three days longer, and meanwhile would look about for another retreat. Not to trespass upon such hospitality and not feeling himself in imminent danger, Valady's companion now left us, taking the road to Périgueux, at which place he said he had a sure friend.

“Yet two days longer our benefactor secreted us, but somehow or other a report got abroad that the *curé* was hiding suspected persons. We were then taken by him to the house of a peasant farmer who received us kindly. On the morrow, however, he said we must go, his wife being much terrified by the fact of our presence. Again our guardian angel came to the rescue, this time concealing us in the hayloft of a *métairie* (farm conducted on the half-profit system), the farm-folk numbering sixteen souls, two of whom were in the secret. Underneath the hayloft was a stable, the door of which stood open, and all day long we could hear footsteps and voices below as men passed in and

out. Sometimes one or another would climb the ladder and peep at the hay which we had heaped over us so as to be invisible. The store was freshly garnered and warm" (we must remember that in these regions there is always a second crop or *regain*). "The loft was piled within two feet of the tiny grating; although we were in October the heat was excessive, and, to crown our misfortunes, the two peasants in our confidence were summoned away on business, and for forty-eight hours we got neither the sour wine nor the coarse food which had hitherto kept body and soul together.

"Impossible to give the remotest notion of what we suffered; the frightful headaches, the agonized thirst, the lassitude and despondency. At last I lost courage, and even my good Barbaroux was overtaken by despair.

"I seized one of my pistols, he did the same, eye to eye, hand clasping hand, without a word, we sealed what was to be our last compact. Another moment and all would have been over, when Valady, following our movements, suddenly cried—

"'Barbaroux, thou hast a mother; Louvet, thy beloved awaits thee!'

"Emotion overcame desperate resolve, the weapons dropped from our hands, all three embraced with tears."

The endurance of the trio was soon put to a test severer still. Next day the two hitherto friendly peasants returned, but in a different mood. Alarm was spreading through the *métairie*, at nightfall and in weather changed for the worse, rain now falling in torrents, the outlaws were somewhat roughly ejected.

A third time the same good *cure* gave his unhappy fellow-countrymen a few hours' shelter, hiding them in a loft on which perpetual watch was kept, and from which at the approach of danger they could make for the fields behind. Meantime Guadet and Salle, contriving to discover their friends' whereabouts, sent us a cheering report. In the first instance, as has been seen, thirty doors had been knocked at in vain. Magnanimous benefactors of the other sex more than once atoned for such cravenness. Not only were Guadet and Salle received by one of these, but on learning the others' plight she exclaimed—

“Let them come also!”

Thither they trudged at night, another village priest, friend of their former host, giving them a good supper on the way. With warm water this good Samaritan bathed their feet; a good fire warmed their wearied bodies and dried their clothes, shaving appliances allowed them to trim their beards; last, but not least, from his slender store, each refugee was provided with clean linen. Well might the narrator describe the sensation as that of escaping from monsters' cave of fairy tale to an enchanted pavilion.

“The astounding woman,” who now received three more outlaws, housed them for security underground. One small chamber, or rather cellar, proving insufficient for five men, a second was hollowed out, the refugees doing the work of sappers as best they could. Not many days had been passed in this hiding-place when news arrived from Buzot and Pétion. Seven times within fifteen days, they wrote,

had they been compelled to shift their quarters, and again their friends' benefactress cried—

“Let them both come here.”

Could men, under such circumstances, be expected to refuse the offer? They accepted. For a whole month the seven outlaws were secreted and fed by one of the world's unknown heroines. During the day living like troglodytes in semi-obscurity, at night supping cheerfully with their benefactress upstairs.

And as I recall this woman's memory, comes into my mind one of de Quincey's most magnificent passages, in a few lines being displayed all the power, copiousness, and splendour of the English language. “Women can die grandly,” he writes, “die as goddesses would do were they mortal,” and then he goes on to speak of “the noble Charlotte Corday, who in the bloom of her youth, who with the loveliest of persons, with homage waiting upon her smiles as surely as the carols of birds after showers in spring, follow the re-appearing sun and the racing of sunbeams over the hills—yet thought all these things cheaper than the dust upon her sandals, in comparison of deliverance from hell of her dear suffering France!”

Louvet's guardian angel in the guise of a homely *bourgeoise* would not thus confront obloquy, a murderer's gown and the guillotine with lofty visions of ever-enduring fame. Her dying words would not, like those of Madame Roland, last as long as her native tongue. She would meet death simply and resignedly, feeling that at least she had fulfilled Christian duty, carrying into deeds the elemental

but all-sufficing moral code embodied in the words, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

IV

The terrible history now draws to a close. After a month's security underground, once more the refugees were compelled to set forth in search of an asylum. Heart-brokenly their benefactress had confessed that they were no longer safe under her roof. Relations apparently had threatened denunciation should she retain them a minute longer.

On the night of the fourteenth or fifteenth of November, Louvet forgets which date, the little band separated, Barbaroux, Buzot and Pétion took one direction, and Valady another; Salle, Guadet, and Louvet hid themselves in one of the numerous grottoes or caves near St. Emilion.

By night Guadet ventured forth knocking at one hitherto friendly door after another in vain. A veritable Upas tree, the guillotine had dried the springs of fellowship and compassion. Closest ties now became mere figures of speech. Friend turned against friend, kinsfolk against kinsfolk. Such a condition of things becomes easier to comprehend when we recollect that not only was succour punishable by death, but the withholding of delation. Men and women were summarily condemned for keeping silent.

Far less moving as a narrative, but in some respects even more remarkable is the conclusion of this history. Worn out by confinement in a cavern, noisome as Sinbad's, and by privations of

every kind, sick at heart, Louvet took a desperate decision. Deaf to the entreaties and remonstrances of his friends, he determined upon regaining Paris or selling his life dear in the attempt.

“My companions at first held me back by force,” he writes, “they persuaded, remonstrated, entreated. I refused to listen. Ridding myself of every possible encumbrance, throwing aside spare stockings, handkerchiefs, and a coat, disguised by means of a little Jacobite wig I had treasured up for the purpose, sharing my *assignats* with Salle, who was poorer than I, embracing both friends, I set out. Never had I felt more resolute, possessed of more exalted courage.

“Nevertheless, hardly had I started than I looked back, reluctant to quit those good comrades. They in turn followed me with their eyes and moved forward bent on a further attempt at persuasion. A moment more and with a wave of the hand I was off, on that long road to Paris, contemplated with hope and wonder.”

Well might he wonder at his own temerity and at the result! Disguised as a *sans-culotte*, or Jacobin, under an assumed name, and having contrived to obtain a passport, the three hundred and forty-four miles were safely got over, dangers, of course, besetting every step.

By way of Mussidan, a poor village, after numerous adventures and hairbreadth escapes he reached Montaigne's beautifully placed city of Perigueux with its mosque-like cathedral, thence journeying to Limoges, cradle of a lost art, the exquisite art of enamelling on copper, and to this

day enriched by a woman's discovery, the *Kainite* used in hard porcelain. So successfully did Louvet act the *rôle* of a Jacobin, and so imperturbable was his self-possession that he now travelled openly, hiring a vehicle and driver and alighting for refreshment and rest at inns by the way. Thus arrived at Chateauroux in George Sand's country, he joined the general dinner-table, here a new series of trials beginning. Just as the hosts sat down to table a traveller arrived from Paris with the news of Madame Roland's heroic death. Even under a blow so crushing Louvet contrived to keep his countenance. From that evening every step of the remaining hundred and sixty miles was marked by news equally harrowing. At Vierzon, whence to-day happy English tourists visit the romantic valley of the Creuse, he learned of his friend Cussy's execution, two days later of Roland's tragic end; yet his courage never for a moment failed him. It must be remembered that he had now in great measure recovered his bodily powers, good beds and ample food counteracting in part continued mental tension.

In passing through Orleans, his native town and *chef-lieu* of the department that had elected him, he escaped by the merest chance. The place, as he knew, was a hot-bed of Jacobinism. Discovery would have meant immediate arrest. As good luck would have it, the public conveyance in which he had taken a seat, and which only passed through the outskirts, was packed with passengers and luggage. At the post-house every one received peremptory orders to get out whilst passports were examined. But time pressed. Driver and conductor doubtless

had enough to do in looking after their horses, their fares would naturally enter the post-house for refreshment. Having secreted himself under straw and packages during the quarter of an hour's halt, Louvet resumed his seat, and the diligence moved on.

"We continued our journey," he tells us, "to Etréchi, a little village at which nevertheless ten travellers joined us for dinner. One or two had come from Tours, others from Orleans and Toulouse, and one, an artilleryman, from the Eastern Pyrenees, where he had lost an arm. All were bound for Paris. As we drew nearer the capital, at every stage I encountered many more. Is it possible that I was not recognized? And if so, how came it about that I escaped denunciation? Inscrutable ways of Providence! For what fate was I reserved?"

A brief and agitated respite from death. That was all.

Paris and "Lodoiska," as throughout these pages he calls the partner of his fortunes, were indeed reached, also the Jura and Switzerland. But not until nine months after Robespierre's fall did he regain civil rights and his seat in the Convention. Just three years later he died, aged thirty-seven, having nobly defended the memory of his friends.

Of these only one named in the diary survived him. Barbaroux, Guadet, Salle, Cussy, Girey, Dupréy and poor Valady, "the least interesting of the band," Louvet calls him—as if indeed any one could be uninteresting under such circumstances—were guillotined, Buzot committed suicide, Pétion

perished of hunger and privation, Riouffe, mentioned in an early page, after fourteen months' imprisonment, during the Terror, became a Préfet under the Empire, dying in 1813.

Lodoiska is a romantic figure and deserves a niche in the gallery of Revolutionary heroines, having again and again risked her own life to save her husband's. When he died she was only saved from poisoning herself by the sight of their child.

As one of Louvet's biographers writes, despite his short and tumultuous career he had tasted happiness. He had loved and been beloved, and he died with the satisfaction of having retrieved past errors by a noble deed. It was owing to his passionate oratory that widows and orphans of men who had been outlawed like himself, regained the property confiscated during the Terror.

THE DUC D'ENGHIEN'S
LOVE-STORY



CHARLOTTE DE ROHAN, DUCHESSE D'ENGHIEN

[Facing p. 117.]

THE DUC D'ENGHIEEN'S LOVE-STORY

I

THE following pages are a *résumé* of the deeply interesting volume published by M. Jacques de la Faye a few years ago, and which, with the portrait appended, has been obligingly placed at my disposal. Based entirely on family papers and on documents in the National Archives of Paris, this narrative possesses the charm of romance and the poignant interest of old Greek Tragedy. Simply and directly it shall here be re-told.

In his memoirs, Henri Rochefort, "the stormy petrel of French politics," who still lives and till recently edited his once famous paper, mentions as a child having visited the Duchesse d'Enghien. For true it is, although the fact has been contested, that the last of the Condés left a widow, and to this widow her youthful relation, Victor-Henri, Comte de Luçay-Rochefort, was presented by his father, the Marquis, before his eighth year—that is to say, between 1833 and 1841, dates of his own birth and of the Duchess's death.

There can surely be few men or women living who have had a similar experience, and who have come in direct contact with personages of the *ancien régime*! That aged, grief-stricken lady in widow's weeds was the once vivacious, captivating Charlotte,

Princess de Rochefort-Rohan, favourite companion of Marie Antoinette in her halcyon days, and niece and god-daughter of the Queen's evil genius, Cardinal Louis de Rohan of the Diamond Necklace. Who can say? Perhaps the story of the Duchesse d'Enghien may have had something to do with her kinsman's implacable hatred of Imperialism, a hatred in no small degree contributing to the downfall of the Second Empire. To her dying day Charlotte never forgave her husband's assassin. Gentlest of the gentle, devotee of devotees, her forgiveness could not go so far.

Blackest deed in the black Napoleonic annals, the crime of Vincennes has been recounted again and again. Less familiar is the sordid history of the *émigrés* and of Condé's army, so called, a band of desperate men living upon the charity of their country's foes, one and all sworn to restore feudalism and the abuses of by-gone days. Wholly unknown to English readers is doubtless the one redeeming feature of the Coblenz campaign. No more pathetic love-story ever relieved blood-stained and dissolute chronicles than that of Charlotte de Rohan and the Duc d'Enghien, and just as her grand-aunt had been fallen in love with at first sight by a Condé, so the first meeting of Charlotte and Louis-Antoine-Henri de Bourbon seems to have decided their future existences as far as passion was concerned.

The pair met at the young prince's baptism, which, as was sometimes the case, took place in childhood rather than in infancy. On the occasion of this *fête* Charlotte was withdrawn from her convent, and the boy and girl immediately became

comrades. Several years older than her cousin, protectiveness on Charlotte's part formed a bond of union. For once and for all, she constituted herself as his would-be guardian angel.

Girlhood in France then, as at the present time, played no part in domestic life. Until she became marriageable, the daughter of a princely or noble house remained almost as much of a recluse as if shut up in a Turkish harem.

In the fashionable convent of Panthemont, Rue de Bellechasse, Paris, with others of the same rank, Charlotte held her state, having a maid of honour, several attendants, and a daily cover at the abbess's table. From masters she took lessons in music, dancing and other accomplishments of the day ; but the school was essentially one of devotion and manners. The traditions of St. Cyr and Madame de Maintenon were strictly kept up. First and foremost, the young ladies were made devout Catholics. Next they were formed for playing their part in society. No ascetic was the lady abbess, and at her hospitable board Charlotte early acquired the arts of conversation, deportment, and also worldly wisdom.

On her education, or what passed for such, being completed, at eighteen, she took her place in the sumptuous family mansion, aiding her mother with the honours of her salon, and joining the coterie of the unfortunate Princess Elizabeth, her senior by three years.

The youthful hostess of the Hôtel, or rather Palais Rohan, had inherited neither her mother's great beauty nor her brilliant social qualities, but

instead, a rare winningness of character, and a depth of feeling proof against time, change, and bitterest ordeal. With Thekla she could have summed up her life in the sentence, "I have lived and loved." She could also have echoed Mlle. de l'Espinasse's immortal line to her lover, "Every moment of my life I love you and wait for you." One romance and one only filled her existence. With the Duc d'Enghien her destiny was knit from the first.

What a change from convent routine to the gaieties of a court and the fascinations of a choice home circle!

In her memoirs Madame Vigée Le Brun describes the soirées of the Hôtel Rohan. Half a score of intimate friends used to arrive daily for supper at half past ten, wit and amiability being the Open Sesame. The Princess de Rohan-Rochefort is represented as a brilliant and attractive woman successfully rebutting the inroads of time, seductive at forty-four as she had been in her halcyon days. Charlotte aided her mother to do the honours, her grace, affectionateness and vivacity lending additional charm.

The daughter of a great house, and god-daughter of the Cardinal was also an heiress. Match-making in those days, as at the present time, being a favourite occupation of French grandmothers, aunts and women-folk generally, Charlotte's marriage forthwith set many feminine minds to work. Among these was her aunt the Comtesse de Marsan, a lady of very ambitious views. Nothing would satisfy her but to see Charlotte the wife of a possibly future sovereign! This was a Portuguese magnate, the Duc

de Cadoval, of the Braganza family, and the scheme was forwarded by her friend the Marquise de Bombelles, a former governess of Madame Elizabeth and at this period wife of the French ambassador at Lisbon.

“If Mlle. de Rochefort were my daughter,” wrote Madame de Marsan to the Marquise, “I should not for a moment hesitate in deciding her to accept this gentleman,” whilst on her side, the other averred that in becoming Mme. de Cadoval, Charlotte would be the wife of an eventual heir to the Portuguese throne.

But Charlotte's pretty head was not turned by the chimerical prospect of a crown. In spite of her aunt's persuasions and the reproaches of her sister-in-law, determination on her own part and wiser counsels prevailed.

The possible heir of the Braganzas, who seems to have borne a questionable character, and was heavily in debt, received his final *congé*. Charlotte could enjoy her radiant, unfettered girlhood yet a little longer.

II

Soon the storm of Revolution broke with cataclysmal suddenness and fury. In less than three days after the fall of the Bastille the unfortunate Louis and Marie Antoinette found themselves abandoned alike by kinsfolk, friends, and the favourites who had been covered by them with wealth and honours. Never in the history of civilized nations was displayed such poltroonery and an animal sense of self-preservation. The disgraceful stampede was

led by the king's brothers and relations. On the seventeenth of July, two carriages, stripped of their armorials, started post-haste for the eastern frontier, the inmates being the three Condés, its unworthy head, Monsieur le Prince; his son, the no more respectable Duc de Bourbon; and his grandson, Louis, Duc d'Enghien. So overwhelming was the prevailing terror that Condé's daughter, the austere Princess Louise, afterwards sister Marie-Joseph de la Miséricorde, accepted as travelling companion her father's mistress. Both vehicles were crowded to suffocation, ten persons occupying the room designed for eight. In torrid heat and desperate scurry the fugitives rattled over several hundred miles, reaching Turin by way of Belgium, the Rhine, and Switzerland.

The Rochefort-Rohan family were divided in their sympathies. The prince with Charlotte and one son joined the *émigrés* at Worms, for the time being Condé's military headquarters, those of the king's brothers being at Coblenz. Mme. de Rochefort in the first instance had followed her husband, but in July 1790 she returned to France, with her sons, Gaspard and Jules, espousing the cause of constitutional monarchy.

As was only natural, the *protégée* and companion of Madame Elizabeth remained an ardent royalist. The defection of her mother and brothers had been a bitter grief to Charlotte, who turned with all the more confidence and affection to an equally ardent sympathizer. At Worms the cousins met again, the young duke entering with heart and soul into his chief's projects.

Fired by the spirit of his great ancestor, the victor of Rocroy, the stripling seems, indeed, almost a heroic figure among his unheroic *entourage*.

Personally, Louis de Bourbon had not been favoured by nature. By one who knew him he is described as being below ordinary stature, but well made, extremely agile in his movements, and of taking appearance; also, in those early days, given to questionable adventure. But he was a dashing cavalier, he shared Charlotte's dynastic enthusiasm, and he represented a house next to that of France. Daily intercourse and constantly evoked sympathies developed an intimacy that, at first sisterly, brotherly, soon ripened into tenderest affection, ultimately deepening into a passion that dominated every other feeling. If ever two beings proved each other's destiny it was these two.

The history of Condé's ill-fated and ill-judged little army is an odyssey that can only be touched upon here. The part played in the miserable story certainly redounded to the Duc d'Enghien's credit. Napoleon, with his appreciation of military qualities, may not unreasonably have early learned to regard him with suspicion. Whilst the young man showed the foibles of Condé's unworthy descendants, he also gave proof of redeeming qualities. On the march, battlefield, or in the skirmish, he soon displayed not only courage but initiative, and, what at this time was rarer, consideration for those serving under him. "Who knows," he wrote at this time, in his day-book, "whether a vigorous stroke might not have saved the life of our un-

fortunate monarch?" When no fighting was going on he hunted, danced, rioted, and flirted with the rest. Not yet had his affection for Charlotte de Rohan developed into love.

Meantime another figure claimed the girl's care and devotion. A year before the fall of the Bastille the Cardinal de Rohan had been permitted to return to Paris. The affair of the Diamond Necklace seemed forgotten. An *émigré*, with his kinsfolk and friends, he betook himself to one of his numerous seigneurial residences, a small principality on the right bank of the Rhine over against Strasburg. The place was called Ettenheim, a name afterwards covering Napoleon's name with undying infamy. To the society loving Cardinal this second exile appeared less bearable than the first. Formerly he had at least breathed native air; he was now cut off from French surroundings and French speech. In his discomfiture he thought of his favourite niece and god-daughter, the winning young hostess of the Hôtel de Rohan. Would she share his exile and cheer his solitude?

Meantime Charlotte's family was scattered as we have seen, not only leagues but opinions dividing the separate members. Mother and sons were again in sympathy with the changing order of things; and as a camp—such a camp at least as that of Worms—was hardly the place for a fastidiously reared young lady, we next hear of Charlotte under the Cardinal's roof. Thus she passed the terrible years that followed, her heart ever with her hero. Every testimony to the young duke's ardour, and what in her eyes constituted



DUC D'ENGHEN

[Facing p. 123.]

the sublimest patriotism, but deepening growing passion.

Meantime tragic events occurred in her own family. The erratic Duchess, her fondly loved mother, after various adventures, had thrown in her lot with Catherine Theot, Dom Gerle, and other crazed visionaries, who later on only escaped the guillotine by the death of Robespierre. Herself imprisoned, Madame de Rohan owed deliverance to the intervention of Tallien. Jules, her son, was not so fortunate. In the beginning an ardent Revolutionary, he afterwards incurred suspicion, and was guillotined in 1793.

Early in the following year Charlotte and her young soldier were thrown together under romantic circumstances.

III

The so-called campaign in Alsace ended disastrously. Without moral force, adequate leadership, money or credit, Condé's little band—army it could not be called—now dispersed. Throughout many a desperate encounter, and the retreat that followed, Charlotte's hero displayed qualities more endearing than mere valour. Royalist of the royalists, fired by the traditions of his house, and naturally of a gay, winning disposition, the young duke had become a general favourite.

Accumulated fatigue, the terrible march in Arctic weather, and discouragement had told upon a not too robust constitution; he now fell dangerously

ill, the cardinal's princely dwelling becoming his hospital, Charlotte, his nurse. Accompanied by a doctor, named Allouel, and making slow and easy stages, he reached Ettenheim early in the year, there remaining till the spring. Night and day that passionately devoted nurse tended her invalid, worldly circumstances no less than bodily weakness appealing to her love and protectiveness. At first it seemed as if only a miracle could effect a cure, but the tenderest care and persistent hopefulness gradually overcame weakness and depression. Then followed the delicious idyll of convalescence. By the time the first snowdrops peeped above ground and the first piping of the thrush was heard, Charlotte's patient could stroll abroad. Leaning on her arm, rejoicing in the sunshine and softened air, above all, listening to her voice, he gradually recovered strength and, what needed restoratives more potent than bodily weakness, in a measure, elasticity of spirit.

In the spring, sings the most English of English poets, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love. The scion of the proud Bourbon-Condés was now twenty-three, his ministering angel—throughout life Charlotte was that—numbered five years more. But the pair had no other confidants in mutually shared enthusiasms and sorrows. Beautiful, Charlotte could not be called, gentleness, self-devotion and deep feeling, however, lending her delicate features something more attractive than mere beauty. And to this prematurely experienced man of the world, hanger-on of the dissolute pseudo-court at Worms, she represented purest

womanhood, her companionship refining, elevating him despite other influences. They were now lovers, prolonged talks of France and *fleur-de-lis*, of tragic events in Paris and projected reprisals, alternating with sweeter, more engrossing topics. Perhaps in moments of abandonment to Charlotte, even misfortune wore a friendly guise. Ambitious as was the young duke, ambitious as was his better self on his behalf, she may have taken refuge in one supreme consolation. Might not her lover prefer inaction to service under foreign leadership? Might not altered circumstances ultimately weigh with his chief? Hitherto it had been a foregone conclusion. The great-grandson of the hero of Rocroy must wed a royal princess, she must also belong to a reigning house.

“Le Roi,” as the future Louis XVIII was called, now an exile, his followers scattered, his cause discredited, European courts holding aloof, coffers, alike royal and princely, emptied—surely such exalted views had received a check. Other proposals would no longer seem preposterous.

Dreams of union and fireside happiness never for a moment overcame Charlotte's sense of duty. To his father the duke wrote during convalescence—

“When honour calls, there is one here, who, instead of hindering, will hasten my departure.”

IV

The clarion call of honour did not come under the circumstances, any prospect of a final stand seeming remote indeed. Nevertheless, as soon as his health was restored, the young soldier quitted Ettenheim, now joining one camp in the Rhine provinces, now another whenever a skirmish took place, showing great dash and, as his friends and foes alike averred, military genius. If, at times, bitter disappointment and comparative inaction brought a feeling akin to despair, was not Charlotte within reach? To Ettenheim he flew, in that endeared retreat finding never-failing love and uplifting. Again and again visions of a future shared with her occupied his mind. Even to his father, in 1794, he ventured to write thus, perhaps hoping that his real meaning might be divined—“My visions of *coulèur de rose* have vanished, but, if forced to renounce France, I do not hold that we should be despondent. In spite of our irreparable losses, a conscience at ease, good repute and health, should ensure some measure of happiness. You will tremble at the thought of your son becoming a philosopher—what a change!—you will say to yourself. But have no fear, my philosophy, such as it is, shall not befool me.”

Quite possibly, if read between the lines, the duke's meaning was as follows—You have doubtless heard of my attachment to Charlotte de Rohan, but be under no apprehension, without your consent I will never marry.

If Charlotte's *protégé* and hero was a *chevalier sans peur*, he was not *sans reproche*. With the spirit, he had also inherited the foibles of his race, and the society into which he was now thrown could hardly have been lower in moral tone. The marvel is that any room was left in his heart for so pure an image. But he was several years her junior. Over him she exercised a dual, nay, a triple influence, alike that of mistress, comforter, and the beloved. In his least worthy moments the spell still worked. Another influence proved equally resistant. Check after check, frustration after frustration, could not damp the young man's ardour for the white flag and *fleur-de-lis*. He was yearning to vindicate family traditions and show himself worthy of a historic name. To his unbounded satisfaction, in April of the above-named year, he was appointed to a command in the royalist army. The newly-named general of twenty-two thus announced the good news to his father—

“Judge of my joy, a joy which you, I know, will share. You will at the same time feel as I do, that the task before me inspires a radical change in my life. No longer the volunteer, by name d'Enghien, irresponsible, agog for pleasure and dissipation, held by most folks to be a wind-bag, a good-for-nothing, henceforth I am Monseigneur the Duc d'Enghien, a young prince commanding the vanguard of his father's army, and who, flattered by the trust reposed in him, will strain every effort to deserve it.”

His exultation was soon sobered. Disaster now followed disaster. One by one the Vendean chiefs

suffered defeat. Napoleon's victories in Italy, and the refusal of co-operation from powers beyond the Rhine, put a stop to the proposed campaign.

"We have neither bread nor money, my head is turned with anxiety," wrote the young commander to his father in June, nevertheless, summoning courage for a desperate effort. Collecting his little forces he gallantly but unsuccessfully opposed the Republican advance under Desaix. Later, with the same object, he was dispatched to Munich, and after an equally unsuccessful skirmish with Moreau's army, commanded by General Abbatuci, the two youthful chiefs met.

"Two cavaliers now advanced towards each other," wrote an eye-witness. "Both were without an escort; the first, wearing a plume of blue feathers and a tricolour scarf, and aged twenty-six, was Abbatuci, general of the Republican brigade. The second, his junior by two years, wore a white feather in his hat, and on his left arm an embroidered *fleur-de-lis*. This was a Condé, the Duc d'Enghien. Both were brave, generous, brilliant soldiers and rivals in glory. They esteemed each other, and met for the purpose of arranging an armistice, thus stopping useless slaughter. After interchanging a few courteous words, Abbatuci said: 'Monseigneur' (note the mention of rank at such a period) 'no necessity for you to have had princely birth. Son of a charcoal-burner you would have attained the same rank in the French army.'"

This gallant foe was a Corsican, son of the patriotic general who had withstood French occupation to the end. With the Duc d'Enghien,

he fell in his prime, being killed at the siege of Huningue two years later.

Then followed a period of inaction, harder to bear than defeat itself and only cheered by Charlotte's love. From his grandfather's head-quarters at Mulheim, whither the young duke had been summarily bidden, he paid flying visits to Ettenheim, and when detained in camp by monotonous duties, writing passionate letters.

"Oh, my friend," he wrote, "why cannot my entire life be devoted to you? why do the combined duties of my position, rank and birth separate us, force me from the presence that banishes every care?"

Despite shattered fortunes, Condé and the Duc de Bourbon still dreamed of nothing else than a royal alliance for their heir. In the eyes of both pure affection and domestic virtues counted for nothing. The young man was indeed from other points of view a cipher, a mere entity. His happiness was left out of sight. Thus in May 1797¹ the head of the house wrote to his grandson: "It would be an immense consolation before dying to know that our race were likely to be continued, a race as is generally admitted worth many another."

The remark was made *à propos* of highly ambitious projects; nothing less, indeed, than an alliance with the Romanoffs. The Duc d'Enghien was to marry a princess of Baden, sister-in-law of the reigning Russian emperor. The scheme came to naught, but others took its place. Not for a moment was Charlotte's lover allowed to consider himself a

¹ Archives Nationaux.

free agent. His frequent visits to Ettenheim arousing suspicion, he would absent himself from camp upon other pretexts, affecting an inordinate love of the chase.

“Throughout the three days I last spent with you, enjoying the deliciousness of your conversation,” he wrote to her at this time, “I was supposed to be hunting wild boar and deer in the Black Forest.”

Throughout life a diarist, from time to time he penned thoughts and dreams, always uppermost in his mind, despite family opposition and, alas! himself.

Domestic tyranny was perhaps partly to blame for his lapses from rectitude. Marriage with the only woman he ever loved might have rendered him heroic in the best sense. But strayings from the straight path could not efface her beneficent if reproachful or rather reproaching image. In pages intended for his own eye only, he ventured to indulge in day-dreams.

“When I look around me,” he wrote whilst at Ettenheim, “and consider the passions tearing France to pieces, and the calm of this retreat, the simplicity and rustic ease around, strange visions of happiness float before my mind.”

Visions soon to be rudely disturbed! Once more the match-makers were at work, this time their paramount object being the separation of the lovers. At any cost the duke must be removed from reach of Ettenheim; and, undaunted by former checks, his grandfather again aspired to a Russian alliance.

Soon came the bitterest trial as yet experienced by these sorely tried lovers. Not only was the

young soldier ordered forthwith to St. Petersburg on matrimonial behest, but on an errand Charlotte dreaded more than life-long separation.

Austria had just signed a treaty of peace with the French Republic. The fortunes of royalty seemed hopeless. Dispirited, penniless, in tatters, the army of "Le Roi," so-called, was offered pay and rations by the Czar, the terms being denationalization. Officers and men alike must wear the uniform and accept the discipline of the Russian army.

To Charlotte's proud nature conditions so humiliating were worse than death itself, and by her lover the proposal was viewed in the same light. Respectfully but firmly he objected, whereupon the elder Condé wrote: "I think too highly of the person in your confidence to believe that her counsels would war with your interest or reputation." His grandson still proving recalcitrant, he gave vent to a passionate outburst—

"Oh! you who are the all-in-all of my old age," he wrote, "you in whom the spirit of the Condés has been so valiantly displayed, are principles, family feeling to be thus set at naught by you?"

"I obey, but overcome with heaviness and grief," was the reply. "Forgive, and never lose faith in my respect and tenderness, both of which are amply proved by this compliance."

Charlotte could never condone the compliance that in her eyes stood for self-abnegation. Did he not thus cast plighted troth, patriotic duty and personal honour to the winds?

The struggle between wounded pride and love

was soon over. But for herself he was alone in the world, instinctive protectiveness pleaded on his behalf. Lost to her for ever, thus at least she felt him to be, he should not lose his only friend.

“Adieu, be happy,” she wrote;¹ “for you happiness may yet be in store, for myself that thought alone consoling me for all that I have lost.

“Adieu, and once more adieu! How the writing of the word pains me. Is it possible that this farewell is our last?”

VI

Not long remained the pair apart. Magnificently fêted by the Russian Court, naturally pleasure-loving and light-hearted, the Duc d'Enghien could not forget Ettenheim. Amid the dazzling festivities of St. Petersburg, Charlotte's gentle image ever haunted him, if not imparting over-mastering courage, at least warding off the last sacrifice. To temporize, to back out of one proposed alliance after another, to allay his grandfather's suspicions, he found easy. Determined opposition, a final stand was not only beyond his capacity but beyond his power. He belonged to a branch of the royal family, and under such circumstances parental authority was absolute. During the reign of Louis XIV a nobleman had sent his son to the galleys for the offence of *mésalliance*. The obtaining of *lettres de cachet* in analogous cases was no unusual event within a few years of the Revolution, witness Mirabeau's story.

¹ Archives Nationaux.

The fortunes of the Rohan family were now at a low ebb. The Cardinal, too, Charlotte's lavish protector, found himself at the end of his resources. After promising his father to contract no marriage without permission, half promising, indeed, assent to paternal wishes, the Duke pleaded Charlotte's cause: "Of that *person* whose name has been so often cited with mine, who is united to me only by the ties of confidence and affection, I would now speak. Impossible were it to point to conduct more amiable, more generous, more devoted or dignified than has been hers, in every relation and under every circumstance. She is now penniless, and her uncle being himself greatly straitened in circumstances, can no longer offer her a befitting home."

Regardless alike of his great name, of his ancestry and family fortunes, the Duc de Bourbon was at this time living disreputably in England. After further particulars his son adds: "I conjure you to strain every effort on behalf of Charlotte's father, who has so bravely served our cause, but now, enfeebled by wounds and infirmities, can no longer mount a horse or even move without difficulty. Your interest and my own might do something for him. England is generous, and ever so small a pension conferred upon the Duc de Rohan would suffice for Charlotte's needs. Pardon, dear papa, if I weary you with my importunities, but I feel deeply on this subject."¹

The notion of obtaining an English pension for the Prince de Rohan-Rochefort to-day arouses a smile, but at the time was not preposterous. Arro-

¹ Archives Nationaux.

gantly proud, the so-called king and his followers were one and all living upon foreign subsidies. No pension for Charlotte's father came from England, the Czar Paul I, however, allowed him an annuity of a thousand roubles, and later on he was invited with his daughter to the Austrian court. There the lovers met. In a fervid letter written after his departure for a campaign in Switzerland, he described her as "the good angel at whose knees he forgot every tribulation and every suffering."

Charlotte was now thirty-five years old, but neither years, sordid anxieties, nor hoping against hope, had dimmed her loveliness. Blonde, blue-eyed and very fair, she still retained the bloom and freshness of girlhood, personal attractions being heightened by dignity and that moral force so rare amid her surroundings.

After a skirmish with the Republican forces under Masséna in Switzerland, Condé's little army was finally disbanded. For the Duc d'Enghien there seemed no longer a soldier's future.

The event took place on the first of May, 1801, and has been eloquently described by Chateaubriand—

"At last," he wrote, "the moment of separation had come. These brothers in arms bade each other a final adieu, each betaking himself he knew not whither, one by one before setting out saluting their father as they regarded him, and their captain, the venerable, white-haired Condé, with tears. The patriarch of a glorious line blessed his children and witnessed the decampment, to him a spectacle grievous as that of crumbling ancestral homes!"

VII

Nothing more clearly reveals the Bourbon character than this story. The *ancien régime* had not been restored by foreign arms. Napoleon, First Consul, had his heel on the neck of France. The proclamation of an autocracy was at hand.

No longer venturing even to call himself Comte de Provence, an exile bearing an assumed name, now accepting a bare pittance and shelter from one sovereign, now from another, the future Louis XVIII had not been one whit changed by recent events. Nor had altered prospects in the very least modified the haughtiness of the Condés. Neither Monsieur le Prince nor the Duc d'Enghien's father abated one tittle of their former pretensions. The familiar world had been already turned upside down. The order of things must undergo another and still more radical transformation ere "Le Roi," so-called, and his kinsfolk would permit a Condé to wed outside a reigning house.

Again and again Charlotte's lover now approached his father on the subject of marriage. Not daring to be quite frank, never suggesting a union with his cousin, he seems to have hoped that his wishes would be anticipated, and that at last, love and home should compensate him for bitter disillusion.

In 1802 he writes to the Duc de Bourbon thus—
"My grandfather tells me that you are both endeavouring to improve my circumstances. I presume such measures have reference to my marriage. I am somewhat surprised that in a

matter so nearly concerning my happiness I should be allowed to remain wholly in the dark. I have long ceased to be a minor. We should therefore consult each other in a matter of such importance, and regarding which I could come to no hasty decision."

On a sudden the lovers' hopes were raised. By the death of the Cardinal de Rohan in 1803 his god-daughter, favourite niece and the devoted companion of exile, became an heiress. Of late years the Cardinal's lavish hospitality had emptied his coffers, but his vast estates remained, and these were willed to Charlotte. Might not altered prospects weigh with the Prince de Condé and the Duc de Bourbon? With their royal master, the pair were bankrupts. What reigning house would for a moment accept their heir as a suitor?

Whether or no at this moment the Duc d'Enghien boldly spoke out, and asked permission to marry his life-long love, is not clear. The desperate decision now arrived at suggests such a line of conduct.

In the last days of 1803, and in the presence of two witnesses, the Marquis de Thumery and the Baron de Grunstein, Louis-Antoine-Henri de Bourbon and Charlotte de Rohan-Rochefort were married in Strasburg Cathedral, the ceremony being performed by a former Vicar-General named Weinhorn. Henceforth life to these two meant home only, and mutually shared, much-trying affection.

And with that blindness of human nature regarded by the Greek dramatists as fatality, bride and bridegroom settled themselves within a stone's throw of the French frontier.

At a time when conspiracies and rumoured conspiracies had maddened the Corsicans, when drum-head court-martials and secret tortures were the order of the day, when any one bearing the Bourbon name was forbidden native soil on the pain of immediate death—scoffing at threats, rebutting persuasion, laughing fears to scorn, the Duc d'Enghien coolly took up his residence at Ettenheim!

In a modest château the pair now made their home, busying themselves with the culture of flowers and vegetables, amid such occupations forgetting past illusions, gloomy forebodings, and perhaps what was hardest to bear, the weight of a secret.

On one side the love of floriculture was an inheritance. In times of peace the hero of Rocroy would amuse himself by cultivating carnations, thereby inspiring Mlle. Scudéry with a famous quatrain. His great grandson no less assiduously tended flowers, covering his walls with clematis, roses and honeysuckle, Charlotte aiding him in such tasks.

They were at last one, all that seemed left to them being their love for each other.

VIII

In March 1802 a collective manifesto had been forwarded to Louis XVIII, at that time living in Poland and styling himself Comte de Lille. Among the memorialists now re-affirming their adherence to *fleur-de-lis* and *oriflamme*, were the king's brother, the Duc de Berry, the Orleanist princes and the

two elder Condés. The Duc d'Enghein could not allow himself to hold aloof from such a movement. On the twenty-second of the same month he acknowledged a missive from "Le Roi" in the following terms—

"SIRE,

"The letter with which your Majesty has deigned to honour me is duly to hand. Too well your Majesty knows the blood in my veins for a single moment to doubt of the reply therein demanded. Sire, I am a Frenchman, a Frenchman loyal to his God, his King and his word of honour.

"Many there are perhaps who will one day envy me the triple privilege implied in such a declaration. Permit me, your Majesty, to join my signature to that of Monseigneur the Duc d'Angoulême, with himself adhering with heart and soul to the sentiments of my King.

"(Signed) LOUIS-ANTOINE-HENRI DE BOURBON."

The last sentence refers to certain proposals of mediation on the part of Prussia, the "Comte de Lille" being offered the Polish crown and a large subsidy in exchange for the throne of France.

In signing the above letter the Duc d'Enghien signed his own death-warrant. Immediately copied into English and other papers, it was certain to catch Napoleon's eye. As the recent researches of M. Ernest Daudet and other historians show, the First Consul was maddened by plots and counter-plots. Never for a moment could he feel himself

in anything like security.¹ From the date of the *Machine Infernale*, like Orestes, Napoleon was followed by Furies. As a sleuth-hound, assassination dogged his footsteps.

Reports of the young duke's popularity had evidently made him uneasy. Adored by his soldiers, brilliantly endowed, daring, above all heir to the greatest name in French military history, Charlotte's husband seemed the only Bourbon to be afraid of, his very existence became a nightmare.

The frenzied precipitation and brutality with which Napoleon's design was carried out look like the work of insanity.

On the fourteenth of March, 1804, that is to say, about three months after the young duke's marriage, a general named Fririon, stationed at Strasburg, was dining with friends. In the midst of dinner his servant handed him a sealed dispatch from the military governor of the city. As the general hastily read, he grew deadly pale, and motioned his host and close friend M. de Stumpf into an adjoining room. "I am ordered," he said agitatedly, "to set out at two o'clock this morning, accompanied by cavalry, for Ettenheim, and seize and carry off the Duc d'Enghien. My duty as a soldier is to obey. I say no more."

The pair pressed each other's hand, and without another word rejoined their fellow-guests. But, understanding the drift of his friend's confidence, M. de Stumpf, without losing a minute, took steps to warn the intended victim. Both men, indeed, the

¹ See the numerous recent works of M. Ernest Daudet and of M. Gilbert Augustin Thierry.

general by divulging the secret, and the civilian by acting on it, now risked their own lives on behalf of an entire stranger. "What was going to be done with the Duc d'Enghein? we asked ourselves," wrote the general in his *Memoirs*. "Was he to be kept as a hostage or to be put to death? Time proved. I had no personal acquaintance with this young man, I had never indeed so much as seen him, but even at personal hazards, I did not hesitate to take steps on his behalf, fully persuaded that by enabling him to escape, I should prevent an arbitrary arrest, and further I should not embarrass the Government by preserving one whose existence was really a menace."

But not only like the hero of an immortal romance, the Duc d'Enghien seems a doomed man throughout every stage of his history, from first to last, a second Master of Ravensworth. He also seems to have played into the hands of fatality, blindly abetting adverse fortune.

When the friendly warning reached Ettenheim, he was miles away from home, gaily hunting wild deer. On his return there yet remained a chance, just a chance, of escape. Charlotte's tears, the prayers of his faithful servants availed nothing. For his followers as well as himself, rest and food were absolutely needed, he urged, adding, "Violate neutral territory, and carry me off? Tush! such a course would be sheer midsummer madness!"

So light-heartedly did he take the matter, with such confidence did he laugh away their fears, that at last even Charlotte grew calm.

The few precious hours were allowed to elapse,

ere morning broke the château was surrounded by armed men.

IX

Springing from his bed, the duke's first thought was of resistance, only the advice of a faithful friend deterring him from such a course. What, indeed, could seven men hope for thus out-numbered?

With frantic haste, not a moment being allowed for preparation, farewells, to say nothing of parting injunctions, the kidnapped man was bundled into a carriage, passed across the Rhine in a ferry-boat, and under a strong armed escort driven post-haste to Strasburg. From the citadel, on the following day, he wrote thus to the broken-hearted Charlotte, "I do not lose a minute in letting you and my friends know what has become of me, and to reassure you all so far. My only fear is that you may have already quitted Ettenheim, and may have endangered your own safety by following me to this place. The happiness of your presence would be dearly purchased by anxiety on your account. I much fear that you would be made to share my imprisonment."

What the duke evidently dreaded was a long incarceration. After various instructions with regard to his papers and the measures she could take on his behalf, he adds—

"The faithful Mohiloff has never quitted me for a moment."

This was Charlotte's pet dog, which had followed the military convoy across the Rhine. Not being

permitted to enter the ferry-boat, he had swum across the river and jumped into the carriage, there laying at his master's feet and ferociously resenting interference.

The long missive ended thus—

“We must wait and hope. Adieu, princess”—the word “wife” was evidently omitted of set purpose—“you know my long and tender attachment to you. Free or a prisoner I shall never change. That attachment is unalterable.

“(Signed) L. A. H. de Bourbon.

“Strasburg, the Citadel, Friday, March 14, 1804.”

This letter, breathing passionate devotion and encouragement, never reached its destination. With other papers it was handed to Napoleon by the general in charge, named Leval.

Meantime, hardly had the duke crossed the Rhine than Charlotte set out for Strasburg, vainly hoping to see her husband and for permission to share his captivity. Roughly refused admittance, after a prolonged examination, the unhappy wife was forthwith expelled French territory. Without a moment's pause she posted to Carlsruhe, there throwing herself at the feet of the Elector, afterwards Grand Duke of Baden. But, with other small potentates, the Elector trembled before the ascendant star, and would not move. More chivalrous and humane, his son-in-law, the King of Sweden, enlisted himself in the Duc d'Enghien's cause, promising every possible effort on his behalf.

Napoleon took good care that his prey should not escape him.

On the sixteenth, with several friends, prisoners like himself, the duke was placed in the citadel of Strasburg. On the following day they were allowed to spend as much time as they chose in the garden. So little, indeed, did the duke apprehend his doom that he supped gaily, saying to one of his companions—

“To-morrow, Sunday, we will attend mass, next day we will set to work in earnest,” the contemplated occupation being his own defence.

What occurred the following and last entry in his diary tells us—

“Sunday, March 18.—I was taken away (from Strasburg) this night at half-past one. Only just time was given me to dress. I took leave of my unfortunate friends and servants and set forth alone, under guard of two officers and two gendarmes. I was told by Colonel Charlot that I was being taken before the General of Division, who had just received orders from Paris. Instead, I find a carriage with six post-horses before the Cathedral. I was hurried inside. Lieutenant Petermanns placed himself beside me, and an officer of the gendarmerie named Blitterdorf drove. Two gendarmes accompanied us—one inside, one out.”

The crime of the Iron Mask was not carried out with more secrecy than Napoleon's crowning infamy. At express speed and with frequent relays the berline rattled towards Paris. Along the route were posted soldiery, so fearful was the tyrant of losing his victim—a young man whose only crime was his name! And such was the precipitancy enjoined on his agents that no time was allowed for

a meal by the way. When, after sixty-two hours' incessant travel, the duke and his faithful dog reached Vincennes, they were half-famished. Moved to pity by their appearance, a humble official hastened to the nearest restaurant, and set before the pair a bowl of vermicelli soup and a *fricandeau*, both by master and dog being gratefully devoured. The name of this humane gendarme was Aufort, and in 1816 he published an account of what happened.

The following order had been forwarded that morning to Harel, Governor of Vincennes :¹ "An individual, whose name is not to be known, citizen commandant, will be conducted to the fortress under your charge. You will place him in a vacant cell, and take proper precautions for his security. The intention of the Government is that everything concerning him is to be kept a profound secret, and that no questions are to be asked as to the reason of his detention. You yourself are not to know who he is. You alone will communicate with him; no one else is to see him till the receipt of further orders. He will probably arrive this night. The First Consul, citizen commandant, relies upon your discretion and the exactitude with which these orders are carried out."

Meantime the members of the impending court-martial were already assembled in close proximity to the prisoner, their instructions being to condemn and at once "juger sans desespérer le prevenu" (to judge without letting go)—and on no account was sentence to be deferred.

¹ *Archives Nationales*, where it can be seen (folio 6418), "29 Ventose An xii, Police Secrète."

The trial and court-martial, so-called, were the merest formalities. Condemned beforehand, allowed no defence, not so much as a day's, an hour's delay, the duke was already a murdered man.

Waked from a sound slumber at eleven o'clock that same evening, he was briefly interrogated before a packed commission, the charges against him being complicity with Dumouriez and Pichegru, of receiving a pension from the English Government and of having otherwise conspired against the Republic.

The first inquiry terminated, the prisoner wrote a hurried note begging that it might immediately be transmitted to Napoleon. It ran as follows—
 "Before signing the statement already drawn up by me, I earnestly beg an audience of the First Consul. My name, rank, conduct, and the horror of my situation, lead me to hope that this request will not be refused.—L. A. H. DE BOURBON."

To their credit be it said, five of the officers constituting the court-martial proposed delay and transmission of the letter. They were over-ruled by a sixth, named Savary, commandant of gendarmerie, who had been charged with the impending execution. Reminding the others that their orders had been "to condemn without letting go," the matter was dismissed.

Meantime the duke had retired to his couch, and worn out with fatigue was soon again fast asleep. Three hours later he was once more aroused, this time by Harel, governor of the fortress.

Lantern in hand, Harel conducted his prisoner through one dark passage after another, finally

emerging into the open air. It was now pitch dark, and a cold north wind was blowing.

“You are taking me to a dungeon?” asked the prisoner.

“Alas, no!” murmured Aufort, his benefactor, whose duty it was to be present.

A few seconds later, the victim knew his fate. He had been conducted to the *fosse*, or dried moat, between the fortress and outer wall. Before him by the feeble light of torches gleamed the bayonets of the firing party; at hand lay a newly-dug grave, which had been prepared the previous morning.

With extraordinary *sang-froid* he now cut off a lock of hair, and begged an officer present, named Noirot, to see that with a ring and pencilled note, it was delivered to the Princess Charlotte; he next begged for the services of a priest, a request met with a gibe. Then the bayonets were levelled, as he fell the words escaping him—“How awful to die thus at the hands of Frenchmen!”

Hardly was the body hidden by hastily shovelled earth than a terrific howl rang through the enclosure. It was Mohiloff, who in desperation had broken loose, and now frantically tore the half-covered grave of his murdered master.

Such was the tragedy written in the face of the aged lady whom a Frenchman still living saw sixty and odd years ago. Charlotte de Rochefort never forgave her husband's assassin. Pitiless she remained to one who was himself the incarnation of pitilessness.

Of European States, three alone protested against Napoleon's crime—namely, Great Britain, Sweden

and Russia. The Duc d'Enghien's dying commands were never carried out. The severed lock of hair, ring and note, never reached her for whom they were intended. Placed under lock and key in the police records, it was not until the final overthrow of Imperialism after Sedan that they were discovered. And these records contain an order which perhaps more than anything shows the real character of the modern Attila. It was this: the faithful Mohiloff was on no account to be restored to his mistress! Dog-lovers, however, may derive some consolation from the fact that poor Mohiloff found kind protectors. And later a follower of the Condés worthily commemorated him in the following epitaph:—

“Perdita Condaei proles dum quaerit amicum
Solum te moriens spectat, amice canis!”

Truly has Herbert Spencer written (*Ethics*):
“The Bonapartes have proved the greatest curse of modern times.”

A STORY OF THE WHITE TERROR

A STORY OF THE WHITE TERROR

THE early years of the Restoration afford melancholy reading. Delations, espionage, merciless reprisals were the order of the day. Vainly we search these annals for the faintest trace of magnanimity or even of moderation. Gouty, infirm, ever under the influence of others, Louis XVIII allowed the reactionaries, or so-called Ultras, headed by the Comte d'Artois, afterwards Charles X, to have their way. The White Terror followed. From end to end the country was terrorized by a rigorous state of siege. So-called *Cours Prévotales* were established, empowered to condemn and summarily execute any citizen accused of conspiring against the government. Drum-head court-martials, fusillades, imprisonments, exile, recalled the war waged against Protestants a century before.

Sparsely, indeed, did the better side of humanity glimmer amid prevailing deterioration.

Napoleon, as he found to his cost—and, curiously enough, to his surprise—had temporarily perverted the French character. When after Waterloo one by one the men he had heaped with wealth and honours deserted him, he could not conceal his astonishment and disgust. I say curiously enough, because from so colossal an intellect might have

been expected more knowledge of human nature. The sycophants flocking around his successor could hardly be expected to display heroism. Few, very few instances of nobleness or self-sacrifice light up these dreary annals. One victim after another, his only crime being reckless devotion to a fallen chief, was abandoned alike by kinsmen and friends. Ties of blood were disregarded. Life-long friendships were cast to the winds. Craven self-interest held sway. Nevertheless here and there we meet with shining exceptions to the rule, instances of purest devotion and endurance.

Among the condemned of that blood-stained year, 1815, was the Comte de Lavalette. Charged with conspiracy, his real offence had been the taking over of postal administration in Napoleon's name during the Hundred Days.

More fortunate than most accused persons of the White Terror, Lavalette was not selfishly abandoned to his fate.

Every effort was made alike to soften the ordeal of long imprisonment, to obtain his acquittal, and after condemnation his pardon.

Here it must be explained that the Revolution had modified prison *régime*. As in the days of which Helen Maria Williams has told us, political prisoners could follow their avocations, and for many hours of the day receive their friends. Later such privileges were withdrawn. Thus Ney, "the bravest of the brave," whilst awaiting trial was deprived of his sole distraction, the flute. Lavalette, on the contrary, was allowed the company of a faithful friend, named Saintes-Rose, the pair amusing them-

selves with chess, and each day Madame de Lavalette shared her husband's dinner. The death sentence having been pronounced, another devoted friend, the Duc de Duras entreated Louis XVIII to grant Madame de Lavalette an audience. The petition was granted, and here we read of a scene recalling Lord Macaulay's famous page, that description written in Scriptural phrase "with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond," of Monmouth at the feet of James II.

Full of hope, the poor wife flew to the Tuileries, and by the duke himself was ushered into the royal presence.

In callousness Louis XVIII equalled his Stuart predecessor.

"Madame," he said, "I consented to receive you as a mark of personal interest." So saying he turned away.

Sobbing and murmuring prayers, the unhappy woman remained on her knees. The king uttered no word more. The death penalty was therefore to take effect.¹

Lavalette's friends next sent his case before the Cour de Cassation (Court of Appeal). This step proving equally infructuous, they determined, if possible, to effect his escape. The initiative was taken by a brave *habituée* of the court, the

¹ In the case of the youthful wife of General Labédoyère, a similar and even more terrible scene had taken place. "Madame," said Louis XVIII, "I can only do one thing for your husband, *I will have masses said for his soul.*"

The widow was condemned to pay three francs to each of the firing party told off to shoot her husband. See Vaulabelle, *La Restauration*, vol. iv. p. 60.

Princesse de Vandemont, and in the short space of a day—Lavalette was to be shot on the following morning at five o'clock—every detail had been arranged. Besides this lady, several friends were in the plot, one and all, be it remembered, hazarding their lives on the prisoner's behalf. The principal rôles, however, devolved upon Madame de Lavalette and her daughter Joséphine, a child of twelve, and here we come to the most remarkable feature of our story. Not unfrequently we read of childish heroism, of juvenile efforts to save some comrade or pet animal from drowning or other catastrophe. Instances in the very young of sustained composure and emotion long suppressed under terrifying conditions, are rare indeed.

Picture, then, a convent-bred child suddenly introduced to scenes so strange—instead of class-rooms and gardens, soft-voiced nuns and joyous companions, confronting prison walls, iron gratings and armed jailers, all the while having a part to play, feeling herself the arbiter of her father's fate! It is this situation that renders the little drama of exceptional interest and poignancy.

The plot decided upon was as follows: after the supposedly final farewells, husband and wife were to change outer clothes, the matter being facilitated by various circumstances. In the first place, the season being mid-winter, Madame de Lavalette's daily visits were paid in a long fur-lined cloak and hood; secondly, the pair were of similar height and proportions, Lavalette's bulkier size having been reduced by long incarceration and suspense; thirdly, the cell was furnished with a screen, behind which



MME. DE LAVALETTE

[Facing p. 156.]

Lavalette performed his toilette; and lastly, perpetual watch was only kept in the corridor on which the door of his cell abutted.

For a few minutes, from time to time, the prisoner daily escaped surveillance. The greatest risks would be run on entering the corridor. Madame de Lavalette's part would be comparatively easy, as the changing of dress would take place secretly; little Joséphine's part was much more hazardous, each step being beset by pitfalls. Between her father's doors and the portal of the Conciergerie, several courtyards and passages had to be traversed, each guarded by warders and gendarmes.

It was especially impressed on the little girl's mind that she must change her position in passing from one portion of the prison to another, always contriving, and as if quite naturally, to place herself between her father and his guards.

The fateful evening arrived. Accompanied by an aged woman servant and the child, Madame de Lavalette visited her husband, as was supposed for the last time. Just before retiring behind the screen an incident threatened betrayal. Overcome by emotion and the heat of the cell, the old woman began to sob audibly.

"No weakness," whispered the almost frenzied wife, "the least noise may cost your master's life. Inhale these salts, in a few minutes you will be in the open air."

Then, no guard being outside the grating, quick as lightning she passed behind the screen; in a few seconds Lavalette reappeared alone, so completely travestied that the little Josephine hardly recognized

him. On the usual signal being given, the door was opened, and, leaning on his daughter's arm, his head bowed as if overwhelmed with grief, a handkerchief pressed to his eyes, and enveloped in furs, he passed out.

The narrow, ill-lighted corridor offered no difficulties. They next passed into a vast guard-room where five turnkeys were always stationed, their position being to the left. Not forgetting her lesson, Joséphine here took her father's left arm, thus screening him from close observation. Here came a second moment of agonized suspense. The jailors ranged on the opposite side let the pair pass without notice, but as they approached the other end, a warder came up and touched Lavalette's arm.

A cry, a start on the part of Joséphine, would now have proved fatal, but the child's nerve stood her in good stead. Lavalette, although, as he afterwards wrote, convinced that all was lost, remained calm.

"You are retiring in good time, Madame la Comtesse," the man said—that was all. We are not told, but probably the interruption arose from self-interest. Perhaps this poor man, who had seen Madame de Lavalette on former occasions, looked for a parting gift, otherwise even the most hardened prison official would hardly have reminded a woman so situated of his presence.

Yet another and equally paralyzing ordeal forthwith confronted the fugitives. Behind the iron grating leading from the guardroom to the outer courtyard sat another turnkey whose business it was

to open, and who now eyed the pair without raising his keys. All now seemed lost, but again Joséphine proved her father's deliverer, remaining outwardly unmoved.

Lavalette had forgotten to say "Ouvrez" (Open). Recalling the omission and summoning all his courage, he inclined his head. The heavy door with its iron grating swung back, and father and daughter passed into the outer courtyard. Here were ranged a score of gendarmes who had witnessed the Countess's arrival two hours before. Remembering her swiftly conned lesson, the child here took Lavalette's right arm, once more being between him and his watchers.

And now the portal was reached, a whiff of fresh air reaching from the open street, the sight of the sedan chair making the prisoner's heart leap. But just as the last danger seemed overcome, again came a moment of fearful suspense. True enough there stood the sedan chair; both lacquey and bearers had disappeared. Incredible as it may seem, the two apparently interminable minutes that followed did not overcome Joséphine's constancy. Never moving a muscle, the twelve-year-old girl again and for the last time stood her father in good stead. The two agonized minutes seemed hours, but they passed. Man-servant and newly hired porters appeared—presumably tired of waiting, the first pair had gone away—the chair moved off, Joséphine's mission was accomplished.

At the corner of an adjacent street Lavalette found himself thrust into a cabriolet and driven off at a furious pace. As soon as he began to breathe

freely he recognized in his companion an old friend, the Comte de Chassenon.

“You here?” he asked with surprise.

“Aye, and with two double-barreled pistols, of which I hope you will make good use in case of need.”

“Nay,” Lavalette replied, “I will not prove your destruction.”

“You will just follow my own lead,” the other retorted coolly.

In the vehicle Lavalette again disguised himself, this time putting on a groom’s livery. By a tortuous route they reached the Rue de Bac, where they alighted, another friend now taking the Count’s place. Proceeding on foot and protected by the obscurity of night, they arrived at the first hiding-place, more than one gendarme in hot pursuit of the fugitive dashing past them on the way.

Meantime all Paris was astir, the city gates were closed, and couriers and riders were dispatched in every direction. The news of Napoleon’s escape from St. Helena could hardly have caused more commotion, or awakened more violent passions. Not only among ministers and in political circles, but in society the most vindictive spirit was displayed.

Court ladies, even young ladies, frequenters of royal salons, cried—

“Is it possible—Lavalette allowed to escape?”

When after her six weeks’ incarceration Madame de Lavalette returned to her home, she found that the little Joséphine had been expelled from her convent school. On learning what had happened, alike nuns and their pupils avoided her, parents of pupils

informed the superior that their children would be immediately withdrawn if Joséphine de Lavalette were allowed to remain. We must go back to the lamentable Dreyfus episode a few years ago for an example of similar vindictiveness and class hatred.

Lavalette's long odyssey was finally brought to an end through English agency. After three weeks' hiding in the house—strange to say, of a Government official—three English officers lent their services. Wearing the uniform of a guardsman and accompanied by two of the Englishmen he safely crossed the frontier, reaching Bavaria. In 1822 the refugee was pardoned and permitted to return to France. He died in Paris a few years later; his *Mémoires* were published in two volumes in 1833.

Less happy than her husband, Madame de Lavalette never recovered from the tension of that terrible night and the six weeks' rigorous imprisonment that followed. Her reason became affected. The after fortunes of her brave little daughter we do not learn.

A TRAGI-COMIC PROGRESS

A TRAGI-COMIC PROGRESS

I

THE odyssey of Charles X after his dethronement in 1830 is as curious a page as French or any history offers.

On July the twenty-sixth, the famous, or rather infamous, Ordonnances were promulgated, by a stroke of the pen, French liberties being thereby destroyed and the Constitution set at naught. Three days' fighting in the streets of Paris, with the sacrifice of six thousand lives, convinced the king and his advisers that a miscalculation had been made. Parleyings with the military authorities did not encourage an appeal to arms. At seventy-three, moreover, Charles X was hardly likely to show more daring than had done the Comte d'Artois when vainly expected by his followers at Quiberon thirty-five years before.

"Was no fishing-boat to be had?" was Napoleon's scathing utterance concerning the affair, the recalcitrant having excused himself on the plea of difficulties in crossing the Channel.

So quickly had matters marched now, and so determined was the national attitude, that on the thirty-first of July the panic-stricken court fled from Saint Cloud to Rambouillet, thence being dispatched an abject recantation.

The Ordonnances should be revoked, the ministry changed, his Majesty would even abdicate in favour of his grandson, the Duc de Bordeaux, afterwards Comte de Chambord. By return of courier came the message—"It is too late!"

In the favourite residence of François Premier abdication was signed indeed, but unconditionally. The white flag no longer represented France.

Then began that slow and tragi-comic progress suggesting rather Gilbertian opera than the fall of a dynasty and the close of a great tradition. Two days later the royal party quitted the historic château and its beautiful forest—perhaps the most beautiful of French forests—for Maintenon, a picturesquely placed little town thirteen miles farther. Here, amid souvenirs of the Roi-Soleil, his uncrowned queen, author in part of the Revocation and of Racine's *Athalie*, adieux were made to the king's guards, or *Cent Suisses*, and to the other regiments that had been so far in attendance. These were now replaced by a national contingent.

Charles X mastered his emotion. In one respect, indeed, *noblesse oblige* was a motto never lost sight of by the Bourbon princes. Personal dignity was ever upheld under the most galling circumstances. Impassibility characterized the attitude of the Dauphin, as the Duc d'Angoulême was called; his wife, the ill-fated daughter of Louis XVI, whose not too richly endowed nature had been warped by early experiences, wept bitterly, whilst the rattle-brained Duchesse de Berri, her sister-in-law, laughed, chattered, and wept by turns.

Presumably foreseeing adventure, the little lady

had prepared herself in the matter of dress, wearing male attire, white trousers and waistcoat, high boots, long coat, or *redingote*, black cravat and broad-brimmed hat.

The travellers arrived at Maintenon in the night of August the third, by ten o'clock next morning the start being made for Dreux, seventeen miles off. Here began dilemmas.

The position of the French Government was that of embarrassed hosts bound to welcome the coming and to speed the parting guest. Warmly must be acclaimed the citizen king sworn to abide by the Charter. Without semblance of hustle, but with all possible haste, his predecessor must be got out of the country.

The imbroglio at Dreux arose out of conflicting insignia.

To have escorted the dethroned monarch to the sea-board with *oriflamme* and *fleur-de-lis* would have been irony, cruel as the placing of York's paper crown. The matter had to be made clear delicately, and by way of sparing the old king's feelings, Odilon Barrot approached his son.

"Monseigneur," he said, "the royal family will be able to pass the night at Dreux, but must be prepared to encounter in that town the national colours."

"Consult the king," was the curt reply, "it is no affair of mine."

Equally curt was Charles X. He was absolutely indifferent about the matter, he said. The royal servants, it must be mentioned, were allowed to wear white favours.

Under escort of Odilon Barrot, the dreary little *cortège* set forth, the king on horseback, the ladies and attendants in carriages. Whenever a town or village came in sight, Charles X alighted and took his place beside the princesses. The representatives of the nation now conducting the royal refugees to the sea-board must have recalled a far more tragic journey of forty-six years before. Very different in character was Barnave to Odilon Barrot, and very different was the latter's errand, here sentiment having no place.

Barnave's generous sympathy for Marie Antoinette, awakened during the return from Varennes, cost him his life. Odilon Barrot could have felt little commiseration for the prince thus uncrowned by his own act, the typical Bourbon who had "learned nothing and forgotten nothing." Barnave's career was all of a piece. Odilon Barrot's later years were a repudiation of early ideals.

The pathos of this tortoise-like journey, indeed, lay in the absence of sentiment, neither monarch nor people having a single tear to shed for each other. With regard to his friends, the king's feeling must have been of aculeated bitterness.

Not from the lips of Charles X could now fall the words, "more oft the gratitude of man it is that sets me mourning." The long route towards Cherbourg and exile lay by many a château whose owners had been overwhelmed with royal favour and largesses. From none came an offer of hospitality! The refugees at starting were categorically given to understand that they must expect no friendly invitations. Every portal remained close shut, every

window remained blank, and few and far between were even the letters of condolence and regret handed to the royal fugitives at each stopping-place. Such ingratitude and want of feeling must, indeed, have been the unkindest cut of all.

On the fifth, the interesting and historic old town of Verneuil was halted at, a name familiar to many English readers. A few miles off lies the great school¹ founded by the late author of that famous book, "Whence arises the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race?" (*À quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons?*) Pleasant are my recollections of a day spent at *Les Roches* some years back, and sad is the reflection that its founder hardly outlived the consolidation of the *Entente Cordiale*.

Next day the procession entered Laigle, a small industrial centre fourteen miles distant. Here a comic incident occurred.

It has already been mentioned in so far as possible the royal susceptibilities were to be respected. Etiquette was to be maintained in the least little particular.

Never throughout recorded history had a French king dined off a round or oval table, the seat of dignity not thus being sufficiently marked. Has not Lord Bacon pointed out the subtle policy which may lurk in the shape of a table? A square table, as De Quincey characteristically remarks, "possesses an undeniable head and foot, two polar extremities of what is highest and lowest, a perihelion and an

¹ *Les Roches* marks a revolution in French educational methods, there a prominent place being given to out-door sports and the cultivation of international sympathies.

aphelion, together with equatorial sides, thus opening at a glance a large career to ambition; a circular table sternly repressing such aspiring dreams." And was not King Arthur's Round Table a protest against prerogative?

Now, oddly enough, this little seat of the needle and pin industry possessed no square table! A diligent search from end to end of the place having proved infructuous, carpenters were set to work, and a rectangular board was hastily coopered.

Equal punctilio characterized every proceeding. Whenever an emissary of the Government approached the dethroned king, he resorted to Goldsmith's expedient. As we all know, the poet hid his patched coat with his hat when paying visits. There was no patch in the messenger's livery, but the tri-colour could be conveniently concealed by headgear. Royal susceptibilities were thus not unnecessarily wounded, the hated colours remained invisible.

Upon one occasion only did anything in the nature of a demonstration take place. As the *cortège* passed through Vire or Val de Vire, a little company of young and old, rich and poor, wearing deep mourning and carrying lilies, approached the king's carriage, with low obeisance offering their flowers.

From this romantically placed and romantic old town, former capital of Lower Normandy, cradle of the Vaudeville, home also of a poet, by name Chénédollé, St. Lo was reached, the journey having now occupied eight days, a peregrination slow as my own when twice following the same itinerary some years ago! Unlike poor Charles X, the

English lady intent on studying rural France received a warm welcome at every stage.

Such snail-like progress had hitherto been passed over by the Government. It was not indeed till Cherbourg lay within easy reach that the king's final destination could be learned. After many negotiations Great Britain consented to receive the royal family on express conditions, namely, as private persons, the new *régime* in France having been officially accepted.

Then measures were taken to accelerate the royal movements. Charles X was politely informed that he had better hasten somewhat.

"I shall do nothing of the kind," was the not unexpected reply. "I have my habits, I am, moreover, very glad to spend as much time in France as I possibly can."

A stronger remonstrance being made, something like expeditiousness was ordered, and on the sixteenth the *cortége* drew near Cherbourg.

At one little village some country folk approached the carriage containing the Duc de Bordeaux effusively, and kissed his hands, whereupon his mother jumped upon the foot-board, crying, "Let us stay here, let us fasten ourselves to trees, refusing to budge an inch ; for God's sake let us stay here."

But the rattle-brained little lady harangued a deaf audience. Carriages and escort moved on. Twelve days after the flight from Maintenon, Cherbourg was sighted.

II

Hitherto only what may be called serio-comic embarrassments had troubled the royal escort. Now for the first time occurred threatenings of direst tragedy. In view of possible danger matters had been so arranged that not a momentary halt should be made at Cherbourg. The population of this great shipping town was known to be ardently constitutional ; a veritable ferment stirred the public mind ; for a brief moment the fate of France trembled in the balance. The least imprudence on either side, a shot fired at the king by some frenzied anti-clerical, an attempt at rescue by some equally frenzied partisan, and the country would again have been plunged in civil war.

With the utmost haste Charles X and his family were driven through the streets, on either side being massed gendarmes and troops of cavalry, whilst flanking these were vast and hostile crowds, men, women and children shouting with fierce determination—

“Down with the white cockade! Long live liberty!”

These were the last words heard on French soil by the self-dethroned monarch. Fortunately the precautions proved adequate, and unmolested the *cortège* reached the destined quay. Here gates were closed upon the hooting, shouting, gesticulating multitude. Fugitives and their escort, all France indeed, could at last breathe freely!

Embarkation on the *Great Britain*, an American

man-of-war, immediately took place, the little Duc de Bordeaux, afterwards Comte de Chambord, now aged ten, led the way with his tutor—here doubtless being indicated his supposititious position of heir to the French crown—the old king following, behind these the remaining royal party with representatives of the Government, the gentlemen in attendance, and servants. Charles X wore civilian's dress without orders; the Duc d'Angoulême wore black, with a white hat and high Russian boots, both himself and his wife affecting a certain negligence in their attire; the Duchesse de Berri had discarded pantaloons and frock-coat at an earlier stage, but still wore a man's hat, this being stuck on the top of her bonnet!

The king and his son were in tears, the princesses showed less agitation, whilst the little Duc de Bordeaux and his sister naturally forgot everything in the novelty of all around them. Dismay characterized the attitude of the suite.

On board took place final adieux, Charles X throughout these painful scenes maintaining dignified calm.

Unlike his predecessor, he was no poser. Nothing delighted Louis XVIII so much as the display of his scholarship and literary attainments, often with great aptness citing Horace and Molière. The other's speech was characterized by distinction of a different kind, his utterances being ever terse, well chosen and reserved.

The delegation from Paris had so satisfactorily discharged their duties that not only by word of mouth, but in writing, did the king express his

appreciation. The document preserved in the National Archives ran as follows—

“It affords me pleasure to fall in with the wishes of the gentlemen of the Commission named below, and to acknowledge the courtesy and attention paid by them both to myself and my family.

“CHARLES.

“To MM. le Maréchal Maison, de Schonen, Odilon Barrot, and de la Pommeraie.”

More painful matters had next to be touched upon. Part of the royal plate had been mortgaged at Rambouillet for urgent needs, and the king now received from the Government an advance of 600,000 francs upon his personal property.

“I will give you a receipt for this sum,” he said, ‘and a draft upon my man of business in Paris, who will reimburse the same.”

“Sire,” replied the emissaries, “we require neither receipt nor draft.”

The king returned to the subject, being again met by refusal. Then he spoke of the future—

“There is only one thing I desire,” he said; “that is, neither to be a charge upon France or upon any foreign court.”

“Sire,” was the answer, “France will never permit that he who has reigned over her shall be indebted to another nation.”

By the terms of abdication, the king’s personal estate had been fully secured to himself and his descendants.

Only once did Charles X display acrimoniousness during these last painful moments.

Presuming on his old master's composure, one might almost say amiability, the Maréchal Maison now came forward with honeyed words of excuse. A soldier risen from the ranks, on whom the king had heaped fortune and honours, this man had been one of the first to quit the losing side and place his services at the disposal of the new Government.

Venturing on an apology, urging that only gratitude and devotion had prompted his action in joining the escort, he was sternly cut short.

"No more on that subject, Maréchal" (*Brisons là-dessus*), said his old master, and turned away.

From his harum-scarum grand-daughter-in-law, biting sarcasm might well be expected. Shortly before departure, the Duchesse de Berri came to the king with a letter from the new queen announcing that a guard had been placed over her historic château of Rosny in the Seine-et-Oise.

"These people look after our knick-knacks," she cried, "and they rob my son of his crown!"

No sooner had the emissaries taken their departure, than the vessel raised anchor, in the person of the king bearing centuries of tradition and the remnant of a dynasty.

A PIONEER OF THE *ENTENTE*
CORDIALE—PHILARÈTE CHASLES

A PIONEER OF THE *ENTENTE*
CORDIALE—PHILARÈTE CHASLES
(1815-1823)

DURING the White Terror a youth of fifteen was hurried off to England, the following eight years being spent by him in our midst.

Son of a *Conventionnel* and ex-priest, married to a Dutch Protestant, boy although he was, Philarète Chasles had just endured a month's horrible imprisonment in the Conciergerie. The period was one of fabricated plots and sedulously nursed suspicions. That the lad had been apprenticed to a printer of republican antecedents did duty for a conviction. "All of us have been more or less in prison," he wrote to a friend jestingly years later. "Such an experience has happened to yourself, to me, to everybody. A very commonplace renown that!" But when, in 1831, he revisited the Conciergerie, no longer the dark, damp, loathsome place he remembered, every familiar horror came back. Once more he fancied himself a prisoner breathing a fetid atmosphere, hearing the sobs of the unfortunate Labédoyère in the adjoining cell,¹ tossing on a filthy bed, barely kept alive by black bread

¹ See *A Story of the White Terror*.

and water, worse still, thrown among degraded criminals of the worst type, and of both sexes.

Young Chasles' education had been liberal and his bringing-up refined, but the old Conventionnel held that every individual, no matter his means and position, ought in case of necessity to be independent of circumstances, hence his son's apprenticeship to a trade. Unfortunately, we have only scattered notes of these English years, a series of elegantly written episodes without dates or connecting links. He tells us that letters of introduction procured him much kindness and hospitality and, as we shall see later on, the acquaintance of Coleridge, Jeremy Bentham and other leading figures of the epoch. If such experiences were not memorialized in a work of enduring fame, if Philarète Chasles' sketches of English life and literature have been superseded, nevertheless who can say? May not the lesser writer have inspired the greater? May not the youthful auditor of Coleridge and Bentham, the passionate enthusiast for Shakespeare and Wordsworth, have had some share in Taine's monumental labours?

That even in the very year of Waterloo a young Frenchman's impressions of English society and character should be highly appreciative is not only a fact remarkable in itself, but forms the key-note to his career. The interpretation of insular modes of thought and literature mainly occupied his life.

"I found myself," he wrote, "in a society less brilliant, less gifted, less mentally alert than that of France, but fortified by profound convictions, resolute in its defence of liberty, respecting religion and

rendered powerful through faith in itself." In later years he held the same views. To the last he remained almost one of ourselves, an Anglo-Français.

A prolonged spell of London fogs, perhaps also a natural fit of home-sickness, induced after a time physical and mental depression. By the advice of the lady to whose care he had been confided, he was sent to a village on the Northumbrian coast, there boarding with a Methodist family.

Might not the lady in question have been Hannah More? Certain particulars warrant such a supposition. Young Chasles' protectress was a person of evangelical principles, the authoress of educational and other works, and moved in distinguished literary circles, but she is never mentioned by name.

Among these austere fisher-folk, "a survival of the Covenanters," he calls them, the fastidious, cultured young Parisian fell under the influences of Puritanism.

"Here," he wrote, "instead of nature bedizened and rendered theatrical, sophisticated devotion and frivolous passions, I found the sublimest conditions the world can show, nature in all its grandeur, faith in all its sincereness, passion in all its depth. From that time arose within me a horror of falsehood, a horror increasing as life wore on."

One might have well expected a quite contrary result, and that he would have rebelled against such surroundings. The patriarchal routine in his new home was severe in the extreme. By five o'clock the household would be astir, an entire hour being devoted to devotional exercises, from which, however, the visitor was at liberty to absent himself.

At the hours of eight, two, and seven the board was spread with homely, abundant, but never varying fare. Left to his own resources the youth spent his time out of doors, in his solitary wanderings along the shore or on the cliffs, often reiterating to himself, "Yes, the Beautiful exists! Nature with its wealth attests the ideal loveliness independent of mere material wants. The faith of my childhood that had been sterilized by early environment now made itself felt again, welled up in my heart as from a living source."

These hardy Northumbrians of just upon a century ago struck Philarète Chasles as a strange compound of brutality and tenderness, now despoiling the shipwrecked mariner, now risking their lives to rescue a comrade. "A mixture of barbarism and pity, of crime and self-sacrifice, all inextricably woven together, such is man," he wrote, adding, "Now for the first time I understood Shakespeare. I re-read Macbeth with comprehension."

Oddly enough, no attempts were made by his hosts to convert their young Frenchman. On taking leave, however, his hand was warmly pressed by the patriarch, the Ezekiel of his narrative, who bade him avoid the world as the fiery furnace consuming Korah, Dathan and Abiram, adding, "If ever you find yourself drawn towards that furnace remember my house as a Noah's Ark in which you will ever find harbourage." Several years later, when Philarète Chasles revisited his much-loved land, he found the Noah's Ark swept away by a veritable deluge of domestic troubles. But memories of the place and the people ever remained dear.

“To that humble village by the sea,” he wrote years after, “I owe a lesson far more precious than any acquirable from books. I realized the profound interest attached to humanity in the lowliest walks. I learned how superior is experience to speculation when we set to work upon the study of mankind.” Elsewhere with the customary self-depreciation of his country people he added, “I was saddened by the contrast between these austere, energetic lives and the vapid scepticism then reigning in France. It humiliated me to see how religious fervour had here elevated and strengthened an entire race.”

The next few years were spent in London, where he had the good fortune to meet Coleridge, Bentham, Leigh Hunt, Cobbett, Godwin, Hazlitt, and other historic personages.

His first visit to Coleridge is thus described years later—

“We reached Coleridge’s elegant little house about eight o’clock in the evening and were ushered into a small drawing-room upholstered in blue, where a company of about thirty persons had already assembled. No one paid the slightest attention to us, and we took our seats in silence. Coleridge was speaking. As he stood with his back to the fire, his head raised, his eyes fixed upon vacuity, his arms folded, he soliloquized rather than discoursed. Inspiration held him fast, impelling rapid utterance. His voice was flexible, vibrant, deep; his features were regular; his lofty forehead, sensitive mouth, subdued fire of glance and marked lines recalled the portraits of Fox with more calm, of Mirabeau also, and in after life Berryer, although Berryer had

not the same dreaminess. In learned and poetic strains he now analyzed the Greek dramatists, dilating on the sombre eloquence of Æschylus, the divine harmonies of Sophocles, the pathos of Euripides. For ten minutes he commented upon the 'Prometheus Bound;' as he gradually lifted the veil shrouding this allegory, his eyes shone, his speech became more impassioned, a living reality now became to us the chained, tortured innovator as he hurled defiance to the elements, sublime embodiment of the antique belief in fatality. Next he showed how mythology gave way to the Christian religion and in a bold, brilliant survey propounded the various metaphysical solutions of the supreme riddle, the enigma of life."

In what his youthful listener afterwards described as a vaporous labyrinth, Coleridge next passed from Hartley and Berkeley to Malebranche, "exposing the system of Cudworth, the theories of the fanciful Duchess of Newcastle, citing Tillotson, Clarke and other writers of that school, finally reaching Leibnitz and Spinoza, in fervid language setting forth the pantheism that lends the world a soul without according a body, imparting to an unreal universe a non-existent motivity, then, having reached an uppermost pinnacle of speculation, he descended to earth, closing with musical mystic citations from Dante."

Well might Philarète Chasles quit the house lost in wonder and admiration!

In that little read but entertaining book, *The Doctor*, Southey makes merry over the lady mentioned in the foregoing bevy of philosophers.

“The fantastic and yet most likeable Margaret Duchess of Newcastle,” he wrote, “in discoursing upon Fate and Chance, had thought just enough about the matter to imagine that she had a meaning, and if she had thought a little more would have discovered that she had none.” The beautiful lady dabbler in poetry, physics and philosophy died in 1674 and was buried in the Abbey.

“Three days later,” adds Philarète Chasles, “I called upon Coleridge, who took the trouble to initiate me into his philosophic system, a system in which Christianity was accepted as conformable to reason, experience and history.” About the same time, 1818–1819, he was received with a friend by Jeremy Bentham, at that time occupying a house on the site of Milton’s dwelling in Old France, Westminster. “On arriving,” he writes, “we were immediately invited to stroll in the garden; as we walked the old man descanted enthusiastically on his projects for the benefit of coming generations. He rather ran than walked, speaking incessantly in a sharp, quick voice. Pausing before two magnificent trees, he bade me read an inscription on an adjoining wall. It was as follows: ‘To the prince of poets.’

“‘My young friend,’ he said, ‘I think of cutting down these trees and transforming a place which was the cradle of *Paradise Lost* into a school for the study of utilitarian theories. Are you still under the spell of poetic ideals? If so, so much the worse for you.’

“Reading my thoughts, Bentham added—

“‘I am far from despising Milton, but he belongs to the past, and the past serves us not.’

“Despite the mild benevolence of his manner I was far from feeling at ease. What interest could this pedantic materialist feel in myself? None whatever. He preferred a syllogism to humanity, thirty thousand men were of less account to him than a single axiom. Nevertheless he seemed quite free from annoyance and misanthropy. His personal appearance was neglected and his costume partly that of a bygone epoch.

“‘I could well wish,’ he said at parting, ‘that each year remaining to me might be relegated to the end of as many consecutive centuries following my decease. I should then be in a position to compute the influence of my works on posterity.’”

His French visitor was far from appreciating the thinker who in the words of James Mill, found the philosophy of law a chaos and left it a science. “Will Bentham’s works long survive him?” wrote Philarète Chasles years later. “No, algebraist of social science, taking no account of human weaknesses and vagaries, the first loafer met with better understands mankind than do you!” Twenty years later, now an acknowledged *littérateur* in Paris, Chasles again revisited our shores. On account of his familiarity with English and distinguished bearing, he was attached to the suite of Marshal Soult, who represented Louis Philippe’s Government at the coronation of Queen Victoria. The fact that these insular experiences were jotted down from memory in after life and put together by a friend for posthumous publication, accounts for an odd mistake.

In 1825 Philarète Chasles returned to France

carrying back a positive veneration for England, "my ideal," he wrote, "of established liberty and well-regulated order." He felt, he said, dis-habituated, out of place, an exile. He proceeds to describe a second glimpse of Coleridge as occurring on this visit which must have taken place years before.

The award of an academy prize in 1827 threw wide the avenues of journalism and literature, also the best literary salons. Henceforth a contributor to the *Débats*, the *Revue des deux Mondes*, and the *Revue Britannique*, ten years later he was named librarian of the great Mazarin library and lecturer on English and German literature at the Collège de France. This chair he held till within a short time of his death, which occurred at Venice in 1873.

The two volumes of *Mémoires* from which these notes are taken (Charpentier, 1876, 1877) contain many striking sketches. "One writer and one only," he writes, "has mastered the secret, no matter how tediously set forth, of the great comedy called our own epoch. Like Dante, Honoré de Balzac has comprehended the immense drama of humanity and has endeavoured to portray the actors. But whilst Dante draws the distinction between good and evil, Balzac compares them; his work is a mixture of Rabelais and Marivaux, the utmost conceivable subtilty, materialism and refinement are here in close alliance.

"I used often to meet Balzac at the house of the Duchesse de Castries," he adds. "The unsymmetrical lines of his unwieldy figure, the flashes of his small, yellowish eyes, the extraordinary mobility

of his facial muscles, the countless curves of his intellectual and quickly lighted-up physiognomy, contrasted with the heaviness of his lips, their perpetual Bacchic parting, and with the straight thick locks falling on either cheek. There was something of the woman and the child about him. He might also have passed for a corpulent monk. One could understand such a man indulging in a bath-room constructed of choice marble and building his house at Meudon without a staircase!"

Théophile Gautier is thus described: "The Danton of the literary revolt, the Paul Veronèse of the pen, Théophile the Southerner was at once acknowledged, classed, labelled, as the exponent of colour and effect, the champion of ornateness and display. Tall of stature, strikingly handsome, he resembled a sculptor's Neptune or Triton, his kind, semi-sensual, semi-oriental features nevertheless lighted up with penetrating intelligence and artistic comprehension. Frankly materialist, caring only for art as he understood it, he jested alike at protestants, purists, philosophers, and all seekers after truth. In his *Le Capitaine Fracasse* and *Voyages* he was superb." Of Taine, who so successfully worked in the field he had himself opened, Chasles wrote most generously; never did any writer more magnanimously acclaim the supersession of his own efforts by another. Himself a writer on England, he wrote on Taine's great work: "Our young philosopher's book throws strong light on many characteristics of English life and literature, and on their connection and harmony. He therefore takes a leading part in the supreme crusade, whose rôle

is the first of all, in other words, the championship of truth."

Equally interesting are his notices of Gustave Planche, the horny critic, "*le critique osseux*," and of his friend Saint-Beuve, who in his celebrated *Causeries* "caresses antiquity, flirts with the present, never contradicts himself, yet perpetually modifies his opinion, now indulging in brilliant sallies, now penetrating depths of thought, hurrying from one subject to another, being only brought to a stand by some partially effaced inscription or printer's error."

Other historic figures here introduced are, Thiers, Victor Hugo, Berryer, Victor Cousin, Villemain, but I will now pass on to a highly dramatic incident recorded in the second volume.

The Libri trial, or rather trials, of two generations ago are forgotten, but at the time occasioned hardly less excitement throughout France than the *cause célèbre* of our own day. Here is the story in a few words.

In 1830 an Italian mathematician of this name, who had been compromised in political movements at home, fled to France, obtained naturalisation, and through the benevolent and afterwards ill-paid offices of the scientist, Arago, a professorship at the Sorbonne. Later, Guizot appointed him inspector of public instruction and superintendent of state libraries. The last-named post gave him command of provincial as well as of the Paris collections, which were visited on official missions.

These bibliographical peregrinations soon gave rise to sinister reports. Just as thirty years later the devastation of the phylloxera was now noted in

one direction, now in another, traces of havoc ere long being visible all over the country, so the state emissary left a tell-tale track behind him. All this time Libri was not only amassing a magnificent library for himself but trafficking in priceless books and manuscripts with foreign collectors. Public feeling being aroused, he was brought to trial, but owing to the powerful protection of Guizot and others, the initiatory proceedings fell through, to be resumed in 1848. The final trial lasted for two years, France being divided into two camps. It was a case of Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards, and political bias entered largely into the acrimonious spirit displayed. Libri, who had fled to England, was sentenced in default to ten years' solitary confinement. To what pitch passions had been aroused may be gathered from the following fact. In 1852 Prosper Mérimée underwent a fortnight's imprisonment on account of a polemical letter, concerning the matter published by him in the *Revue des deux Mondes*. That one state library after another could be thus pillaged might well stir up popular resentment. Libri died at Fiesole, and here I again quote Philarète Chasles, his first and last coming in contact with this extraordinary thief being striking in themselves and strikingly told.

“One day” (presumably about 1832, but our author is provokingly remiss with regard to dates), “Libri presented himself at the Bibliothèque Mazarine bringing an introductory letter from Guizot. Plump, polished, amiable, astute, Italian of the Italians, was this man. His object in coming was to invite me—the two-hundredth guest—to a dinner

of celebrities, one and all being the most influential and energetic contemporary writers. He was about to begin his crowning raid on our great libraries and naturally wanted the suffrages of the press. Buloz (founder of the *Revue des deux Mondes*), Girardin, all our principal leaders became his partisans.

“Since his flight to England before the final trial I had heard nothing of him except that he was living in Florence, and, as he gave out, in great penury. It was in 1869 that, after visiting Venice, Padua, Pisa and Ravenna, I halted at Florence. I wished to see the last home of the great Galileo, the villa in which Milton, then in the flower of his youth, visited him, little dreaming that his own declining years would be clouded by a similar infirmity. One hot September morning I climbed the dusty, rose-bordered road leading to Fiesole, black-eyed beggar children holding up bunches of flowers for sale. The cathedral reached, I walked straight to the chief altar in order to inspect the statues. A coffin, unlidded after Italian fashion, barred my way. As I glanced at the face of the dead, I recognized Libri!”

Philarète Chasles was not only what our friends call *un écrivain de race*, wedded to the best traditions of French literature, but a fine personality, a man who carried out in daily life the high moral and intellectual standards he had set before him. Such a figure has seemed to me worth recalling at the present time. In more senses than one he may be regarded as a precursor of the *Entente Cordiale*, the convictions of old age corresponding with the impressions of youth. “In your person,” wrote to

him his friend Saint-Beuve, "the year 1826 brought us a critic acclaiming no new French school, no national routine, instead one who had communed with Shakespeare and Johnson, who had intellectually bridged over the 'Manche.' At the present time, you are in your proper place (I do not here allude to your official position), acknowledged on all sides to be a large and liberal mind, sowing more ideas broadcast than any of us and not at all on the point of coming to a standstill. You belong to the critics of to-morrow, and these you have anticipated."

In Philarète Chasles' case, as in that of many another, he sowed harvests that he was not destined to reap. And as I recall him here, come back to memory my student days in Paris during the Second Empire and the genial lecturer of the Sorbonne whose classes I attended. I well remember his tall slight figure, distinguished bearing and charming talk, for the young English girl was introduced to the professor, and more than one chat did I have with this French *littérateur* of the best, most engaging type.

THE SECOND EMPIRE

THE SECOND EMPIRE

BY A VICTIM OF THE 2 DÉCEMBRE

“Dont le nom est un vol, la naissance un faux.”

VICTOR HUGO, *Les Châtiments*.

[THE Second Empire has long been repudiated by the French nation. The popular history of M. Hippolyte Magen answers the query—how came about a condemnation so swift, so unanimous, and so thorough? Published shortly after the consolidation of the Third Republic, the work will still, I believe, be new to many English readers. In the following pages I give a brief *résumé*, adding that the author cites official and other authorities for his facts, and that no statements of my own are intercalated without special mention.]

Louis Napoleon Bonaparte was born in 1808. The Duke of Reichstadt, son of the first Napoleon and Marie-Louise of Austria, died at Schönbrunn in 1832. Joseph Bonaparte having no sons, it was on Louis, King of Holland, and his male issue, that devolved the Imperial succession. On account of marriages contracted by them against his will, the Emperor had disinherited his other brothers. The King of Holland had two legitimate sons; the eldest died of croup at the age of five years, the second died in 1831. The third son born to Queen Hortense, afterwards Napoleon III, was disowned by the King of

Holland, and, as is now well known, was the offspring of an illicit connection.¹ In compliance, however, with the wishes of his brother, the Emperor, King Louis allowed the boy to be baptized under the title of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, paternity according to French law being proved by the baptismal register, *la filiation se prouvant par l'acte de naissance*. In the eyes of the law, Louis Napoleon, therefore, became the third son of the King of Holland and Queen Hortense. The Comte de Morny, who conspicuously figures in this history, was half-brother of Louis Napoleon, by another *liaison* of the Queen.

His political education was taken in hand by his mother on the death of the Duc de Reichstadt, the King of Holland having long since been separated from his wife and testifying no interest in his son. With such maxims as these she imbued the mind of her apt pupil: "All means towards the attainment of power are good, provided public order is maintained." "A prince should know how to keep silence or to speak without saying anything." "A famous name is the first instalment of destiny to the man who knows how to push his advantages." "Caprices of fortune can always elevate the heir to an illustrious name." "Study the machinations of your uncle." Already Louis Napoleon had made up his mind that he should one day become Emperor, and if contradicted on the subject, became, in the

¹ The curious on this subject may consult the *Almanach de la République*, in which a Dutch admiral, Werewel, is said to be the father of Louis Napoleon.

In Hanotaux' great history of *Contemporary France*, Vol. I, Napoleon III is always spoken of as "le fils de la Reine Hortense," never as "le fils du Roi d'Holland."

words of his foster-sister, Madame Cornu, furious as a tiger. The Strasbourg and Boulogne escapades are familiar to most readers, but there are one or two circumstances regarding these to be pointed out. When the conspirator, having thrown himself into the arms of General Voirol, crying, "Acknowledge in me Napoleon III," was quietly led off to prison, Louis Philippe not only pardoned him, but on the eve of his departure for America, sent him by the sous-préfet a packet containing 16,000 francs in gold. "I am deeply touched by the King's generosity," wrote Louis Napoleon. In 1837 Queen Hortense died, having previously sent for her son from America. "If Louis ever becomes Emperor, he will ruin France," she wrote to his friend the Duchesse d'Abrantès, being greatly distressed at his dissipation and extravagance.

The Boulogne attempt turned out much after the manner of that of Strasbourg. One of the conspirators made the following confession whilst being examined: "The leaders gave us each a hundred francs and a military costume. To myself, who can neither read nor write, was given the grade of corporal." The prince, who had deliberately fired a pistol at the head of the captain in command of the fort, missing his aim, but severely wounding a grenadier, was condemned to perpetual imprisonment in the fortress of Ham, Persigny to twenty years' detention, the rest to short terms of imprisonment. During the four years and a half he spent at Ham, Louis Napoleon corresponded with George Sand and Béranger on the rights of the people and the principles of democratic government. He penned

sentiments that won the confidence of such men as Louis Blanc, who was received by him among other visitors in prison. "I have never claimed any other rights than those of a French citizen," wrote the "noble captive"; thus was he apostrophized by George Sand. "I never shall believe," he added, "that France can become the appanage of one man or one family." The Republican journals congratulated the writer on such views. "Prince Louis Napoleon is no longer a pretender in our eyes, but one of ourselves, a soldier fighting under our banner," was the opinion put forth by one democratic organ. "The Napoleon of to-day personifies the sufferings of the people," wrote George Sand. The future author of the *Histoire de César*, a book perhaps undeserving of the oblivion into which it has fallen, not only wrote pamphlets and newspaper articles, but a work called *The Extinction of Pauperism*. Tired of a captivity which, however, hardly deserved the name, every possible indulgence being accorded him, Louis Napoleon, in 1846, petitioned the king for release on the score of his father's failing health. Ever disposed to clemency, Louis Philippe would fain have granted the request, but his Ministers imposed conditions which the prisoner found unacceptable. At a time when some repairs in the fort offered such an opportunity he preferred to escape in the guise of a workman named Badinguet. Two days later he reached London—the ex-king of Holland meantime being at Florence—and again betook himself to a life of pleasure and debauchery. The revolution of February found him in great pecuniary embarrassments,

one of his creditors being a young and handsome Englishwoman, whose story is mixed up with that of the Second Empire in a very painful manner, and whom according to the Imperial correspondence, "he tenderly loved."

On the twenty-fifth of February, 1848, not quite two years after the escape from Ham, the following letter was received at midnight by the members of the Provisional Government then sitting in Paris—

"I arrive from exile to place myself under the banners of the Republic. With no other ambition but that of serving my country, I announce my arrival to the members of the Provisional Government, and to assure them of my devotion to the cause they represent, also of my personal sympathy.

"LOUIS NAPOLEON BONAPARTE."

II

No sooner had he taken his seat as deputy in the National Assembly than Louis Napoleon emphatically proclaimed his adherence to the Republic, and his devotion to the existing institutions of the country.

"None present," he said in the Assembly, "are more determined than myself to devote his efforts to the maintenance of order and the establishment of the Republic on a firm basis." On the eve of the presidential election he said, "I am no ambitious dreamer of empire. If elected President I should solemnly swear to hand on my office to my successor with the liberties of the people intact." On

the twentieth of December, 1848, as President, he took his oath, "before God, and in the presence of the French people represented by the National Assembly, to remain faithful to the sole, indivisible, and democratic Republic." Immediately afterwards, with the co-operation of the monarchical party, bent like himself on the overthrow of the Government, he set to work to carry out his designs. The Republican press was harassed, Government officials suspected of Republican leanings were dismissed, the right of public meeting was interdicted, and many other repressive measures were put in force. At the same time attempts were made to frighten the middle classes by the spectre of a Red Republic.

It seems incredible that, in the face of such facts as these, the President should have been able to blind the country, and even politicians, to his ulterior designs; yet so it was. Indeed, had it been otherwise, his conspiracy could never have been carried out. During his presidential journeys in the provinces, attempts were made to feel the pulse of the people, and to see how far he might venture on betraying his real motives. At Nantes—this story I have from the late Dr. Bodichon, one of the Republicans of '30, not from the volume before me—his habits of life disarmed suspicion. "Would you have me believe a man like that to be a conspirator?" asked a Republican of a colleague warier than himself, who had tried to put him on his guard; "a man who is the slave of drink and pleasure?"

It would appear that much of this dissipation was affected by way of a blind. During these presi-

dential progresses, Louis Napoleon protested against entertaining any sinister intentions. At Lyons he said to the mayor and municipality, "Rumours have reached you of a projected *coup d'état*. I thank you for discrediting them." In a presidential message delivered during the same year, he declared—"The unswerving rule of my political career will be adhesion to duty and nothing but duty." At Caen, indeed, he ventured upon a tentative—"If," he said, "the French nation should desire to increase the responsibilities of the first citizen, the acceptance of the same would be obligatory upon that citizen."

The Assembly, having refused to revise the Code, a measure on which he had counted for the renewal of the presidential office, the conspiracy was planned. With Louis Napoleon were associated his half-brother Morny, also Persigny, Saint-Arnaud, and Maupas, the latter afterwards his creature as *préfet* of the police.

One and all seemed to have been in desperate circumstances. Morny, a notorious gamester, was deep in debt.

Not the least astonishing feature of this history is the blindness shown by Republican leaders. Had, indeed, a different line of conduct been taken in the Assembly, the *coup d'état* must have been rendered abortive. To understand all the circumstances that rendered such an event possible, we must study the records of the period. The Republicans mistrusted the President, but they still more distrusted the monarchical party, and were ready to place an overweening confidence in the army

and in the people. "There is no danger," cried a Republican deputy, Michel de Bourges, one of the first victims of the 2 *Décembre*, on the occasion of the memorable discussion of the fourth of November, 1851. "The army is with us, and if danger were there, we have invisible sentinels in the entire people." If the army and the people belied these sentiments a few weeks later, it must be borne in mind that the French soldier is trained in the doctrine of passive obedience to his leaders, and that popular resistance had been rendered impossible.

On the eve of the first of December, all was ready. At the Opéra Comique, Morny visited one stall after another, exchanging significant nods with his friends. A certain Madame de Liadères put the following question to him—"It is said that the President is going to make a clean sweep of the Assembly. If so, what will you do?" "If so," replied Morny gaily, "I shall keep as near as I can to the handle of the broom." The President was that evening holding an official reception at the Elysée. To one of his associates he thus addressed himself in an undertone—"Colonel, are you sufficiently master of yourself to keep down all outward show of emotion?" "I believe so, Prince," replied the other. "Then," added Louis Napoleon, "it is to be to-night." Later that evening, in conversation with the Mayor of Nantes, he alluded to the rumours of a *coup d'état*. "You, at least, Monsieur Favre, do not believe such reports? You know that I am an honest man?"

The reception over, the conspirators met together in a private closet. The Prince then took from a

drawer three sealed packets; the first, containing 500,000 francs and the nomination to the post of Minister of the Interior, he handed to Morny; the second, containing the same sum, was given to Maupas, with the list of such deputies, officials and journalists as were to be placed under immediate arrest; the third packet, weightier than the other two, contained 2,000,000 francs—500,000 for Saint-Arnaud, Minister of War, the rest being for distribution among the officers and soldiers, thereby to be bribed into betrayal of the Republic. The sums had been borrowed of the Banque de France by the Prince-President. Another conspirator, Belville, was immediately dispatched to the *Imprimerie Nationale* with proclamations for secret printing. These were cut into slips, in order that the compositors should have no notion of their meaning. "Fire upon any one who may attempt to quit the building or approach a window," were among the orders given to the gendarmes in charge.

Meantime Saint-Arnaud was so disposing of his forces so as to render combined action on the part of the Parisians impossible, whilst to Maupas, in his capacity of *Préfet* of the Police, was entrusted the business of arresting sixty-eight representatives of the people, many officers holding high command, besides large numbers of journalists and others, whose opinions and well-known devotion to the Republic rendered them dangerous. The first arrests took place outside the *Palais Législatif*, around which the President's colleague, Colonel Espinasse, had drawn his forces. "Colonel," cried the brave *Commandant Meunier*, "what is your

business here?" "To take command and execute the orders of the President," was the reply. "Ah! you dishonour me," cried Meunier, tearing off his epaulettes and breaking his sword, which he threw at the other's feet. Espinasse then hastened to the apartments of the military governor of Paris, the loyal Niol. "I arrest you," cried Espinasse, seizing the Colonel's sword. "You do well to take my sword," the Governor replied coolly, "for as I live, I should otherwise have run it through your body." Bertoglio, a Corsican bravo hired for the work, was charged with the arrest of the Breton general Le Flô, a man of spotless integrity, and devoted to the Constitution. Bertoglio took a back staircase, finding himself in the bedroom of the General's little son, aged eight years. "Do not be frightened, darling," said the man. "We have only something very particular to say to papa. Take us to him at once." The unsuspecting boy conducted him, the soldiers following, to his parents' bedroom. Bertoglio sprang upon the General as he lay in bed; he nevertheless offered a stout resistance. Then finding himself overpowered, he tried in vain to recall the men to a sense of duty. "My son," he said afterwards, taking the child on his knees, "maybe Monsieur Bonaparte will have me shot, as his uncle, like a coward, had the Duc d'Enghien put to death. Whatever happens, remember how he has treated your father." Madame Le Flô, who had been sleeping by her husband's side, was present at this scene. A commissary of police, accompanied by fifteen police agents, thirty guards and ten mounted soldiery, were charged with the

arrest of General Changarnier. The brave officer, taken in his night-clothes, also attempted resistance.

General Cavaignac was arrested in the same way. Years after, his son, a youth of sixteen studying at the Sorbonne, was called from the ranks to receive a prize at the hands of Louis Napoleon, son of Napoleon III. In the presence of the Court, the school authorities and a large body of spectators, the lad sat still, haughtily refusing the proffered honour. Never was the Court put to greater confusion than by this incident.

Police, armed to the teeth, were dispatched to arrest another loyal officer, the brilliant strategist, Colonel Charras. "Ah," said Charras, "my prognostications fulfilled—the *coup d'état!*" Seeing a pistol on the mantelpiece, the police commissary seized it in a fright. "Oh!" cried the Colonel coolly. "Be easy, it is not loaded. Now that you are reassured, send those scoundrels out of the room whilst I put on my things." The commissary and two police officers nevertheless waited in the Colonel's bedroom whilst he dressed himself. General Bedeau, like Le Flô, Lamoricière and Cavaignac, by birth also a Breton and loyalty itself, was surprised in his bed. "Arrest *me!*" exclaimed the General to the police agent. "It cannot be. I am legally protected; your business is in the enforcement, not the violation of the law." Then, after deliberately making his toilet he said, "Bring in your creatures, if you will; I yield to force, and to force only." Half-a-dozen police agents sprang upon him, and he was brutally dragged into the street.

General Lamoricière, also surprised in bed, was promised that he should be treated with consideration if he gave his word to offer no resistance. "I do not give my word to such ruffians," was the General's reply. When in the vehicle conveying him to prison, putting his head out of the window, the agent said, "If you open your lips we gag you," showing the gag. None of these generals were ever won over, be it remarked, to the Empire.

Arrests of deputies and civilians were being carried out in the same way. A deputy, named Baze, being surprised by armed men in bed with his wife, made a stout resistance, but was, of course, overpowered and dragged to prison. Another, named Nadaud, was by a subterfuge persuaded to dress and accompany the police officer. They had not proceeded far when the agent stopped the cab before a street lamp, and, pretending to re-read the document in his hand, exclaimed, "Good heavens! I have made a mistake: it is to prison I have orders to take you." "Sir," Nadaud replied, "you have made no mistake. Your conduct is shameful."

On the same night were arrested Thiers and other representatives of the people, among these Hippolyte Magen, the author of the present work, and Demosthène Olivier, father of Émile Olivier, afterwards Minister of Napoleon III, who "accepted the responsibility of a war with Prussia with a light heart."

So well did the emissaries of Saint-Arnaud do their work that next morning by seven o'clock, the Prince-President, who had remained all the time securely shut up in the Elysée surrounded by his

troops, received the following dispatch: "We triumph all along the line."

At dawn the surreptitiously printed placards appeared; they were made up of such sentences as these: "The Constitution has been destroyed in the interests of the country and for the security of the Republic." "It is in the name of the people, in their interests, and for the maintenance of the Republic, that the deed has been done."

That same day the Palais Législatif was cleared at the point of the bayonet, and convoys of deputies were conveyed through the streets of Paris to prison. What could the Parisians do? The situation was aptly described by Victor Hugo in a meeting of Republicans and Constitutionals held in the studio of the artist, Frédéric Courbet. Armed resistance was uppermost in the minds of all.

"Listen," said Victor Hugo, who presided as chairman. "Be clear as to what you would undertake! On one side are 100,000 armed men, 17 batteries, 6,000 pieces of cannon, with sufficient stores and ammunition for making war on Russia. On the other side are 120 representatives of the people, 1,000 or 1,200 patriots, 600 guns, and two cartouches apiece per man. Not a drum have we with which to call to arms, not a bell with which to sound the tocsin, not a printing-press with which to print a proclamation; hardly a cellar at command for the safe lithographing of a handbill. Pain of death against those who displace a paving-stone; pain of death against all those who paste up a proclamation, or who summon the people to arms. If you are taken in the struggle—death; if you are

taken after it—exile. On one side, a crime and the army; on the other, the right and a handful of men. Do you accept such a struggle?”

“We do, we do,” was the unanimous reply, and it was decided that next day, at eight o'clock in the morning, the representatives of the people, journalists and others, should meet in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, and concert the best means of an appeal to the people and the army.

III

Kinglake in England, and Victor Hugo in France, have described the massacres of December so fully that it is unnecessary here to do more than recall the bare facts, of which both writers were eye-witnesses. When Louis Napoleon saw that the people of Paris would not tamely submit to have their representatives carried off to prison, the Constitution overthrown, and the laws trampled under foot, when even his agents shrank from the second St. Bartholomew imposed upon them, he became tigerish—*le tigre éclata en lui*. A second and a third time messages were sent to the poltroon shut up in the well-guarded Elysée, saying that matters were going ill, that indeed Paris was bent on resistance. His only answer was, “Let my orders be executed.” The precise number of men, women and children massacred in the streets of Paris cannot with exactitude be determined on. Probably the largest aggregate any historian has as yet given, namely, several thousand, falls far below the reality. The difficulty of accurately estimating the

numbers lies in the fact that many of the bodies were never recovered by their friends. Every attempt was made to prevent identification. Thus the keeper of the cemetery Montmartre received on the fifteenth of December 350 bodies, with orders to bury them at once in the common burial-ground, so as to prevent recognition. In this case the order was disobeyed, but many victims perished inside the prisons. One citizen stated on oath the following fact—

“Two of my friends on the evening of the 4th, as they were returning to their homes, met a strong body of gendarmes conducting sixty prisoners, mostly youths, in the direction of the Champs Elysées. As they passed, one of the lads cried out, ‘Adieu, friends, they are carrying us off to be shot.’ He was immediately gagged.”

In one discharge alone, the soldiery having been infuriated by drink for their work, the following persons were shot down: a foreign count, nine ladies, three children, a lawyer, a farmer, a sous-préfet, a chemist, a clerk, several domestic servants, and others, described by an eye-witness to belong to the better ranks of society. An English resident in Paris averred that certain streets in the Faubourg Montmartre were nothing more nor less than slaughter-houses.

People were no safer indoors than in the streets. In one house alone, tenanted by several families, were found thirty-six dead bodies, many of them ladies and children. Street gutters were seen running with blood after these massacres in private dwellings.

The Republic afterwards voted 5,000,000 francs for the families of victims, 25,000 cases having been investigated.

The terror was not confined to the capital. Thirty-two departments were placed in a state of siege. Every day might be seen bands of prisoners whose sole offence was the cry of "Vive la République." Morny's order to the sous-préfets was: "Let all who offer resistance be immediately shot," whilst Maupus wrote to the Commissaries of the Police: "Every symptom of agitation must be stopped by arrests on a large scale and by repressive measures."

People were arrested for no offence whatever. The austere Doctor Guépin, of Nantes—a man whose entire career had been devoted to the amelioration of humanity, whose name cannot even now be cursorily named by the English tourist in Brittany without bringing tears to the eyes of the peasants—even Guépin of Nantes, as he is known, was dragged before a council of war. His devotion to constitutional principles and the Republican cause was well known, but his bitterest enemies could bring absolutely nothing against him, and he was permitted to return to Nantes, there to pursue his beneficent career, till his heart was broken by the surrender of Metz.

These particulars are not named by M. Magen.¹

It was not only the Republicans who were proscribed, but those guilty of offering them a morsel of bread or a night's shelter. In the Jura, Saint-Arnaud ordered "pain of death to be inflicted on all

¹ I spent a year (1875-6) at Nantes, under the roof of Dr. Guépin's widow.

who should afford an asylum to the proscribed or contrive their escape." In the Lot, the names of thirty fugitives were given, to whom succour was forbidden under the severest penalties.

In Algeria (these facts I also had from Dr. Bodichon) the proscriptions were stopped by a rough but honest soldier, whom most probably the President dared not punish. This was Pélissier, afterwards Marshal of France and Duke of Malakhoff. A list was sent to him of thirty Frenchmen residing in Algeria, who were to be forthwith put under arrest and dispatched to Cayenne, among the proscribed being the archæologist Berbrugger, Dr. Warnier, Dr. Bodichon, and other distinguished colonists. Pélissier, then Governor of Algeria, swore a great oath and threw down the paper. "I am not going to send out of the country the few honest men in it," he said, and the order was set at defiance. It is worthy of note that the *coup d'état* had only been foreseen in Algeria by one or two clear-sighted men. To Dr. Bodichon, a writer eminently gifted with political foresight and long settled in Algeria,¹ an officer's reply had been as follows: "A *coup d'état*? We hold the sword of Changarnier against the breast of the President." A day or two later the doctor's prognostications were realized!

The massacres of December were followed by the "Deportations," or transportations. One event, however, that intervenes must be mentioned, namely, the solemn *Te Deum* celebrated by the conspirators in commemoration of their success. The clergy,

¹ Dr. Bodichon married Barbara Leigh Smith, the foundress of Girton College.

well pleased at the overthrow of the Republic and constitutional liberties, hastened in the person of Sibour, Archbishop of Paris, to sanctify the crimes that had just been committed. From that date the President took up his abode in the Tuileries; the words "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité" were effaced from the public buildings, and hostile measures were put in force against the Republicans and independence of thought generally. A clean sweep was made of all the most eminent men in science, art, and letters. Never since the expulsion of the Huguenots had been witnessed such an exodus of illustrious exiles. Victor Hugo went first to Jersey, where he wrote his famous *Châtiments*, and finally settled in Guernsey, there writing *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*. Eugène Sue made his home in Switzerland, there composing his *Famille d'un Proscrit*." Edgar Quinet penned his work, *La Révolution*, also on Swiss soil. Among the distinguished refugees in England were Louis Blanc, Alphonse Esquiros, Pascal Duprat, and Ledru Rollin. The great historian Michelet; David d'Angers, called the Michael Angelo of France; the venerable Dr. Trélat, head physician of the hospital of La Salpêtrière, a man as much esteemed for his science as for his philanthropy; Pierre Dupont, the popular songwriter; Lachambeaudie, the charming fabulist, were all driven from their native country. In the land pre-eminently of *beaux esprits* only two remained, the gifted author of *Colomba* and the great critic, Sainte-Beuve. A cluster of men who had worthily distinguished themselves in different spheres settled in Belgium, and were permitted after a time to

pursue their respective avocations there. Here are the names of a few: Laboulaye, who had been removed from his professorship at the Collège de France; Challemel-Lacour, afterwards French Ambassador at St. James's, and Étienne Arago. Victor Considérant sailed for New York; Charles Ribeyrolles, an esteemed journalist and writer in *La Réforme*, went to Rio de Janeiro, where he soon after fell a victim to the climate; Amédée Jacques, founder of the *Revue Démocratique*, on being deprived of his professorship at the École Normale, fled to Buenos-Ayres. The number of exiles and *déportés* has been estimated at from fifteen to twenty thousand.

Among the victims were large numbers of Government officials, schoolmasters, and professional men, with not a few women. Hard, however, as was the fate of the exile wrenched from his career and compelled, when often past middle life, to begin it anew, such a lot was enviable compared to that of the *déportés*, those unhappy beings sent to perish miserably in Cayenne or in pestiferous spots of Algeria. When orders came for the removal of batches of these prisoners from Bicêtre to Cherbourg or Brest, thence to be embarked, several were removed in a sick or dying state despite the protestations of the doctors. Those who remained for some time in the hospitals before departure were forbidden wine. Many medical men resigned their posts in consequence of such inhumanity. The same thing occurred after the arrival of the prisoners at penal settlements.

The writer of this narrative embarked from Havre

in company with the following prisoners, all handcuffed like convicts of the worst class :—Twelve lads from twelve to fourteen years of age ; Déville, an eminent professor of anatomy ; the statuary Garraud, formerly director of the Beaux-arts ; a well-known chemist, named Guérin ; the fabulist Lachambeaudie, several leading journalists, schoolmasters and officers, some of whom had been decorated with the Legion of Honour ; Abazaër, the skilled crystallographer ; Girard, a great agriculturist ; Péreira, formerly préfet of Orleans ; besides several deputies, artisans, and fifty-seven ladies. Well might the gendarmes gaze at their charges in bewilderment and ask them with a look of profound astonishment, “Then it is not true what we were told—you are not criminals?” The captain of the vessel which was to convey them to Cayenne was no less astonished. “Gentlemen,” he said, when he had in some degree recovered himself, “make it known to all your companions in misfortune, that I undertake to forward your letters to your families.” The consideration of this officer was the one drop of comfort in the sea of misery. The weather was exceedingly tempestuous. Prisoners and gendarmes, closely huddled together, rolled on the floor in the agonies of sea-sickness. The port-holes were closed, the atmosphere was stifling, and the sufferings from thirst, hideous.¹ The food of the prisoners consisted of worm-eaten biscuits and haricot beans, which

¹ M. Magen writes : “Lasserre, l’instituteur et moi, nous en sommes réduits à prier un ami de se trainer vers le charnier d’y aspirer quelques gouttes d’eau et de nous les apporter dans sa bouche.”

several had to ladle out of a common dish. Bad food, want of air, of clean linen, and the commonest appliances of health and cleanliness, soon induced skin diseases of the worst kind.

In March, 1853, between two and three thousand persons disembarked at Algerian ports and in Cayenne; numbers soon succumbed to harsh treatment, and many attempted to escape. A youth named Milletot for such an attempt was condemned to receive a hundred lashes in the presence of his father and brother. Under the twenty-first he fell down dead. A lady whose sufferings form the subject of a poem by Victor Hugo, Madame Pauline Rolland, was forbidden all communication with her family, and, in company of thieves and abandoned women, imprisoned at Bona. When some years after she was set at liberty she died on her way to Paris without having seen her children. Another lady, a bride of seventeen, obtained permission to accompany her husband to Noukahiva. They were watched night and day, and permitted no communication except with their gaolers, although condemned to *déportation simple*—namely, expatriation. A former traveller in Algeria—Mr. A. Knox—many years ago gave an account of the horrible fort of Lambessa, in which many of those victims were confined.

Nor must it be forgotten that the punishment of death for political offences, which had been abolished in 1848, was now revived. At Belley, a young peasant named Charlet was thus executed. Two executions for political offences took place at Clamecy, two also at Béziers.

IV

On the tenth of October, 1852, the President pronounced one of those speeches which, with so many others, was soon to be cruelly belied. "I declare it," he said at Bordeaux; "l'Empire, c'est la Paix."¹

M. Magen shows how much the clergy had to do with the plebiscite in conferring the dignity of Emperor on Louis Napoleon.

"God has pointed out Louis Napoleon. Is it possible not to recognize His Elect?" said the Bishop of St. Flour. "He has dared everything," said the Bishop of Nancy, "we will pray for him. It is the tribute we are bound to pay him for the services he has already rendered and will yet render us. The words of the Prince are the sweetest that have ever yet been uttered by Christian prince." The Bishop of Amiens said, "We have here St. Louis surpassed."

The Bishop of Fréjus declared the author of the *coup d'état* "The saviour of the world." The Bishop of Strasbourg hailed the orderer of the December massacres as "A magnanimous prince, whom may God bless." The Bishop of Nevers declared, "I salute in the Prince a visible instrument of the Almighty." "I promise him the aid of the Lord," said the Bishop of Verviers; whilst the Bishop of Valence announced that "The acclamations of a rescued and grateful people awarded a crown for his Highness's brow." The Bishop of Grenoble said, "I shall continue to offer my most

¹ "Il ne dit pas grande chose, mais il ment toujours," said Lord Cowley of Napoleon III.

fervent prayers to Heaven on behalf of this august prince, the stay, the hope, the glory of his country."

It is not matter of surprise that the clergy should thus welcome the ascendancy of one who had already shown the liveliest inclination to increase their power. Five million francs had already been bestowed upon their body, and this was a mere foreshadowing of favours to come. To the ex-bishop of Algiers he now gave the sum of 220,000 francs for the payment of his debts. The salaries of the higher clergy were increased, and 30,000 francs added to the incomes of the respective cardinals.¹ "Rouse the indifferent of your flock, wrote the Bishop of Rennes to his *curés*, "direct them how to vote." The mayors were ordered to send electoral urns to the bedsides of the sick and dying and to the hospitals. Indeed, so apparent was the systematized pressure and illegality, that large numbers of Republicans abstained from voting. The issue justified general expectation. Led by the clergy and the Government officials, the masses of the people declared themselves for Louis Napoleon and the Empire.

Among the first acts of the new-made Emperor were to heap favours on his friends and fellow conspirators, and the spoilation of the Orleans princes. Louis Philippe out of his own purse had presented Queen Hortense, afterwards called Duchess of St. Leu, with 70,000 francs, she having represented herself in direst straits. He had also, as has been seen, befriended the conspirator of Ham. With one hand the new-made Emperor

¹ Who can help here recalling the immortal *Tale of a Tub*?

now deprived the sons and grandsons of his former benefactor of property estimated at the value of two millions sterling—this was restored to them by the Republic in 1875—with the other, he gave a Marshal's bâton and a handsome pension to Saint-Arnaud. Fleury received an income of 90,000 francs; another accomplice was created Marshal of France with the customary pension; the rest were proportionately rewarded, and all were decorated with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour. To his own relations he showed himself equally lavish.¹ The ex-King Jerome received two million

¹ The profligacy of the Emperor before and after his so-called *mariage d'affection* is well known. The sums he spent on his mistresses were enormous. To Eliza Howard (these facts and notes are from M. Magen's work, and are based on the Imperial correspondence) he gave in all the sum of five millions, part of which was owed to her for debts he had contracted before the *coup d'état*. The letters of another mistress were found in the Tuileries, carefully sealed by the Emperor's signet ring. To this woman the Emperor presented a villa near St. Cloud, and she always followed him to Plombières and other resorts. In one letter she wrote, "Mon cher Monseigneur, I have deceived you. The only matter on which I beg you to have no doubt is the depth and sincerity of my love for you." Here is the sequel of Eliza Howard's history: "Miss Howard avait contribué à élever les deux enfants que Louis Bonaparte avait eu d'une blanchisseuse de Ham. Elle se montra profondément froissée du mariage de Napoléon III. Elle alla d'abord à Florence, où elle épousa un homme qui la rendit très-malheureuse. En 1865, elle voulut revoir Paris. Tous les jours quand Napoléon III et l'Impératrice sortaient des Tuileries, elle se montrait en toilette splendide conduisant guidant elle-même un superbe attelage et se plaisait à cotoyer les équipages impériaux. Peu de jours après une représentation aux Italiens, durant laquelle Miss Howard, couverte de diamants, s'était amusée à lorgner l'Impératrice, elle disparut subitement, et cette disparition ne fut pas le fait de la police. La légende veut qu'elle ait été étranglée. Dans tout les cas, elle est morte à cette époque."—Vicomte de Beaumont-Vassy, *Mémoires du XIXme. Siècle*.

francs yearly. The various branches of the Bonaparte family were divided by a *sénatus-consulte* into two categories, each member receiving handsome dotations.

The civil list, that had been twelve millions under Louis Philippe, was now raised to twenty-five millions. Over and above this sum, he received the revenues of the State Forests, valued at three millions, and a million and a half for the maintenance of his family.

The Second Empire was inaugurated by a scandal. The sum of 300,000 francs was stolen from the Emperor's private cabinet, to which two persons only had been admitted—viz. Saint-Arnaud and General Cornemeuse. Which of the two had taken the money? The pair both denying any knowledge of the theft, fought a duel, in which Cornemeuse fell mortally wounded. A short time before this occurrence, Saint-Arnaud, having lost the sum of 800,000 francs at the gambling-table, refused to pay the debt. The Emperor, in order to hush up the affair, furnished the money. Gambling and speculation, a fashion set by Morny, became the passion of all classes in Paris. What was the tone of society at Court may be gathered from one of the pastimes that figured among the fêtes of Compiègne. It was called, "La curée des dames," and has been described by Prosper Mérimée. Jewels were thrown upon the carpet by the Imperial host for his guests of the other sex to scramble for.

In spite of great opposition on the part of his family and friends, the Emperor's forthcoming

marriage with Mademoiselle de Montijo was officially declared in January 1853. "What will be said in Europe?" asked Morny, whilst Persigny, very wrathful, is said to have exclaimed, "Pretty result this of the Second of December!" The Emperor's matrimonial advances had been rejected in two foreign courts, however, and he was determined on this step, unpopular as it was throughout the country. Eye-witnesses of the ceremony relate how the placards announcing the marriage were immediately torn down, and how not the slightest interest or enthusiasm were testified by the Parisians in the event. Indeed, this Spanish marriage was the most unpopular that the Emperor could have made. Had he married a Frenchwoman of good family, things might have turned out very differently for his dynasty after Sedan.

The wedding festivities were hardly over when the Emperor was menaced by one of those numerous attempts which from that date made his existence precarious. How many times, indeed, he escaped the poniard of the would-be assassin, and how often the stiletto of his skilful Corsicans, Griscelli, Alessandri and others, was called into requisition on his behalf, can never be accurately known. Napoleon III never stirred abroad unaccompanied by one or other of these men. Griscelli, whose memoirs have been published at Brussels, remained in his service till 1857, when he entered that of Cardinal Antonelli, the cleric obtaining for him abundance of papal favours and the title of Baron di Rimini. When the Emperor visited the late Queen and Prince Albert at Windsor and Osborne, Griscelli accompanied his

master, dressed as a private secretary. The nature of his duties may be gathered from the two following narratives, cited from M. Magen's work—"In the summer of 1853, Griscelli was summoned to the Emperor's private cabinet, who said to him phlegmatically, "Here, Griscelli, read this telegram. You have a thousand francs for your expenses. Pietri will have an account of your mission." The mission was to lie in wait for an Italian named Donati, said to be coming to Paris in order to assassinate the Emperor. Griscelli accomplished his task successfully. The next day the Italian was strangled in prison. Another Italian, named Sinibaldi, suspected of the same designs, had been laid hold of by Griscelli a few weeks before. He was supposed to have been stabbed.

The manners were of a piece with the morals of the period. Prosper Mérimée, a writer not at all disposed to exaggerate matters, a friend of the Imperial family and a senator, in his *Lettres à une Inconnue*, has amply described the tone of society and the frivolities and extravagance of the Court. Young ladies in attendance on the Empress were permitted to dress up as ballet girls for the amusement of the visitors. At a masked ball it is related how a domino caught hold of a certain Madame de S—— and kissed her, she screaming and trying to extricate herself from his embrace. It was the Emperor thus amusing himself! One lady was dressed, or rather undressed, as a bat. Another writer describes the "tableaux vivants" in which the maids-of-honour posed by Imperial command. The description is not quotable, nor that of the

objectionable canvases painted expressly for the Imperial chambers.

Many of these were exhibited at the Salon, and were a public scandal, so gross was their impropriety. The Empress's boudoir¹ was covered with frescoes after the same style. The extravagance in dress, a fashion set by the Empress, was unparalleled, and wrought the ruin of hundreds and thousands of families. The Emperor determined that his Court should be the most dazzling in Europe, and reproved any lady who appeared in the same dress twice.²

The present writer well remembers the efforts made by Madame de MacMahon, wife of the Governor-General of Algeria, 1867-1870, to introduce simplicity of dress into her little court. Ladies were encouraged by the example of the Duchess to dress becomingly, decorously, and with rigid economy. It was a reformation.

It is to be noticed that whilst millions were absorbed in these scandalous frivolities, and whilst the municipality of Paris was burdened by millions of debt on "Haussmanizing," that is to say, on

¹ The Empress's bathroom at Compiègne was walled round with mirrors. This was changed before the visit of the Czarina in 1901.

² The clergy, M. Magen shows, did not hold aloof from the frivolities of the Court and of the times. One of the means of collecting money for the Church was by lotteries. An instance will suffice. In 1857, in Paris, a Jesuit father gave himself out as the prize of a lottery, the prospectus being thus worded: "Each ticket is of the value of one hundred francs. Only ladies can draw. The reverend father now preaching the Lenten sermons at the Church of Foreign Missions is the prize. The lady drawing the winning number will have the services of the said father for three days, in order to make collections, preach sermons, etc."

outward embellishment, nothing worth mentioning was done for the education of the people, or for sanitary or useful works. In 1866, M. Jules Simon drew attention to the fact that out of 62,000,000 francs of the public money expended within a stated period, only 780,000 francs had been spent on education. It was no policy of such a Government to instruct the people. Let the masses have a vote by all means, but let that vote be in the hands of the priest, was the maxim carried out.

Meanwhile the most rigid repression was exercised by means of secret police and legislation. Every possible effort was made to stamp out Republicanism and independence of thought. From the secret police, which was the mainstay of the Empire, no one, nothing were safe. Letters were opened in transmission through the post. The sanctity of the death-chamber was violated. When the mother of Ledru Rollin died, the police took possession of the body, and allowed *no relation to accompany it to the grave*. In 1854, Lamennais also died, having left orders that he should be buried without religious ceremony, without the cross on his coffin and in the common burial-ground of the poor. Hundreds of thousands would fain have paid their last homage to the author of the *Paroles d'un croyant*. The gates of Père-la-Chaise were hedged round by troops, and even Béranger could not obtain admission.

David d'Angers, the celebrated sculptor and staunch Republican, died two years later, and by his wish was to be buried without priestly offices. Enormous crowds followed him to the grave.

Expecting no such demonstration, the Government had not taken preventive measures. Among the mourners was recognized Béranger, his appearance being greeted with a cry that had been stifled in Paris for five years—" *Vive la Liberté!*" Several students were arrested for this offence. That same year Eugène Sue passed away in exile, and a few days later the great song-writer followed him. Both forbade religious ceremony at their interment. "If I should lose my faculties," the poet had said a short time before his death to some intimate friends, "you know what are the convictions I have held all my life. It is your duty to see them respected."

A little later the Republican ranks were thinned by another loss. General Cavaignac died suddenly, and was buried beside his brother Godefroy—both true patriots and high-souled gentlemen. The Government strictly prohibited any orations at the grave.

If the dead were held in such terror by the Government, what must have been the fear of the living? It is exemplified in the restriction of the press and the confiscation of all works of independent thought throughout the entire period of the Empire.

In 1862, Renan's lectures on comparative philosophy at the Collège de France were stopped on account of an expression which had given offence to the Ultramontanes and the Court. A work of great merit from the pen of the Duc d'Aumale, *L'histoire de la Maison de Condé*, was seized at the publisher's and confiscated. The history of the campaign of Waterloo by one of the victims of the *coup d'état*

before named, Charras, was also seized. Charras died at Bâle in 1865, whither had journeyed several leading Republicans to take their last leave of him. The Empire had no more redoubtable enemy than in the person of this single-minded man, brave soldier, and eminent writer. Among the private papers of the Emperor, found in the Tuileries after Sedan, was the following memorandum: "Received news of the death of Colonel Charras. *It is a good riddance.*" That same year saw the death of another French writer whom Napoleon III had sent into exile, Proudhon. In 1858 Proudhon's book, *De la Justice dans la Révolution et dans l'Église*, had been confiscated, and its author punished with three years' imprisonment and a fine of 4000 francs. In Algeria the types of a work by Dr. Bodichon were destroyed on account of a remarkable study of the first Napoleon. Renan, on account of his *Vie de Jésus*, was placed under ecclesiastical ban. The bishops thundered forth anathemas; a few priests even ordered the bells of their churches to be tolled every Friday by way of expiation for that "infernal work."

M. Magen does not draw attention to the fact that the Académie Française always held aloof from the Empire. That great body, representative of the *élite* of the French nation, maintained a haughty attitude towards the avowed enemy of free thought and intellectual progress. It was the same with the first literary organ of the world, the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

In order to deal with the almost daily press offences, a so-called Sixth Chamber of Justice was

created. This tribunal occupied itself with newspapers and printed matter, dealing summary punishment, fines, imprisonment, exile, not to speak of confiscation.

It has well been said that over the door of this chamber should have been inscribed the words of Dante: "Leave all hope behind, ye who enter here." Accused persons were sure to be condemned. One of the judges of this court committed suicide on the day that the Empire collapsed. During a period of six weeks, the proprietors of the *Rappel*, the *Marseillaise*, the *Siècle*, the *Avenir National*, the *Réveil*, and thirty-two provincial papers, were punished by fines and imprisonments. The editor of the *Courier du Dimanche* was exiled for having published an article offensive to the Government. A paper of the Charente was stopped for publishing doubts as to the success of the Mexican expedition, another paper was stopped because it contained a statement concerning the depressed state of trade in one of the departments. Hundreds of journalists were ruined by fines and repeated suppressions. One of the Ministers of the Empire delivered himself of the following sentiment—"With a will it is easy to find grounds of accusation against the Liberal press."

Nor was this all. In 1865 a law had been passed fatal to municipal liberty throughout France. By virtue of this piece of legislation, all mayors and deputy mayors of towns containing 3000 and odd inhabitants were to be appointed by the Emperor; and those of larger towns by the *préfets*. It is hardly necessary to say that before that time, as in

the present day, these functionaries were chosen by the inhabitants.

V

The Mexican War, the Baudin trials, the assassination of Victor Noir, lastly, the appearance of *La Lanterne*, were events that, without the fatal war with Prussia, must inevitably have brought about a reaction too mighty to be resisted. In 1866 the Emperor opened the legislative session with these words—

“Peace is assured on every side. In Mexico the Government, founded in accordance with the wishes of the people, is consolidated. The disaffected have no longer any chiefs, the country has found those guarantees of order and security which have developed its commerce and security. I have come to an understanding with the Emperor Maximilian concerning the withdrawal of the French troops.”

Every one of these affirmations was in direct opposition to the actual state of things. The Mexican Expedition, “la plus belle pensée de l’Empire,” as it was styled by its projectors, was a speculation got up by Morny, Jecker and others, and with which the will of the French people had nothing whatever to do. Not to speak of the hundreds of thousands of families who lost money by the loan, that war cost millions out of the treasury, decimated the army, and caused a great monetary loss to both France and Mexico in stopping for fifteen years the happy commercial relations that had hitherto existed between the two. How much the will of the Mexi-

can people had to do with it may be gathered from one fact. When Maximilian and his wife landed at Vera Cruz in 1864, they only counted 350,000 adherents among a population of 7,000,000. It was little likely that the new Government should meet with sympathy. The constitution was overthrown, national institutions were destroyed, the country was devastated with fire and sword, and thousands of inhabitants shot down in cold blood for having merely resisted invasion. The Emperor Maximilian was perhaps as much the victim of his own ambition as of intriguing speculators. For years, according to his own showing, he had dreamed of empire. In his memoirs he wrote, "How agreeable it must be to stand amid bowed heads and to feel oneself supreme as the sun in the firmament!" To the last, egged on by clerical advisers and by terrorists, he tried to retain his hollow dignity. And, to the last, he looked for support from Napoleon III. The affair proving a failure, he was left to his fate. The Archduke had married a Belgian princess, Charlotte, granddaughter of Louis Philippe, a lady of high spirit, ambitious, perhaps also imbued with romantic notions of her husband's mission. The unhappy princess, seeing at last that his only chance of help lay in Louis Napoleon, sailed for Europe, landed at St. Nazaire on the eighth of August 1866, and that same night started for Paris. On the morning of the ninth she arrived at the Grand Hôtel.

The Court was at St. Cloud, and on demanding an interview of the Emperor by letter, she was informed that His Majesty was ill and could not see her. The two Empresses, however, exchanged

visits, and, finally, the Empress Charlotte insisted on being received in the Imperial closet. Then ensued, writes M. Magen, a scene which must have haunted Louis Napoleon to his dying day. When to prayers, tears, and agonized supplications on her part, his only reply was a coldly reiterated "It is useless to insist, Madame; not a crown, not a soldier," the princess, whom such cruel anxieties had already brought to the verge of insanity, gave way to frenzied utterances, recalling the piece "Trojan Cassandra." Rising from her abject position as suppliant, she drew herself to her full height, and, with a kind of inspiration, prophesied to the Emperor the destruction of his dynasty, and cursed him to his face. "Ah!" she cried, "I know you! Avenge yourself on the granddaughter of your benefactor, Louis Philippe, who rescued you from the scaffold and from want." The Emperor turned pale, and she went on: "You hope, do you not, by means of your police, to get possession of all the letters and papers that witness your pledges to my husband? They are in a place of safety." After predicting his impending downfall, she added, tears choking her utterance, "May the curse of God rest on you as on Cain!" and then quitted the palace. Four years later, on the declaration of war with Prussia, Napoleon III, not venturing to show himself in the streets of Paris, departed from the palace wherein this interview had taken place. By an irony of fate, he entered the railway at the little station in the park, called the "Gare des Fêtes."

The first number of the *Lanterne* appeared in May 1868, and created an extraordinary sensation.

Nothing so minatory to the Empire had as yet appeared. It is related of Edgar Quinet that, on reading the first number, he asked to see the writer's portrait, and, embracing it many times, exclaimed, "Here is the angel who shall deliver us from the demon!" The stinging little paper in reddish-yellow cover found its way everywhere, and, unnecessary to say, the author did not long go unpunished. On the appearance of the third number Rochefort was condemned to thirteen months' imprisonment and a fine of 10,000 francs. The *Lanterne* continued, however, to appear at Brussels, and persecution only increased its popularity.

Henri, Marquis de Rochefort, came of noble family, boasting a queen of France among his ancestresses. Named Commissaire des Barricades during the Commune, in 1871 he was condemned to transportation. Thiers vainly tried to procure the pardon of this thoroughly French genius, "cet esprit tout a fait Français," as he called him. It was forgotten at the time how much France owed the caustic, scurrilous journalist, the witty mp—*le gamin spirituel*, so characterized by Alphonse Karr—and he was sent to New Caledonia. Rochefort's attack on the Empire came at the right moment. Every stroke told.

Here is one of M. Magen's many stories, the introductory anecdote having been related to me by the Frenchman already named, Dr. Bodichon. Billault,¹ a whilom Republican, was later won over

¹ In 1870 the populace at Nantes dragged the statue of Billault from its pedestal, and would have thrown it into the Loire but for the interposition of Dr. Guépin, then préfet. The statue was handed over to Billault's family.

to Napoleon III. One day he met an old Republican friend in Paris who would fain have passed him by, but he insisted on a shake of the hands. "Mon cher," he said, speaking of the Emperor, "you don't know what that man is; he is a tiger at large." Then he qualified his apostasy from the Liberal cause by saying that if it were not for a few men like himself, France would be ruined.

Before going over to the Empire, Billault had addressed some letters condemning the crimes of December to a friend of his, an honest country lawyer, named Léon Sandon, of Limoges. After his defection, Billault claimed this correspondence. Sandon refused to give it up. Determined to lay hands on the letters by foul means, since fair could not prevail, Billault got a friend to borrow them for a few hours, when, instead of being returned to the owner, they were placed in his own hands. Sixteen times the unfortunate lawyer was arrested and put in prison, for no other offence than protesting against the injustice that had been done him. But Billault had recourse to more terrible vengeance still on the man in whose power he felt himself to be. One day when in prison Sandon was visited by four doctors, or doctors so-called, a warrant of insanity was signed on the spot, and the victim was sent to the public madhouse of Charenton, there to be detained at Billault's pleasure. On hearing the news Sandon's mother, in despair, committed suicide. When Billault died Sandon was set at liberty, and proving beyond a doubt that he was, and had ever been, in perfect possession of all his faculties, he demanded satisfaction of Billault's

accomplices. The publication of the proceedings was forbidden by the President of the Tribunal. Persigny wrote to the Emperor's private secretary, "Here is a very serious matter we must hush up. An abominable piece of iniquity has been perpetrated."

The Imperial Government gave Sandon the sum of 10,000 francs (£400) by way of compensation for sixteen illegal imprisonments, eighteen months' illegal incarceration as a lunatic, the ruin of his prospects, and the miserable end of his mother! The whole story afterwards came out in the Imperial correspondence.

The *début* of Gambetta as a great orator in the famous "affaire Baudin" was another event ominous to the Empire. Baudin had perished on the barricades as a defender of constitutional liberty in 1851, but no attempt had been made to celebrate the anniversary of his death till 1868, when it was decided by several leading Republicans to go in procession to the Montmartre cemetery and place wreaths on his tomb. This meeting passed off quietly, but when the leading Republican journals announced the opening of a subscription in order to raise a monument to "the glorious martyr of December," the Government immediately took fright. Editors of the offending journals on being ordered to close their subscription lists, refused, adhesions and money pouring in on all sides. The eminent orator Berryer sent a contribution with these words, "My colleague Baudin fell a victim in defence of the Constitution; accept my offering."

On the thirteenth of November, Peyrat, Charles Quentin, Challemel-Lacour, and others, were sum-

moned before the so-called Sixth Chamber. They were defended by great advocates, among these Quentin by Crémieux, Peyrat by Emanuel Arago, who concluded his noble defence with the following sentence—alluding to the funeral oration that had been pronounced by Rouher two years before on the tomb of Morny :—

“Morny and Baudin! Recall the two men and shudder at the contrast! Let the Second Empire raise monuments to its accomplices if it will, but let it leave us a tomb for Baudin—in other words, for virtue, for courage, for every quality that makes the good citizen!”

Amid the thunders of applause that greeted this final peroration rose a barrister only twenty-seven years of age, who from that moment was to take his place foremost among French statesmen. Again and again he was interrupted and threatened by Imperialist lawyers, but his tones only gathered volume, and his utterances, added passion, till, like a torrent, he silenced the pigmy voices around him.

“Listen,” cried Gambetta; “you have never dared to say ‘We will make a national *fête* of our second of December. We will keep it as a national anniversary.’ Yet throughout all the *régimes* that have succeeded each other in France the days of their inauguration have ever been *fêted*. Only two anniversaries, the eighteenth Brumaire and the second of December, have never been kept as solemn festivals. And why? Because you know that if you dared to make the proposal, the public conscience would repudiate it.”

Amid vain attempts to stop him, he cried, in accents of thunder, "We fear neither your threats nor your contempt! You may strike! You can neither crush nor dishonour us!" Only those who, like myself, have had the privilege of hearing Gambetta can realize his marvellous eloquence, and still more marvellous voice.

The Nemesis of the Empire had appeared. By the voice of Gambetta and the pen of Rochefort, it was now judged, and their arraignments found ready echo in the hearts of the people. The accused were variously condemned to fines or imprisonment; M. Challemel-Lacour was fined 2,500 francs.

¹ The assassination of a young journalist, Victor Noir, by Pierre Bonaparte, a cousin of the Emperor, and the acquittal of the assassin by the High Court of Blois, was another event that heaped obloquy on the Empire. The day after the crime Rochefort wrote in the *Marseillaise*, the paper appearing with a black border, "I was weak enough

¹ "The late Emperor made Pierre Bonaparte a prince in return for his services in the National Assembly and in 'La Société du Dix Decembre,' *alias* the Bludgeon Club, the members of which used to post themselves in streets through which the Prince-President had arranged to pass. When in sight they cried, 'Vive l'Empereur,' and those who did not do so were pommelled."—*Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 18, 1880.

The same writer adds, "When Pierre wanted (greatly to his credit) to legitimize his children, he applied to Napoleon III to give their mother a regular position. It was refused, and he could find no mayor who would officiate at a civil marriage. The letters which passed between him and the Emperor he published before going to Belgium, where he succeeded in effecting a marriage, which now, because the Empire has been swept away, is binding, but otherwise would not have been valid in France."

to believe that a Bonaparte could be something else besides an assassin. I imagined that a loyal duel was possible in this family, with whom murder and traps are matters of custom and tradition."

It will be remembered that Victor Noir had called upon Pierre Bonaparte to ask satisfaction for having insulted his friends, and the Prince, with a coarse invective, shot him dead on the spot. Victor Noir was accompanied by a gentleman of respectable position and standing, M. de Fonvielle, who witnessed the assassination, and made this affirmation over his friend's grave: "I take my solemn oath by this tomb, and in the presence of the people, that Victor Noir was assassinated in cowardly fashion by Pierre Bonaparte." On the acquittal of the assassin, Tardieu, professor at the *École de Médecine*, who had acted as counsel for the defendant, was driven from the lecture-room with cries of "To the door! The Corsican! To the door, the defender of the assassin!" For this conduct the students were deprived of their classes for three months. Rochefort, at that time deputy of the first arrondissement of Paris, for his protestations in the *Marseillaise* was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a fine of 3000 francs.

Meantime, the Empire, the watchword of which had been peace, was on the eve of its last and fatal war.

In July 1870 M. Émile Olivier, then Minister, announced that war with Prussia the responsibility of which he had undertaken "with a light heart," and the days of the Empire were numbered.

A word about M. Émile Olivier. Among the

deputies arrested at the time of the *coup d'état* was Demosthène Olivier, a staunch Republican, whose son afterwards went over to the Empire. M. Magen, relates a personal experience—

“It was the fourth of January, 1852. Towards noon, sixty defenders of the Constitution, imprisoned in the fortress of Bicêtre, received the order, ‘Get your belongings. You are to set off.’ Between a line of gendarmes and soldiery, we were marched off in the direction of the fort of Ivry. It was bitterly cold, and rain fell in torrents. The comrade on whose arm I leaned was named Demosthène Olivier. At the gates of the fort awaited a tearful crowd, anxious for a glimpse or tidings of some father, husband, brother, son, torn from their arms by Louis Napoleon Bonaparte. My companion, attached to me by a chain, recognized in the crowd one of his sons. This youth would fain have interchanged a word with his father, but the gendarmes rudely pushed him away. After having followed us for some time in the mud and rain, he raised his hands to heaven, murmured doubtless some imprecation on the torturers of his father, and walked away weeping. ‘Poor boy,’ said my fellow-prisoner, greatly agitated, ‘how he must suffer!’”

That poor boy was Émile Olivier!

It is said that when the Emperor met Prince Napoleon at Châlons after the declaration of war, the latter, then bound to Italy on a mission, said, “Adieu, sire, we shall meet no more in France,” and the same chronicler relates how the Prince, meeting a Government official on the frontiers, who

asked him the news, said, "France is undone! We are all undone! It is the fault of the Empress!"

During his later years, both physical and mental powers being impaired by disease and excesses, the Emperor's vacillation and contradictory conduct were no doubt due to the influence of the Empress and her advisers. There is little doubt also, that the Empress was mainly instrumental in bringing about the Prussian war, the anti-Protestant war.

One more anecdote, for which, however, I am not indebted to M. Magen's work, and we close this short survey.

When Troplong, Minister of the Emperor, was very ill, it was feared on his dying bed, the latter insisted on paying him a visit. "Now," said Madame Troplong, "my husband is sure to die! Wherever the Emperor goes he brings evil fortune!"

In Vol. I of M. Hanotaux' great work on contemporary France is given a full account of the Emperor's plot to subvert the Third Republic. Every detail had been carefully arranged, and a second *coup d'état* was only frustrated by Louis Napoleon's death in 1873.

In the preceding November the Emperor, finding that despite his terrible malady he could again sit on horseback—a contingency of the first importance—was to visit Cowes, his doctors advising a change of air. Thence with the utmost secrecy and dispatch he was to reach Ostend, and by way of Cologne, Bâle, Nyon, Annecy. Thence, in

company of Prince Jérôme, and, as it was hoped, joined by the cavalry regiment in garrison at the above-named town, Lyons was to be reached, the garrison of that city, under Bourbaki's orders, being counted upon. A uniform awaited the Emperor at Prangins, residence of Prince Jérôme, and, putting it on, he was to ride at the head of his troops to Paris. The National Assembly then sitting at Versailles, as M. Hanotaux remarks, was to be disposed of in a manner truly heroic. The parliamentary train running between Versailles and the capital was to be surrounded in the tunnel of St. Cloud, the deputies being caught like so many mice in a trap!

Even the Imperial Cabinet had been formed by anticipation, among the destined ministers being General Fleury, and Marshal MacMahon. The conspiracy got noised abroad, and during three days and nights the Parisian police were on the alert. The Emperor's death for a time checked Bonapartist machinations.

THE TWINS OF LA RÉÔLE



CONSTANTIN



CÉSAR

*Les frères Truochet
Nés le même jour, faits Généraux sur le champ de bataille le même jour, morts le même jour*

THE TWINS OF LA RÉÔLE

[Facing p. 241.]

THE TWINS OF LA RÉÔLE 1760-1815

“One face, one voice, one habit and two persons.”
Twelfth Night.

I

NEVER had twins a sadder, stranger fate than César and Constantin Faucher, known in history as the Twins of La Réôle.

Few English tourists bound to Bordeaux halt at that ancient townling with its castellated walls dominating the Garonne and the vineyards. Yet hours, even days, might pleasantly be spent amid scenes so picturesque and historic.

In archæological interest France is exhaustless, a fact that the much-travelled are constantly and humiliatingly finding out. We are ever at the beginning of things.

The town derives its name from a Benedictine abbey founded in the tenth century, and called the *regula*, hence *la règle*, La Réôle. To-day a quiet, dull *chef-lieu* of four thousand and odd souls, La Réôle has had a stormy chronicle from the days of Froissart, neither the Hundred Years' War, nor religious wars, nor Revolution and Restoration, passing it by.

Here on the twelfth of September, 1760, were

born the twin sons of an officer named Faucher, who had acted respectively as secretary to the Embassies of Turin and Genoa, later fulfilling the duties of general secretary to the Government of Guiana.

From babyhood the boys so precisely resembled each other that the likeness puzzled their parents, and as years went on the difficulty of identification did not diminish. The brothers were only distinguishable by some difference in dress.

When mere children, that is to say, at the age of fifteen, they entered the army, being enrolled in a company of light horse attached to the royal household. At twenty the pair attained full military grade, and each received command in a regiment of dragoons.

Dazzlingly brilliant must existence have appeared to these youths, the accident of twinhood heightening natural gifts, rendering them more interesting to others. Well favoured, of handsome proportions, both possessed winning qualities and exceptional intelligence, both gave early promise of the "chevaliers sans peur and sans reproche" that they were to become in after years.

Let us glance at their first outlook upon life.

As children they had perhaps witnessed the scene immortalized by a sentence of Burke. They had perhaps gazed upon Marie Antoinette as, "just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she had just begun to move in, she appeared glittering like the morning star, full of life and splendour and joy." Ten years later the pair formed part of the king's retinue. Louis XVI and his queen had now reigned six years, Turgot had been

dismissed. Gathering clouds announced the coming storm, signs were not wanting of the great upheaval, but as yet royalty remained absolute, the king held his state as the Roi Soleil had done before him. No less than fifteen thousand persons composed the household at Versailles, and no less than five thousand horses occupied the royal stables. The court, a small world in itself, absorbed, indeed, a considerable portion of the national revenues.

Amid scenes of Oriental lavishness and perpetual gaiety, the gallant twins would naturally play their part. They would, of course, join in the frivolities of the Trianon, in the royal hunts, and be on duty during State functions.

Instead of etiolating virile qualities, such experience but developed manliness and moral force in both. A school this period became of chivalrous sentiment and courtesy, not for a moment does it seem to have induced worldliness or parasitism.

Throughout these years at Versailles César and Constantin Faucher were only recognizable by the flower each wore in his button-hole, a matter alternately calling for mirth and annoyance. Nor could any difference be perceived in that most characteristic attribute, the voice. It was truly a case of "one face, one voice, one habit and two persons," only a rose, carnation or geranium, proclaiming identity.

Another feature of this historic twinhood was as marked in these dazzling years as in later life, unswervingly, uninterruptedly, the brothers remained attached to each other. We hear nothing in either case of romance, love or marriage. Brotherly affec-

tion apparently sufficed, and, alike in private life as in their military career, the two lives remained identical, one being precisely the parallel of the other. They were not, however, the only members of the Faucher family; they had a sister and a youthful grand-niece, who, as we shall see later on, played a heroic part in their most tragic history.

Meanwhile, step by step, the brothers moved in unison, not a single phase of their eventful career breaking such continuity, neither initiative nor chance rendering one more conspicuous than the other. Thus stood matters when the outburst of Revolution changed not only environment, daily life and prospects, but convictions. To these two, now in the flower of manhood, the year '89 came as an awakening. Both straightway embraced the popular cause, their respective services being military and civil. César was named commandant of the National Guards at La Réôle, to Constantin fell the responsibilities of its municipal headship.

Disapproving the summary execution of Louis XVI, both displayed that moral courage characterizing their life-story from first to last. Throwing up these appointments, they retired into private life.

II

Their retirement did not last long. Setting aside every consideration but the integrity of France, a few months later the twins again buckled on the sword. Acting as volunteers in the Republican army dispatched to La Vendée, both brothers speedily and step by step attained promotion. On

the same day, and on a blood-stained field, at the age of thirty-three, the brothers were named generals of a brigade. This happened in the fierce encounter of the thirteenth of May, 1793, near the forest of Vouvant (Sarthe). The civil war was just then at its height. As we now know, the Breton and Vendean peasants were neither inspired by religious nor monarchical ardour, but by horror of conscription, the blood-tax levied on their sons by the Convention. All the false romance and tinsel chivalry with which novelists and pseudo-historians have moved their readers are disproved in these days by historic research. It is especially to provincial archives, which were only thrown open to the public twenty-five years ago, that historians are mainly indebted. What these good countrymen shed their blood for was the right of *Habeas Corpus*, the liberty to sow their corn and gather in their harvests, not for *fleur-de-lis*¹ and the white flag.

Both brothers, having been severely wounded, were sent to the military hospital of St. Maixent, there awaiting recovery before the resumption of military command.

Early in the following year occurred the premonitory incident of this tragic life-story. As in the case of the Master of Ravensworth and of the Duc d'Enghien, evil fortune, like a sleuth-hound, persistently dogged the brothers' footsteps. With

¹ "Il n'est pas dans toute notre histoire, d'épisode sur lequel les écrivains naient répandu plus d'erreurs que sur le soulèvement des paysans du Bas-Poiton, du Bas-Maine, du Comté Nantais, et d'une partie de l'Anjou, pendant la lutte désespérée que soutint la Convention contre l'Europe tout entière."—E. BONNÈMERE, *La Vendée in 1793*.

them the bitterness of death had been past long ere the final moment came. In that terrible period, when brother was set against brother, and friend against friend, no one's reputation or life was safe. Having incurred the suspicion of a deputy named Laignelot, César and Constantin were dragged before the Revolutionary tribunal of Rochefort and accused, firstly, of having, as representatives of the Tiers État, interceded for Louis XVI, secondly, of having worn mourning on his death. Neither act being denied, sentence of death was passed, the pair listening with that calm which ordeals even more terrible had no power to shake.

For next day occurred an incident paralleled in Russian annals of modern times.

Who has not read *Crime and Punishment*, perhaps the most horrifying novel ever penned, and who without a shudder recalls one incident of the unhappy author's life?

This is what now took place.

With limbs bandaged and splintered, and so enfeebled by wounds and sickness that they could hardly stand, the generals had crawled to the foot of the guillotine. Having embraced each other and taken—as they supposed—a last glance at familiar scenes, César mounted the ladder, the last adjustments were prepared, when a stentorian "Halt!" resounded, as a representative of the people, breathless with haste and waving a paper over his head, stayed proceedings. By a few seconds the brothers escaped the knife.

We do not learn that a cheer arose from the crowd, yet the incident might well have moved the

callous. These twin soldiers, lofty of stature, comely of feature, and in early prime, possessed an extra, a unique interest. Upon this occasion, as usual, the Twins of La Réôle remained undistinguishable. One was the exact counterpart of the other. Carried before a second tribunal, the sentence was annulled, and once more the brothers quitted public life. An active career it was all the same. By no means ardent partizans, but good patriots, the pair now devoted themselves to civic duties. Enjoying ample means, at one period they proved a veritable providence to their poorer fellow townsmen, at another, to those of their own class.

But for their liberality in purchasing corn during the year 1794, La Réôle would have experienced the horrors of famine. Later on, through their heroic efforts, many *émigrés* of their acquaintance obtained the restitution of property, and many *proscrits*, or outlaws, were permitted to return to France. Throughout this, as throughout every phase of existence, nothing is recorded that does not redound to their honour.

Changes of government in no wise affected such conduct, France to these two meaning neither Monarchy, Republic nor Empire, but mere mother country. For mother country they were prepared to make sacrifices alike in times of peace and war; the call of duty never falling upon deaf ears.

Thus under the Consulate we find César acting as *sous-préfet* of his native town, Constantin being named *conseiller-général* of the department. Both, however, were imbued with the spirit of the Revolution and remained ardent lovers of liberty. Having

voted against the Empire in 1804, for a third time they became private citizens.

III

The return of Napoleon from Elba ten years later and the Hundred Days once more summoned the twins from their retreat. Adherents of the Rights of Man and of the tricolour, they had naturally resented a dynasty and a *régime* forced upon the country by foreign arms. In the *acte additionnel*¹ of the Emperor, with many others, they saw a prospect of regained liberties and pacific progress.

The entire country, indeed, seemed of the same opinion. The Government of the Hundred Days was warmly and almost unanimously acclaimed. César now became representative in the chamber, and Constantin was named Mayor of La Réôle. Waterloo changed everything. On the twelfth of July, 1815, Louis XVIII was reinstated by the Allies in the Tuileries, and on the evening of the twenty-first, Constantin, in his mayoral capacity, received orders to hoist the white flag, a mandate carried out by daybreak next morning.

What now happened shows the vindictive spirit fostered by the restored royalists and the utter helplessness of those falling under suspicion. Hardly had the flags been exchanged when a band of soldiery wearing the tricolour in their shakoes and on their way from Toulouse to Bordeaux, entered

¹ The *acte additionnel*, signed by Napoleon at this time, accorded liberty of the press, liberty of conscience, and proclaimed representative government by two chambers. It was too late.

the town. As yet unaware of what had happened and infuriated at the sight of the white flag, aided by negroes belonging to a colonial battalion, they tore to shreds and burnt every royal standard they could lay hands on, afterwards continuing their march.

With these proceedings the brothers had nothing whatever to do. Having previously retired from their posts, throughout the riot they had quietly remained at home.

On the heels of the soldiers followed a troop of royalist volunteers, strangely enough led by an Englishman. These in turn, rendered furious by what had just happened, raised a hue and cry against the two men lately representing the town.

With sabres uplifted the volunteers rushed through the streets shouting—"Down with the brigands Faucher; down with the generals of La Réôle; let us do for them!"

The townsfolk at first showed no disposition to take sides; Johnston, the English free-lance, had the good sense to continue his journey, leaving the volunteers behind, but for six days the brothers' residence was literally besieged, no efforts being made by those in authority to quell the disorder. Indeed, in this case, as in every other of the kind during the White Terror, the populace was egged on to violence. The fact of having served the preceding Government, either in a civil or military capacity, was a crime that could not be too mercilessly punished.

"We will not permit our private dwelling to be violated, we will defend ourselves should force be resorted to," proudly wrote the brothers to the

newly-elected Mayor, and this letter it was, coupled with trumped-up charges, that led to what followed. A brief spell of tranquillity intervened.

On the last day of the same month, as the brothers were resting one afternoon in their salon, the house was surrounded by gendarmes, Spanish volunteers, and National Guards, two hundred men in all. From attic to cellar, every corner was ransacked, and a list of the weapons discovered, these consisting of guns used in the chase and old military arms, was drawn up. Accused of harbouring ammunition with treacherous intent, the brothers were thrown into the local prison, thence a few days later being transferred to the fortress of Hâ, near Bordeaux, and there in chains placed amid condemned criminals.

Then began a trial, the infamy of which is unmatched in Revolutionary or any annals.

Madame Roland, as we have seen, was permitted to arrange her little cell with some degree of comfort, prison hours being alleviated by books, piano, drawing materials, and occasional visits.

Prisoners of the White Terror for the most part received no such indulgence. Thus the twin generals were now placed in what was called, "La tour des Forçats," or the convicts' tower, a huge bare cell in which prisoners had been herded together without any kind of sanitary provision. The high windows, barred from top to bottom, being unglazed certainly let in air, but also wind, rain, miasmatic vapours, and, what was still worse, myriads of mosquitoes and other noisome insects. Excepting two heaps of hay, one wretched coverlet, and one mattress, the place was furnitureless, neither table,

chair nor bench being allowed for comfort, neither knife, fork, nor razor, ewer or basin for cleanliness. Lights and fire were equally forbidden.

The greatest privation was that of being unable to sit down. When tired of pacing to and fro, the pair obtained a little rest by leaning against each other back to back, a device soon losing its efficacy.

“We wallow in filth and vermin,” they wrote to friends six weeks after incarceration. “Our linen is a horror. The cell is open to wind and rain. In order to escape the tortures of verminous insects we sometimes cast our clothes altogether, but soon becoming rigid from exposure, we have to cover ourselves with the one wretched blanket allowed us, and pressing body to body, regain circulation, and consequently attacks of fever. Throughout the entire night sleep is impossible. As you know, we are not wine-drinkers, but at the present time a little wine is necessary by way of medicine.”

The remedy was, of course, refused. But the crowning bitterness lay in the defalcation of life-long friends. With two exceptions, these brave men and excellent citizens were now abandoned to their fate. As so often had been the case during the Revolution, heroism of loftiest kind was only shown by the humble and the weak. If the twin generals were brought face to face with humanity in its most despicable shape, at the same time apostolic love and pity saved them from cynicism.

Of consolation and upholding these strong natures stood in no need. From first to last their attitude was one of unshakable firmness and endurance.

The brothers had never married, but had one

sister, and we hear of nephews and nieces to whom they were evidently attached. Did these also act the poltroons' part? Certain it is that only one member of the Faucher family, a great-niece, now proved the good Samaritan, or rather guardian angel.

Her name was Anais, a beautiful name, and beautiful must have been the bearer by virtue, if not of outward endowments, of heroic courage and exquisite tenderness.

Braving threats, imprisonment, maybe death, she succeeded in transmitting food, fruit and flowers to the captives, and after a time obtained the privilege of washing and mending their linen. That she was ever permitted an interview with her great-uncles we do not learn, and is highly improbable.

The other—veritable Abdiel in real life—was an officer on half-pay, named Monneins, the father of five children, and having for partner a wife as brave and disinterested as himself.¹ At imminent personal risk he also daily visited the prison, carrying little dishes from his frugal table, and after the trial and revision making desperate efforts to obtain the services of an advocate.

IV

For—will it be believed?—men with whom the brothers had lived on friendliest terms, with whom they had worked for the public good, one and all refused the last, the sovereign service. None would plead their cause.

¹ On the brothers' condemnation Captain Monneins was imprisoned, but was released a few days later.

It was well known beforehand that the court-martial would be the merest formality, and that the twins were already condemned. All the same a trial, so-called, took place, César and Constantin in turn calmly rebutting the accusations unblushingly backed up by former friends. So ill and worn out were both brothers that they could only speak for a few minutes at a time, the one taking up the other's relation. Both had never more closely defied identification than upon this occasion. Alike figure, physiognomy and voice were undistinguishable. In dress too, excepting the necessary badge, there was no difference. No less striking than such similarity was the absolute composure displayed by the prisoners.

The counts of accusation were three: firstly, of having retained office after dismissal by the actual Government; secondly, of having excited the populace to civil war; thirdly, of having repressed by violence the *élan de fidélité des sujets de sa Majesté*, a Pharisaic phrase which may be thus put into English, "the rising fidelity of the King's subjects."

The charges, as every one present well knew, were one and all false, but sentence of death was swiftly pronounced,¹ the brothers listening unmoved. They merely pressed each other's hand. Escorted back to prison and therein again loaded with chains, the generals now drained what to such men must have been the very lees of bitterness. Privilege of

¹ See Vaulabelle, *La Restauration*, Vol. IV, from which this narrative is taken; Hachette's *Dictionnaire Biographique*; Ernest Daudet's *La Terreur Blanche*, and *Un assassinat judiciaire*, 1889; these *inter alia*.

revision was granted, we learn on the application of a single relation. Was it the youthful Anaïs supported by her champion Monneins? Be this as it may, in revision lay one chance, a chance, however, depending upon a second contingency. Before the court of revision the accused must be represented by an advocate.

As it happened, Bordeaux at that time possessed a galaxy of eloquent barristers and tried pleaders. The Bordelais Bar was renowned far and wide, among its members being several friends of the two generals, more than one indeed greatly their debtor.

Each by turns wriggled out of the obligation, each outdoing Tartuffe in smug hypocrisy.

Nevertheless the brave captain and the devoted Anaïs did not despair. Whilst the first rushed hither and thither passionately appealing to one advocate after another, Anaïs did duty for telegraph and telephone, acting as letter-carrier and express messenger, neither for a single moment relaxing their efforts. When every legal door had been knocked at in vain, Monneins offered his own services. "I am no orator," he said, "but my feeble voice will, I trust, suffice to prove your innocence. I therefore place my services at your disposal, and if allowed the privilege, will take upon myself your defence."

The magnanimous offer, or rather appeal, was, of course, set aside. The generals would not thus endanger the half-pay of a poor officer and father of young children.

The infamous sentence was allowed to take its course, both brothers awaiting their doom with the

utmost calm, spending their last hours in writing letters.

“In another hour,” wrote one, “we shall be no more, we shall confront the firing-party ordered to shoot us. We await the last word of command.” Not a single sentence betrayed failing courage or a clutching at life, each breathing of stoical resignation to fate.

Hardly had the ink dried on the paper quoted above when a gaoler presented himself to knock off their fetters. Whilst thus engaged this man heard one brother say to his twin: “The average span of human life is sixty years. We are fifty-six, of only four years are we therefore robbed.” Then, having tenderly embraced each other, hand in hand they quitted the cell.

V

Enormous military display had characterized this judicial assassination from the beginning. During the trial the fort of Hâ had been surrounded by troops and cannon. On the day of execution the entire route to the firing-place was lined with troops.

Enfeebled by rigid confinement and illness, the condemned men were allowed no vehicle for the long transit. The three miles from the fort to the cemetery of La Chartreuse under a burning sun was traversed on foot and amid the objurgations, hisses and insults of the crowd. Yet we must believe that other sentiments here and there animated some beholder.

The two brothers on this occasion, as in every other, were habited precisely alike, their white

kerseymere trousers and braided frock-coats being as much of a pattern as the wearers. Their lofty stature, soldierly bearing and countenances of unbroken serenity, must surely have moved some hearts, the fact of twinhood adding extraneous interest!

Hand in hand, even, it is averred, with a smile, César and Constantin marched through the streets and suburbs of Bordeaux, every window being filled with hostile spectators.

One royalist lady seated at a ground floor balcony was so carried away with shouts of "Vive le Roi!" that she dropped her handkerchief.

Letting go for a second his brother's hand, the elder now moved forward, and, picking up the handkerchief, with a bow and a smile presented it to the owner. We do not learn that even this act called forth a cheer, but as the newly dug graves and firing-party came in sight, the hitherto noisy multitude became silent, as it seemed, under a spell. Not a sound was heard.

Twenty-two years before the brothers had stood side by side at the foot of the guillotine, then sentenced to death as royalists. To-day no voice cried "Halt" at the eleventh hour. Lookers-on no longer hissed and shouted, but this time, indeed, the Twins of La Réôle wrung each other's hand, kissed each other's cheek for the last time. The elder was the first to fall, Constantin, surviving the fusillade, being mercifully and instantaneously shot by a soldier.

A monument, I am told by a resident, is shortly to be raised to the memory of the Twins of La Réôle.

